WALID SHOEBAT: THE PHONY PURVEYOR OF HATE, FEAR, AND VIOLENCE

There are many individuals in our society who make inflammatory and derogatory statements against Islam and Muslims. To avoid accusations of racism, many of them will claim that they are not referring to all Muslims, just the extremists. Of course, for most of them, a Muslim extremist is a person who does not subscribe to the narrow views of his or her accuser.

Some individuals do little to hide their views. They openly proclaim that Islam and Muslims are evil. Walid Shoebat, Pat Robertson, Franklin Graham, Ann Coulter and Robert Spencer, are examples of such individuals. Their motto: “The only good Muslim is a dead Muslim or one who converts to Christianity.” If you subscribe to such views, you need not read any further. If you are not a bigot, racist or xenophobe, we ask that you read on.

SHOEBAT’S QUESTIONABLE HISTORY

Shoebat claims that he comes from the Palestinian village of Beit Sahour, a largely Christian village in Israeli occupied Palestine near Bethlehem. This paragraph appears on the official website of the village (www.beitsahourmunicipality.com):

“Beit Sahour is a model of cooperation and brotherhood between Christians and Muslims. Throughout the troubled and turbulent history of our land, the people of Beit Sahour have always stood firm as a united community. Today, Beit Sahour is home to some 14,500 residents, 80% Christian and 20% Muslim.”

Interestingly, nobody in the village seems to know about Shoebat’s phony tales. Many of Shoebat’s claims appear to be fantasies dreamed up by Shoebat. Shoebat claims that his father was a Muslim fundamentalist who preached jihad and who conveyed such thoughts to his impressionable son. This information is inconsistent with the history of Shoebat’s family. According to Shoebat, his father was a member of the very secular (i.e. – not Muslim fundamentalist) Fatah branch of the PLO, a group he now refers to as a terrorist organization. (Mahmoud Abbas, the leader of Fatah, - the supposed terrorist organization - was recently invited to meet with President Bush in Annapolis, MD). While attending college in the United States, Walid’s father met a Christian woman and they had a child (Walid’s sister) out of wedlock. His parents subsequently got married and some years later went to live in the largely Christian village of Beit Sahour. (Which part of this history portrays the life of a devout Muslim fundamentalist?)

In 1978, when Walid was about 18, his “fundamentalist”, “rigid” and “abusive” father sent him to the United States to study. He apparently attended (we don’t know if he was capable of graduating from) the prestigious “Loop College” in Chicago. (Apparently, the college is now defunct). Shoebat has resided in the United States ever since. So when was he a “terrorist?” Well, that apparently took place during his teen years and during his years at Loop College. Not surprising, not one individual has ever come forward to corroborate his supposed terrorist exploits and crimes. Not one. Terrorist acts of the type that Shoebat claims to have committed would have made the news (at least in Israeli newspapers). Guess what? There is no documentary evidence of any act that he claims to have committed, in occupied Palestine or in the United States. No witnesses, no documentary evidence, no truth. Another more important point that goes to Shoebat’s credibility is his legal status. Shoebat became a citizen of the United States by way of marriage to a U.S. Citizen. In his application to become a citizen, he is required to fill out form I-485 (www.uscis.gov). Part 3 Question No. 1b specifically asks: “Have you ever, in or outside of the United States, been arrested, charged, indicted, fined or imprisoned for breaking any law or ordinance, excluding traffic violations.” Question No. 4 asks: “Have you ever engaged in, conspired to engage in, or have you ever solicited membership or funds for, or have your through any means ever assisted or provided any type of material support to any person or organization that has ever engaged or conspired to engage in sabotage, kidnapping, political assassination, hijacking or any other form of terrorist activity?” Had Shoebat answered in the affirmative, he would have been barred from becoming a citizen. If Shoebat answered in the negative, then he either lied to the U.S. Government or he is lying to all of us. Will a local journalist (UWM Post or Milwaukee Journal Sentinel) or a local researcher ask Shoebat to sign a consent form allowing the journalist or researcher to file a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request in order to obtain a copy of the I-485 that Shoebat submitted to the U.S. Government? Will Walid Shoebat consent to this simple and very reasonable request? Ask him in public to consent and have him sign the consent during his speech. It will cost him nothing … except possibly the little credibility that he may have. For more information, go to the following web site: http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/efoia/foiafact.htm. (Shoebat only needs to sign a paper that says: “I, Walid Shoebat, Social Security Number __________ hereby give my consent to (name of journalist or researcher) to file a FOIA
request with the USDOJ Office of Executive Immigration Review to obtain immigration documents that I filed with the USCIS (formerly known as the INS), with special attention to form I-485.” Then have the document signed and dated by Shoebat. It’s so simple.)

**SHOEBAT AND HIS RADICAL FUNDAMENTALIST CHRISTIANITY**

Shoebat calls the Christians of Beit Sahour “false Christians”. (He alleges that Muslims have infected Palestinian Christians with anti-Semitism. Interestingly, the Holocaust and pogroms in Europe never happened among Muslims or Palestinian Christians. It was Shoebat’s radical “Christian” brethren who committed those atrocities). Shoebat refers to Catholics as false Christians. Shoebat considers South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu (who has said that Israeli practices are worse than South Africa’s Apartheid) a false Christian. Shoebat even considers the evangelical Christian and former President Jimmy Carter (author of “Peace: Not Apartheid”) to be a false Christian. Apparently, the only moderate Christians in the world are Walid Shoebat and members of the pro-Israel Walid Shoebat fan club (appropriately called Shoebat’s Dingbats). For more info on the views of Palestinian Christians, see the following link: [http://mideastchristians.virtualactivism.net/statements06/michelsabbah.htm](http://mideastchristians.virtualactivism.net/statements06/michelsabbah.htm).

Shoebat and his fanatic followers are seeking to bring about the battle of Armageddon and the Rapture. Shoebat urges Israel to destroy the major Muslim shrines in Jerusalem and to annex the occupied West Bank and any other territory that Israel can obtain. Shoebat believes that total and exclusive Jewish control of Palestine is essential for the “big battle” to take place and Shoebat is trying to speed up the coming of the Messiah who will destroy the enemies of Israel, including all those Jews who do not accept Christ as their Saviour. Of course, Shoebat says that we shouldn’t worry about that problem now. Our first task is to destroy all the Muslims. In Shoebat’s view, when asked “WWJD?” Shoebat’s answer: Wipe out Islam and Muslims.

Shoebat’s “stories” will only be believed by those who are bigoted, deeply uninformed or too dense to recognize Shoebat’s anti-Muslim bigotry and racism. Shoebat plays on the public’s ignorant misconceptions of Islam and Muslims. Shoebat’s supporters are radical fundamentalist Christians and radical Jewish supporters of Israel. Whereas the former may faithfully believe Shoebat, the latter are satisfied with his anti-Muslim bigotry and recognize that he is a cheap propaganda tool for the promotion of Israel, despite his “Christian” anti-Semitism.

**SHOEBAT’S RIGHT TO SPEAK**

We firmly believe in Shoebat’s right to promote his hateful views and his right to demonize Islam and Muslims. Neo-Nazi’s, the KKK and Shoebat all have the right to speak and we firmly uphold that right. However, we also believe that a venue other than a university would have been more appropriate for Shoebat to disseminate his bigotry and xenophobia. Shoebat has no academic credentials. He is a charlatan, a snake oil salesman and a fraud. Shoebat is a former “nobody” and is now an extremist Christian terrorist.

Although there is no proof that Shoebat participated in violence against Jews, we know that he now promotes violence against Muslims. He is often quoted as saying: “We need to choose war.” He supports the war in Iraq and calls for the U.S. government to attack Iran and other Muslim countries. He justifies Israeli human rights violations committed against Palestinian Muslims and Christians, including, assassinations, collective punishment and other war crimes.

The Muslim Students’ Association has always condemned extremists. We particularly condemn those who, in the name of our faith, commit heinous crimes. We salute those people of other faiths who do not have double standards and who are similarly willing to condemn their co-religionists when their co-religionists commit acts of violence and terrorism. Jews who value their faith tradition will condemn the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands and the atrocities being committed by Jews against Palestinian Muslims and Christians. Christians who value their faith tradition will condemn the wars and violence being promoted by war mongering Christians. When people of all faiths (and those with no faith at all) are able to recognize the humanity of one another and to adopt the same standards to define extremism, bigotry and hatred, we will have created a better world and left behind those like Walid Shoebat who worship the gods of hatred and intolerance.

For more information, contact the Muslim Students’ Association at UWM