

Hizb ut-Tahrir Emerges in America

Introduction

Updated: July 25, 2013

Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT), an international organization that seeks to establish a worldwide Islamic theocracy, is increasing its efforts to spread its message and recruit members in the U.S.

The American branch of HT convened its 2012 Khilafah Conference, titled, "Revolution: Liberation by Revelation," on June 17, 2012, in the Chicago suburb of Hickory Hills, IL.

Messages at the conference primarily centered on promoting the organization's vision of establishing a worldwide Caliphate and how the revolutions in the Middle East can be utilized to reach the movement's goals.

HT's 2013 conference drew on similar topics as the 2012 Khilafah Conference, titled, " Muhammad: Mercy to Mankind, Messenger, Leader & Statesmen."

HT held its first major event in the U.S., a conference entitled "Fall of Capitalism and Rise of Islam," at the Hilton in Oak Lawn, Illinois, on July 19, 2009. Although HT America's Web site states that the group "does not work in the West to change the system of government," speakers at the conference focused on HT's larger agenda of establishing a global Islamic caliphate, which entails ousting existing governments.

While HT has operated as a predominately clandestine organization in the U.S., the Oak Lawn conference marked the group's emergence onto the public stage in America.

A public [demonstration organized by HT](#) on December 24, 2011, in downtown Chicago to protest the Assad regime's crackdown in Syria suggests that the organization remains committed to raising its public profile in the U.S. HT demonstrators carried signs and banners calling for the establishment of the Caliphate and demanding the end of Western support for dictatorial regimes in the Middle East.



Hizb ut-Tahrir America Logo, from its Web site

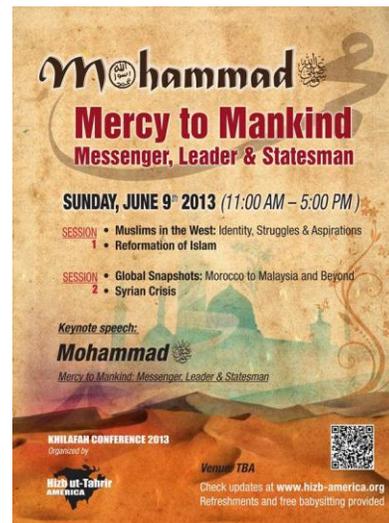
HT is increasingly using the Internet to organize meetings in the U.S. and distribute materials, and has become active on social networking sites like YouTube and Facebook, which it used to advertise both of its conferences.

A closer look at the group's ideology and international activity reveals that HT not only promotes Islam as a way of life, but is also fundamentally opposed to capitalism and democracy and is explicitly hostile toward Israel and Jews. These basic tenets, along with its record of advocating violence, contradict the group's attempt to portray itself as a political party seeking change through nonviolent means.

Khilafah Conference 2013

Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) held its fourth annual Khilafah conference on June 9, 2013, at Lexington House Banquets, country club that provides conference halls.

The 2013 conference, titled “Muhammad: Mercy to Mankind, Messenger, Leader & Statesmen,” focused on the positive aspects of reestablishing the Khilafah, how to support and maintain Muslim identities in Western societies, and discussed the events in some of the Arab Spring countries, most notably Syria. For many of the speakers, this year’s conference was their first time addressing members of the organization; however, the program contained speakers that have spoken at previous HT conferences. The conference also featured a keynote speech by Hizb ut-Tahrir America founder and deputy spokesman Mohammad Malkawi.



Speaker after speaker spoke of the important duty Muslims have to bring back the Khilafah and to replace capitalism and democracy with an Islamic system of governance that will, as the speakers claimed, “deliver humanity from the darkness it has plunged into.”

One session led by Raza Khan, an HT member who has spoken at previous Khilafah conferences, was titled “Muslims in the West: Identity, Struggles & Aspirations.” During his speech, Khan warned of the evils facing Muslims in the West, claiming that Western states and societies want to create a new identity for Muslims and to sow discord among them. The conspiracy that the West seeks to reform and change Islam and Muslims was a consistent theme in other speakers’ speeches.

In a session on the Syrian revolution, Jihad Abu Yassen, whose real name is Jihad Makled, called all leaders of the Arab world “agents and puppets for the U.S., Britain and France.” Makled also accused the West of conspiring against the “sincere revolutionaries in Syria” and aiding Iran and its terrorist proxy group, Hezbollah.

The keynote speech was given by Mohammad Malkawy, a U.S.-educated Jordanian who founded Hizb ut-Tahrir America who acts as the organization's deputy spokesman. Malkawy, who also goes by the name Abu Talha, delivered a passionate speech denouncing capitalism and democracy as the world's worst illness. Malkawy also quoted select passages from the Qur'an that refer to warfare and the prophet Muhammad's use of it in the 7th century, stating, "Fighting is done only when the oppressed people, when the oppressed people of the world, men, women and children, are crying out for victory, for support to get out of the oppression and tyranny. Then, you are charged to go and fight and let go of oppression from the backs of these people."

Malkawy, who spoke a few days later at a televised Khilafah commemoration event in Amman, Jordan, also called Britain "The source of evil" and the "cause of all evil in the world." At the July 21, 2013, rally in Amman, Malkawy similarly stated that the West, Britain and America should go to hell, "because the Khilafah is coming."

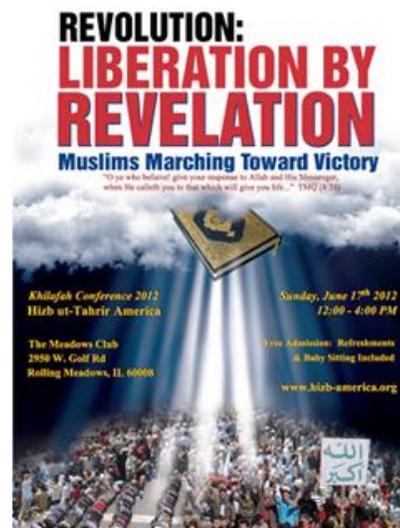
Khilafah Conference 2012

Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) convened its third Khilafah conference on June 17, 2012 in Hickory Hills, a suburb of Chicago. Unlike the previous year's conference when HT organizers withheld information about the event's venue, HT organizers promoted the 2012 conference and its scheduled location well in advance. After heavy pressure from concerned groups, the venue was changed to Lexington House Banquets.

The 2012 conference, titled "Revolution: Liberation by Revelation," largely focused on the same themes as HT's 2011 Khilafah conference. Topics included promoting the organization's vision of establishing a worldwide Caliphate and how the revolutions in the Middle East have affected Western concepts of economics and governance.

One session, "Revolutions: Causes, Motivations, and Reasons," provided a historical overview of the Islamic Caliphate and the *Ummah's* desire for the return of the Khilafah. The session, which was posted on HT's website shortly after the conference, used examples of failed U.S. policies that fostered democratic values and ideals in Muslim countries as evidence for the need to reestablish the Khilafah. The revolutions of the Arab Spring were also identified as proof that capitalism and western culture have been unable to provide the basic needs for Muslims and that Islam still remains the only solution.

In another session, "Choices and Alternatives: Islamic State, Secular State, Democracy...?" the unidentified speaker said that Muslims are at a crossroads, facing



Flyer for Khilafah Conference 2012

the decision to either join the West or to embrace Islam. Throughout the session, the audience was warned that in the aftermath of the revolutionary upheavals in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Syria, the West will seek a compromise with newly elected Islamist political parties. "This compromise will take many forms all done in an attempt to prevent Islam from returning to power."

One of the so-called "compromises" Muslims will encounter, according to the presenter, will be the Al Aqsa mosque, one of the most contentious points of disagreement in the Israeli-Arab conflict. According to the speaker, the West will seek new Arab leaders who will compromise on this issue, "and they will accept only those [leaders] that respect the Camp David agreement." The speaker continued, saying that those leaders who compromise on the issue of Al Aqsa and Palestine "are willing to put their hands in the bloody hands of murders and occupiers," and, "show no regard to the martyrs of this *Ummah* and its land."

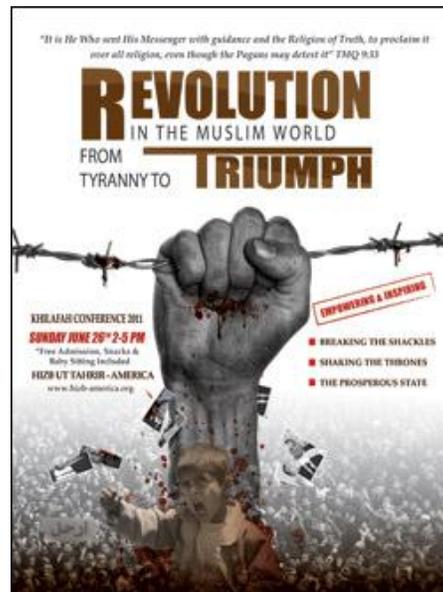
The conference drew to a close with HT organizers urging members to be proactive in the struggle to reestablish an Islamic Khilafah.

Khilafah Conference 2011

Hizb ut-Tahrir's American branch convened its second Khilafah conference in the Chicago suburb of Oak Brook, Illinois, on June 26, 2011. The conference, which was not advertised as broadly as its first conference in 2009, was attended by approximately 250 people.

Messages at the 2011 conference, titled "Revolution in the Muslim World: From Tyranny to Triumph," primarily centered on promoting the organization's vision of establishing worldwide Caliphate and how the revolutions in the Middle East affect the movement's goals.

One session at the conference, titled "Breaking the Shackles," gave voice to the organization's idea that capitalist and nationalist systems of the West are "enemies to Islam," and the only solution is for a unified Islamic state to replace such systems with "the rule of Allah," Sharia, and the Sunnah. The speaker at this session, identified as Brother Abu Saib, offered the February 2011 ousting of the Mubarak regime in Egypt as evidence of the Islamic nation awakening and starting on a path toward establishing a Caliphate.



Flyer for Khilafah Conference 2011

Another session, "The Meaning of Real Change," was accompanied by a follow-up question and answer with a panel of HT representatives in the U.S. The session addressed practical steps the Muslim community can take to bring forth the Caliphate and to prevent another dictator from seizing power in newly liberated Arab countries, like Egypt. Panelists in the Q&A session emphasized that HT was "working with the *Ummah* [Muslim community] in Egypt," and that a Muslim's duty is to "get the West out of our lands."

The last two sessions, "Shaking the Thrones" and "Life Under the Khilafah," examined the state of suffering the *Ummah* and Islam have fallen into since the abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate, and how everyday life will be governed once Islamic law is implemented worldwide with the rise of a new Caliphate. One of the speakers, identified as Abu Atallah, emphasized that the rise of the Caliphate would mean that borders become obsolete, nationalist ideology would be abandoned and Muslims would control the military.

The meeting ended with organizers stressing the importance of pushing forward for a unified Islamic state, and that the "Qur'an is a message for all mankind and a solution to all of man's problems." This was detailed in a pamphlet, "Khilafah State Structure: Introduction to the Constitution," that was handed out during the conference.

The constitution provides a detailed look at the structure, laws, and methods of governance the global Caliphate is expected to embody once it is established. The source of the Caliphate's authority and sovereignty will be derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah, which will help the Caliph "adopt certain rules [...] and obliges the people to act according to them." This pamphlet was designed to be "studied by Muslims while they are working to establish the Islamic State that will carry the Islamic *daw'ah* to the world."

Some key points mentioned in the draft constitution:

- Article 1 states that '*aqeedah* (Islamic creed) will be the sole basis of the State's foundation. The government's structure in its entirety can only exist if it is from the Islamic '*aqeeda*.
- Article 7 describes that the State will be charged with implementing "divine law", therefore those "guilty of apostasy (*murtad*) from Islam are to be executed according to the rule of apostasy..."
- Article 23 details the eight institutions of the Caliphate system, which includes an Amir of *Jihad* (war). The Amir of *Jihad* will oversee all war-related activities in the government.
- In the "Army" section, Article 56 states, "*Jihad* is a compulsory duty (*fard*) on

all Muslims. Military training is therefore compulsory. Thus, every male Muslim, fifteen years and over, is obliged to undergo military training in readiness for *jihad*.

- The social system of the Caliphate would strictly enforce gender segregation between the two sexes, and while women will have the same rights and obligations as men, a woman's primary role "is that of a mother and wife," and she may not hold any positions of power within the structure of governance. (Articles 108-118)
- In reference to trade with foreign nations, Article 157 states that "Any country we have real war between us and its citizens (such as Israel) is excluded" from trading with the Caliphate and its citizens.
- Article 194, Section 3, describes "imperialist states" like the UK, U.S., France, and Russia as potentially belligerent states that do not have a treaty with the Caliphate.*

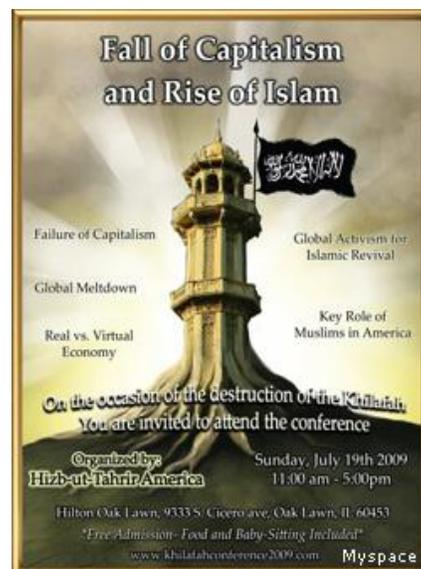
*With regards to Israel and the Caliphate's policy toward the Jewish state, Section 4 states that there can be no peace, and that "a state of war must be taken as the basis for all dispositions with them. They must be dealt with as if a rear war existed between us – whether an armistice exists or not."

Khilafah Conference 2009

Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) held its first ever Khilafah (Arabic for "caliphate") conference in the U.S. on July 19, 2009, at the Hilton in Oak Lawn, Illinois. The conference, entitled the "Fall of Capitalism and Rise of Islam," advocated for the implementation of an Islamic financial system and promoted the organization's larger agenda of establishing a global Islamic caliphate, or Islamic rule worldwide, which entails ousting existing governments.

Speakers addressed a crowd of approximately 400 men and women on a range of issues, including the "Islamic economic system," "suffering under capitalism" and the rise of Islam in the United States.

Mohammad Malkawi, HT's deputy spokesperson and computer engineer from Chicago, argued that capitalism is responsible for the world's poverty, hunger and war. "It is time to deliver the world to Islam, an idea whose time has come," he said.



Flyer for the 2009 Khilafah Conference in Illinois

Another speaker from Chicago, Jaleel Abdul-Adil, a professor of clinical psychology at the University of Illinois – Chicago, spoke about the role of Muslims in the U.S., arguing that every Muslim should utilize his skills in the struggle for an Islamic caliphate. Abdul-Adil, who has reportedly appeared at past HT conventions in Britain, declared that "Every home and every community and every masjid [mosque] must contribute to the struggle."

Abdul-Adil also urged the audience to never "stop calling for Islam as a complete way of life...unless and until Islam becomes victorious or we die in the attempt." During a question and answer session following his presentation, Abdul-Adil was asked if shari'a, or Islamic law, would trump the U.S. Constitution. "Yes, it would be gone," Abdul-Adil replied.



Jaleel Abdul-Adil

Another speaker, identified only as Abuatallah, outlined how capitalism has failed America, and African-Americans in particular. "Making a black man president will not stop this systemic oppression, will not stop what we see in the urban ghettos," he said. "Making Obama president is only a scheme, a plot, designed to quiet us."

In a session on "The Global Rise of Islam," Burhan Hanif, a member of HT in Britain, criticized Western governments and values and called for Muslims to "work for khilafah," or the establishment of Islamic rule worldwide. "Freedom and democracy has become an opium of the masses," Hanif claimed. "We see how the call of Islam resonates in the increased desperate measures in governments around the world... they are destined to fail."

HT presented several videos at the conference, including a recruitment video showing HT conferences and demonstrations around the world. "Now it is your turn," the video says, "Join Hizb ut-Tahrir America."

A pamphlet entitled "Islamic Reformation: Exposing the Battle for Hearts and Minds," was reportedly distributed at the conference. The pamphlet, written by Adnan Khan, an HT member in Britain, calls for the death penalty for those "in the khilafah [who] openly leave Islam." The pamphlet is also critical of the West, where "crime, sexual promiscuity, individualism and civil disorder is rife."

The Aqsa School in Bridgeview, Illinois, which was originally scheduled to host the event, cancelled two weeks before the conference, claiming that the group did not disclose the true nature of HT or the conference.

Hizb ut-Tahrir Background

Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT), Arabic for "Party of Liberation," is an international organization that seeks to establish a global Islamic caliphate. Established in Jerusalem in 1953, HT claims to be a political organization "whose ideology is Islam."

HT maintains an extensive international following; it is currently active in more than 45 countries, and its August 2007 convention in Indonesia drew approximately 100,000 delegates.

HT's strategy to establish a global Islamic caliphate consists of three stages. In the first, the group seeks to recruit "people who believe in the idea and the method of the Party." This stage mimics that of the prophet Muhammad, who "gathered together secretly those who believed in him on the basis of this ideology," according to HT's Web site.



Hizb ut-Tahrir Logo, from its Web site

In the second stage, HT seeks to educate the larger Muslim community about its interpretation of Islam so that the community can work "to establish it in the affairs of life." This stage consists of approaching the masses through "lessons, lectures, and talks in the mosques, centers, and common gathering places, and through the press, books and leaflets."

The third and final stage entails replacing all governments and implementing a global Islamic caliphate.

HT conferences around the world suggest that the group is currently in the second stage of its goal of establishing a global Islamic government. In commemoration of the anniversary of the abolishment of the Islamic caliphate 85 years ago, HT held worldwide events throughout the summer of 2009, calling "on Muslims around the world to mobilize to re-establish the Islamic Khilafah." In addition to the July 19 conference in Oak Lawn, Illinois, events took place in Ukraine, Mauritius, Lebanon, Tanzania, Bangladesh, Britain, Indonesia, Sudan and Turkey, among other places.

HT claims that it does not engage in violent activities and generally espouses a policy of nonviolence. However, in a January 2010 press release, HT called for violence against U.S. troops stationed in Afghanistan. The group accused "US crusaders" of killing nine school children and injuring 85 others in Afghanistan. "Such incidents," HT said in the press release "has to be answered by sharp swords of Muslim united armies under a true Muslim leader (Imam/K), not by few words of condemnations, rallies and demonstrations or submissions of list of demands to the UN's or Human

Rights, which are the protector of these crusaders, not us."

Its position on nonviolence is complicated by its admission that "jihad" is compulsory for Muslims in an Islamic country to fight their perceived enemies. According to the group's Web site, "the members of Hizb ut-Tahrir in that country are a part of the Muslims and it is obligatory upon them as it is upon other Muslims, in their capacity as Muslims, to fight the enemy and repel them." HT's statements in response to the Israeli naval operation to stop a [flotilla of ships en route to Gaza](#), which called on Muslim armies to "fight the Jews" and "blow 'Israel' off the map," further demonstrate the group's acceptance of violence.

The radicalization of HT members who adhere to the group's extremist ideology can also lead to violent acts. In 2007, German police arrested three men on suspicion of plotting to bomb military and civilian airports, restaurants and nightclubs. Two of the men were allegedly Uzbek members of the HT splinter cell [Islamic Jihad Union \(IJU\)](#), which carried out a terrorist attack against the American and Israeli embassies in Uzbekistan in July 2004.

Two British HT members were also allegedly involved in terrorist activities. One of the men was among those responsible for the 2003 suicide bombing at Mike's Place, a bar in Tel Aviv. Another HT member was suspected of joining Al Qaeda and plotting to attack several New York-Based financial targets. He was arrested in 2004 by British authorities.



Hizb ut-Tahrir Rally in London; January 2009

Some observers have suggested that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the admitted mastermind of the September 11 terrorist attacks, and [Abu Musab al-Zarqawi](#), Al Qaeda in Iraq's former leader, were also members of HT.

In 2003, Germany banned HT for allegedly spreading anti-Semitic propaganda. Russia declared the group a terrorist organization that same year after reportedly detecting links between HT and Chechen terrorists. The group had previously been banned in Russia in 1999 for being a criminal organization. HT has similarly been banned in several Arab and Central Asian countries as well.

Several other European countries, including the United Kingdom, have considered banning HT. The British government sought to ban the group after allegations that it was linked to the London bombings in July 2005.

HT also has a growing presence in the West Bank, which stands in opposition to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process and rejects the legitimacy of both the Palestinian Authority and Hamas. In 2007, the group held a conference in Ramallah that reportedly drew approximately 20,000 supporters. That same year, HT marched through Ramallah in opposition to the "Zionist provocation" against the Al Aqsa mosque. Palestinian officials banned HT from holding a July 2009 rally opposing both Fatah and Hamas and the concept of a modern nation-state.

On Israel and Jews

Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) claims that Islam is in conflict with the existence of Israel, which it says harms both Islam and Muslims, and has a history of encouraging followers to eliminate Israel and the Jews as a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This long record of hostility toward Israel and the Jews belies HT's claim that it does not espouse or condone violence, and, according to the U.S. State Department, can yield violent acts against the U.S. and its allies and generate support for terrorism.

A press release dated May 31, 2010, was posted on HT America's Web site in response to the Israeli naval operation to stop a [flotilla of ships en route to Gaza](#) on the same day. "O people: indeed Hizb ut-Tahrir strengthens your determination... there is no solution except to mobilize armies, gathering the capable soldiers and fight the Jews," the statement declared. The release also calls on Pakistan and Iran to attack Israel, saying "O you possessors of the missiles that you boast can blow 'Israel' off the map, so where are you now, O Pakistan and Iran's rulers?!"

In another press release in response to the flotilla incident, the Pakistani branch of HT issued a statement calling on the Pakistani army to "prepare nuclear bombs and other weapons for Jihad... fight under this command to annihilate Israel." The Bangladeshi branch of HT also condoned violence in a press release that called upon Muslim armies to "eradicate Israel and purify the earth of Jewish filth."

In March 2008, HT posted a press release on its Web site in response to Israel's retaliatory military action in Gaza, which was employed to stop Hamas from firing rockets into Israeli towns. "There is only one and uniquely one solution," the statement declared, "and that is to exterminate the entity of the Jews from existence." In another press release that month, HT called on Pakistan and Iran to attack Israel as "the only option that the state of Jews deserves." The statement also urged Muslims to "direct your anger at the armed forces so that they stir up fighting the Jews."

In addition to the inflammatory pronouncements on its Web site, HT America has also condoned violence and jihad during their monthly online discussions. In April 2010, an HT America leader asserted, "When the Muslim land is occupied, jihad is the obligation to those who are attacked by the kufar [non-Muslims]."

Leaders of HT America also produce a monthly newsletter, titled "The Shield," which has condemned Israel. In the May 2010 newsletter, an editorial claimed, "Israel was

created by the West in order to ensure the Ummah remains divided and continually occupied in an endless struggle with a Western proxy."

HT has also distributed virulently anti-Israel leaflets. In 2007, HT Australia reportedly promoted a conference in Sydney with a leaflet that depicted a dagger plunged into a map of the Middle East with the words "'Israel' is an illegal state" written in blood.

HT Denmark's spokesman Fadi Abdelatif was convicted in Copenhagen in 2002, and again in 2005, for inciting young Muslims to kill Jews, first in an Internet posting and later in a leaflet. The leaflet, which called Jews "a people of slander...a treacherous people," made threats against Jews and called on Muslims to "kill them all, wherever you find them." The leaflet, which was available on HT's Web site, encouraged suicide bombings in Israel as "legitimate" acts of "martyrdom."



Hizb ut-Tahrir Rally in Australia; January 2009

HT has also been prosecuted elsewhere in Europe for distributing anti-Semitic publications. Germany banned the group in 2003 for "spreading hate and violence" in leaflets that called for the killing of Jews, according to German officials. In 2005, the National Union of Students barred HT from universities in the UK after accusations of anti-Semitism. The group does, however, still operate legally in the UK.

HT's leadership has also publicly expressed opposition to Jews and Israel. In an April 2002 response to Israel's military operations at the Jenin refugee camp, HT in Sudan released a press statement on its Web site condemning the "miserable brethren of pigs and monkeys" of carrying out "brutal massacres." "Recognition and negotiation with the Jews," the press release continued, "is a betrayal of Allah."

In a 2000 interview with the Central Asia Caucasus Institute at John Hopkins University, an unidentified HT Central Asian leader openly stated, "We are very much opposed to the Jews and Israel... The United States is the enemy of Islam with the Jews."

HT's former global leader, Sheikh Abdul Qadeem Zalloom, reportedly declared an injunction in 1988, saying, "If the plane belongs to a country at war with Muslims, like Israel, it is allowed to hijack it, for there is no sanctity for Israel nor for the Jews in it."

The Anti-Defamation League, founded in 1913, is the world's leading organization fighting anti-Semitism through programs and services that counteract hatred, prejudice and bigotry.