

noticed women with Islamic dress in the car. He returned to the car and ordered the driver to leave immediately. The driver, who was opening the trunk, said that he would comply as soon as he pulled out the luggage and the traveling passengers got out of the car. The policeman called fellow officers on his walkie-talkie and started yelling at the Muslim man that he should leave immediately and started approaching the man. The policeman allegedly pushed the man's wife and son out of his way as they tried to intervene. As the other policemen arrived, they handcuffed the man very tightly, causing bruises. They placed him in jail for six hours. The man was later charged with "assaulting an officer" and "resisting arrest." The man later filed a complaint with Internal Affairs.

- A Turkish-American financial analyst from Wayne, Pennsylvania, reported that he was searched and questioned by police officers on March 2, 1996, allegedly without any probable cause. The incident took place near Super Fresh supermarket on West Chester Pike in Havertown, Pennsylvania. The man was standing listening to his radio, when a police officer rolled down his patrol car window and asked if the man saw "a guy in a white jacket." The man replied that he had been listening so intently to a soccer game that he had not been paying attention to passers-by. A few minutes later, three police cars with four policemen converged and surrounded the man. They searched him, checked his identification and asked him harassing questions. After half an hour of questioning, the police decided to let him go. The victim, who has been a citizen for two decades, believes that his dark complexion, accent and Arabic-sounding name triggered the prejudice (*Local Daily News*, April 3, 1996).

- A Palestinian living in Chicago with an expired student visa reported that on April 5, 1996, agents of the FBI and the INS came knocking at his door at about 5:30 a.m. The agents allegedly threatened him, saying he would be deported if he did not agree to provide information about what goes on in what they described as "secret meetings" in local community institutions. The agents allegedly told him that

they would update his status record and grant him a green card if he worked for them. On April 9, the man was reportedly taken into custody after he refused to "cooperate."

- Two men—one an African-American and one a Caucasian—were riding in a car when a patrol car pulled them over on April 12, 1996, in St. Louis, Missouri. The men believe that the policeman stopped them because they were "in the wrong neighborhood." The two men went with the officer to the station. There he allegedly told them that he was "Allah" and that the badge gave him "the power to kill." The two men said they filed a complaint with Internal Affairs.

Parental Rights Violation

- A forensic pathologist, who testified in a case involving the death of a child, reported the following incident involving the Child Protection Services (CPS) in Seattle, Washington, and a Muslim father. The man had been accused of murdering his two-year-old son, because "the son refused to pray." During the trial, the CPS took custody of the man's other children. The charges against the father were later dropped when doubt was cast on the forensic evidence. The children's custody case has yet to be settled. Meanwhile, the children were returned to their mother and the father was given visitation rights. However, on October 11, 1995, the CPS reportedly took the children away from the their mother on a rumor that the father was going to leave the state. Actually, the defendant never expressed his desire to leave the state, but was in the process of initiating litigation.

Equal Protection Under Law

- On July 25, 1995, Dr. Mousa Abu-Marzook, a 44-year-old U.S. permanent resident of Palestinian origin, was detained at JFK airport by INS officials when he returned with his wife and children from Jordan. Carole Florman, an INS official, told *The Washington Post* that Abu-Marzook's name had surfaced in a terrorist lookout database. At the time of his detention, the U.S. government did not charge

him with any criminal activity. Two weeks later, the government formally arrested Abu-Marzook and began extradition proceedings, acting on an extradition request by Israel. Stanley Cohen, a lawyer defending Abu-Marzook, was quoted in the press saying that the case against his client is political rather than criminal. Dr. Abu-Marzook had served as a political advocate for Hamas, which opposes the Israeli-PLO accord. Because he is incarcerated in a maximum security prison, Abu-Marzook is not allowed to attend the Friday congregational prayer. A number of American Muslim and Arab-American organizations formed a committee for his defense (*The Washington Post*, July 28, and August 9, 1995).

- Lawyers defending Shaykh Omar Abdel Rahman complain that his trial was far from free and fair. According to attorney Abdeen Jabara, one particularly troubling aspect of the trial was the judge's decision on July 7, 1995, to deny a request by the defense team to call experts in Islamic jurisprudence to testify. The judge's reasoning was that the trial was about terrorism, not about religion. However, the defense argued that a crucial point in the case was the nature and meaning of some Islamic terminology, such as *fatwa* (religious opinion). The prosecutor argued that the *fatwa* which sanctioned political violence amounted to an order to commit crime. The defense disputed that interpretation, insisting that defendant was expressing opinions, not giving orders. The blind cleric, who serves a life sentence in a maximum security prison, is not allowed to attend Friday prayers (*The Abd' Al Rahman Report*, Newsletter of the Committee to Free Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, July/August/September 1995).

Other Incidents of Discrimination

- A senior student enrolled in a paralegal studies program at Davenport College in Kalamazoo, Michigan, complained of discriminatory behavior by the department's head. Unlike her classmates, the African-American student had difficulty finding an internship placement. She says that she has had a feeling that the department head was hesitant to present the student, who wears a long skirt and a head scarf, to law firms. When the student called the advisor

to inquire about the status of her application on August 3, 1995, the advisor said, "Dressed the way you are, you're not going to be employable in this conservative town."

- An inmate at the Northern Correctional Institute in Somers, Connecticut, sent a letter on October 5, 1995, to a lawyer complaining that the prison administration has been procrastinating on a number of demands including: (a) finding an imam for the Muslim population in the facility; (b) facilitating the purchase of Qurans and other Islamic literature; and (c) meeting Muslim dietary requirements for the month of Ramadan. The lawyer sent a letter to the prison administration inquiring about these issues. In response, the religious coordinator of the facility stressed that the administration allows religious literature received from private organizations to reach the prisoners. Also, he said that the administration was close to hiring an imam and that they were "concentrating on the Nation of Islam fast." In a follow-up letter, which was received by the lawyer on December 1, 1995, the inmate said that he was removed to a more restricted section of the prison as a result of his asking for outside help. He indicated that he and other prisoners are Sunni Muslims; and that they must be treated on equal footing with other religious groups. He also complained that the administration is denying him and his fellow prisoners the privilege of buying prayer rugs.

- On November 4, 1995, a board member of the Barcroft Hills condominiums in Falls Church, Virginia, allegedly harassed an Arab tenant and used foul language in communicating with him and his guests. The incident took place toward the end of a wedding party while a number of guests were picking up their relatives. The board member asked the tenant about the number of people attending the party. When the tenant said that it was within the maximum allowed by the contract, the lady loudly cried out that he was a liar. Then she turned to the front door and yelled: "Who's the SOB who opened the door?" The Arab man said: "I did not violate any rules. And even if I did, her insults were wrong. I felt that the lady discriminated against me and my guests because we looked like foreigners to her!"