



SEPTEMBER 2005

**Institute for Social Policy
and Understanding**

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Find us on the web!
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The ISPU Mission

The Institute of Social Policy and Understanding is an independent and nonprofit organization committed to studying U.S. domestic and foreign policy and its impact on American society in general and its Muslim communities in particular. ISPU provides analysis, research, policy briefs and commentary which directly involve public policy through publications, conferences, media events, grants, training and research support. ISPU is established on the idea that every community must address, debate and contribute to the pressing issues facing our nation.

A Word from the Board of Directors

Institute for Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU) has had an exciting and productive summer.

First, it has completed a major report designed to optimize the performance of non-profit institutions. Through surveying and analyzing a sample of American Muslim non-profits, ISPU Board member Aamir Rehman has produced his second in a series of reports on the Muslim non-profit sector. These practical suggestions for improvement can be easily implemented and are described in an article below.

ISPU aims to provide practical policy solutions to many of the problems faced by various sectors of American society. Several policy briefs produced

this summer deal with a range of issues from protecting the environment, treating and preventing substance abuse, and immigration reform.

ISPU's core projects currently involve the national mosque survey and the study of American Muslim education. Updates on these projects are found in the inset on the first page.

ISPU remains indebted to its members. Without their pledges of support, much of the research and scholarship simply would never be done, or at least not by those who maintain a balanced view of the American Muslim community.

We at ISPU look forward to your ongoing support throughout 2005.

**Enhancing Non-profit
Performance**

Aamir Rehman has produced a well-researched, breakthrough report on improving Muslim non-profit organizations. This ISPU report is the second in a series designed to provide practical suggestions for optimizing the effectiveness of Muslim organizations by focusing on the performance of the leadership or the "Board."

Based on surveys, Rehman found that most American Muslim organizations picked their leaders based on their past contributions to the organization rather than their ability to meet its future needs. Furthermore, most Boards had little or no management training, and spent more than half of its time devoted to issues that are not considered Board level. In addition, it was found

Project Updates

National Mosque Survey. ISPU has submitted several proposals for grants to fund the third phase of the Muslim census project. The national mosque survey which would study American Muslim communities across the country to understand their demographics, political and religious beliefs. This study would have great implications for policy planning. ISPU has already had site visits and follow-up interviews as part of the grant review process.

Islamic Schools. ISPU has gathered a group of scholars to publish a book outlining the current state of education of American Muslim children. This will lay the groundwork for a subsequent three phase project studying Muslim education in the United States.

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Recent Articles and Reports

Implications of the Detroit Mosque Study

This policy by Ihsan Bagby and Misbah Shahid report further analyses results of the 2004 study, a Portrait of Detroit Mosques. It identifies several important challenges that Muslim communities will face over the next decade. Its major findings include that many mosques have predominantly one ethnic group. Secondly, most of the growth of Muslim communities has come from an influx of immigrants, and 58% of these immigrants came after 1990. Thirdly, over one half of the American Muslims attending mosques were under the age of 40. And finally, the role of women in most mosques was quite limited, with an average of only 15% of the congregants during Friday prayers being Muslim. The Report Analysis makes several suggestions that can be used to effectively meet the challenges outlined.

Immigration Reform that Both Sides Can Support

Benjamin Powell identifies the economic benefits that increased immigration can bring to the U.S. Unfortunately, the strict-

est immigration requirements are on the highest skilled workers who provide the most benefit. He argues that these restrictions hurt American businesses. Powell believes that an open immigration policy for those with an ability to work, a place to stay and no criminal record can significantly improve the economy. Although there will also be a large influx of low-skilled workers, adjustments to welfare disbursements, increase of tax revenue and a growing economy should allow even these workers to contribute to an economic upswing.

Why did terrorists Strike London?

ISPU Fellow Ivan Eland writes that "Much of the U.S. public seems to believe President Bush's erroneous claim that the Islamists are attacking the United States because it is "free" instead of honestly examining the history of the U.S. government's profligate meddling in the affairs of other countries." He argues that the London bombings, like those in Spain last year, are more the result of British involvement in the Iraq war. He believes that the reaction to the bombing in both Britain and the U.S. has resulted in more freedoms being curtailed.

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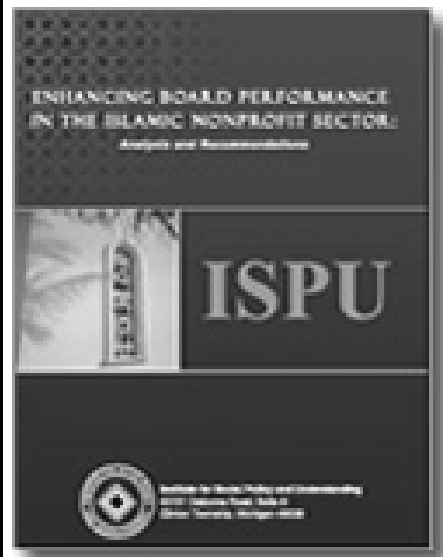
Enhancing Non-profits

(cont from page 1)

that cultural diversity seemed to reduce Board cohesion, whereas joint spiritual and educational activities seemed to increase Board cohesion.

According to the Report, Muslim non-profit organizations can improve their performance by emphasizing forward-looking criteria when selecting new members. This would require a Board to develop a list of priorities for its term. Second, a Board should institute an annual performance review based on specific criteria created at the beginning of the term. Thirdly, the Report advises Boards to create an operating committee distinct from the Board of Trustees. And finally, the Report advises regular management training and joint spiritual/educational activities.

The full report is available online at the ISPU website.



The full report shown above is 20 pages, and can be downloaded from www.ispu.us. Hard copies can be purchased by contacting ISPU.

Contribute To ISPU

ISPU is a non-profit organization and relies upon generous individuals and institutions to support its work. Our development staff can work with you to identify the most advantageous means to contribute to the Institute. Please consider making a bequest to ISPU in your wills. **Stock transfers, online donations and checkomatic deductions** are available for your convenience. For more information please contact the ISPU office.

Recent Articles and Reports

(Cont. from page 2)

Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Strategies

Dr Abdul Basit, assistant professor of Psychiatry at Northwestern University and ISPU fellow, reviews current policies regarding substance abuse in the United States. Unfortunately, this epidemic appears to be worsening, despite billions of dollars spent trying to stop this problem. Very little data is available about the effectiveness of educational programs and rehab programs. He argues that evaluating the effectiveness of these programs needs to be a top priority. Strengthening the family structure and recognizing alcohol as the most widely abused substance are essential components of treatment and prevention strategies.

The Bush Record on the Environment

This policy brief by Jumana Vasi examines the various environmental accomplishments of the Bush presidency. Three of the brightest stars of Bush's environmental accomplishments are rules regarding off-road vehicles, brownfields (abandoned industrial sites) and Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency (CAFE) standards. Unfortunately, there have

been many shortfalls also in Bush's environmental record, including the easing of regulations concerning air pollution (Clean Sky Initiative), global warming (Kyoto Protocols), hydrogen fuel research and forest health. There has also been a systematic lack of enforcement of many existing environmental policies. Vasi makes a series of recommendations on balancing the conflicting priorities of environmentalists and "wise-use" proponents.

Bridging the Divide

ISPU is pleased to partner with the **Brooking Institute's Saban Center** to sponsor a series of conferences that bring together U.S. government officials, community leaders and leading academics. These conferences will explore ways to optimize relations with the Muslim world and the United States. The Brook- ing Institute has explored the conference theme, "Bridging the Divide," for past few years. ISPU looks forward to developing concrete policy recommendations that will reduce tension between the Muslim world and the United States.

WWW.ISPU.US

Kathleen Moore Lectures at ISPU event

ISPU co-sponsored a lecture at Wayne State University on April 6th 2005 titled, "Justice American Style: Citizenship, Civil Liberties and Muslims in the United States After 9/11." The keynote address was given by Kathleen Moore, a professor of Law and Society at University of California Santa Barbara. Dr. Moore presented her research into post-Sept. 11 attitudes on civil liberties, Muslims, the Patriot Act and other issues. Moore has written extensively about the practice of Islam in America. She has argued that there is a uniquely American Muslim identity which has been defined in part by the American legal system. She explores this theme in detail in her book, "Al-Mughtaribun: American Law and the Transformation of

Muslim Life in the United States," a pioneering look at Muslim encounters with the American legal system.

ISPU Internships

ISPU provides several internship opportunities throughout the year to motivated college and graduate school students. Zareena Grewal is the internship coordinator, and she can be contacted through info@ispu.us. Special law internships are available under , Uzma Qureishi, a Harvard trained lawyer studying civil liberties.

ISPU Board of Directors

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ISPU Research Grants

The ISPU Research Committee is **accepting proposals** for any projects that fall within the ISPU mission. Details about submission and proposal guidelines can be obtained by contacting our office or visiting our website. This is an ideal opportunity for scholars and students to obtain logistical and material support, and mentorship from our scholars for projects they wish to pursue.



ISPU Presentations at ISNA

The 2005 ISNA Convention will be held September 2-4 at the Rosemont Convention Center in Chicago.

Saturday, 10:45 am – 12:00 noon, September 3, 2005

Room 24 Session 4I: **Muslims and Public Policy**

The Institute of Social Policy and Understanding will provide insight into the realm of think tanks and public policy institutions. It will also provide information on how the Muslim community can be more effective in influencing both domestic and foreign policy. Speakers: **Muqtedar Khan, Saeed Khan**, Salam Al-Marayati, **Jumana Vasi**, Moderator: **Farid Senzai**

Saturday, 10:45 am – 12:00 noon Room 22 Session 4G:

Dominant and Emerging Voices in the American Muslim Discourse Speakers: **Saeed Khan**, Hank Chase, Maliha Chishti, Rafik Beekun Moderator: Louay Safi

Saturday, 4:30 – 6:00 pm Room 32 Session 6L: **Best Practices for Islamic Centers** Speakers: La Dale George, Salam Al-Marayati, Ismail Tahir, **Ihsan Bagby** Moderator: Louay Safi

Sunday, 9:00 am – 10:30 am Room 24 Session 8I:

Abstract Session B Enhancing Board Performance in the Islamic Nonprofit Sector: Analysis and Recommendations
Aamir Rehman

Sunday 4:30 pm—6:00 pm Room 33 September 4, 2005

Freedom House Report: This panel will review the widely distributed publication of Freedom House titled *Saudi Hate Literature Fill American Mosques*. Speakers: Faroque Khan, **Junaid Afeef**. Moderator: Eric Hamza Byas

Other ISPU Presentations

“Mapping the Discourse of Interfaith Relations between Muslims & Evangelical Christians” Washington, DC: Fuller Theological Seminary, April, 2005

“The Relevance of Contemporary Islamic Intellectualism” Dallas, Texas: Association of Muslim Social Scientists Seminar on Islamic Intellectual Heritage, June, 2005

“Roundtable Discussion on Religion and Fundamentalism” by Farid Senzai, Esalen Institute, Monterey, California, September 2005,

“A Study of Arab and African-American Relations within the Muslim Community: Bridging the Divide Between Indigenous and Immigrant Groups” by Saeed Khan, Middle Eastern Studies Association Annual Meeting, Washington D.C., November 2005

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