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Clock and Bull Story

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**You’ve no doubt heard about the “clock boy”**—the 14-year-old Muslim student who brought a self-made clock to school to show to his teachers and was then detained by police on the suspicion that the clock might be a bomb.

The media pounced on the story as a classic case of Islamophobia, the president complimented Ahmed Mohamed on his “cool clock” and invited him to the White House, and just about everyone agreed that the young bespectacled clock maker was a boy genius. Offers of scholarship money poured in from giant social media companies, and the Cambridge Public Library, which might have been expected to show more prudence (it stands next to Cambridge Rindge and Latin—the school attended by the Boston Marathon bombers), hosted a “Stand with Ahmed and Build Your Own Clock Day.”

And then the clock narrative began to unwind. It turns out that Ahmed [didn’t make the clock](http://blogs.artvoice.com/techvoice/2015/09/17/reverse-engineering-ahmed-mohameds-clock-and-ourselves/), but had merely taken out the innards of a Radio Shack digital clock and installed it in a cigar box. What’s more, it appears that the boy was not as innocent as portrayed. The [first teacher](http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2015/09/18/real-story-istandwithahmed/) he showed it to told him to put it in his locker and not show it around. Nevertheless, Ahmed continued to show it around until he found a teacher who reacted with the apparently desired response.

When the Irving, Texas police showed up, they found the boy to be uncooperative, and, seeing that a few months previously, two jihadists had attempted to machine-gun an art exhibition in nearby Garland, they thought it prudent to detain Ahmed until they were sure of the situation.

The case that the teen was deliberately trying to provoke a confrontation was strengthened as more was learned about his family. His [older sister](http://www.familysecuritymatters.org/publications/detail/clockmeister-ahmed-mohameds-sister-was-once-suspended-from-school-for-threatening-to-blow-it-up?f=must_reads), Eyman, was once suspended from her school for threatening to blow it up. His uncle runs a trucking company called Twin Towers Transportation. And his father, [Mohamed Elhassan Mohamed](http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2015/09/18/real-story-istandwithahmed/), is a publicity hungry activist who calls himself a sheik, wears flowing white robes, and is a 9/11 Truther. [Nothing wrong with not believing the standard explanation for 9/11!] The elder Mohamed routinely returns to Sudan to run as a presidential candidate, and he once debated Pastor Terry Jones of Koran-burning fame. [Well, which side was he on??!!]

In one of his posts (in Arabic), Ahmed’s father rails against Islamophobia and [says](http://www.westernjournalism.com/clock-boy-ahmeds-father-just-got-caught-making-a-stunning-claim-about-his-sons-clock-incident/) that “Muslims … must exploit every opportunity to reveal the truth of Islam.” He has certainly done that. With the help of his lawyers, publicists from CAIR (the Council on American-Islamic Relations), and considerable assist from the media, Mr. Mohamed has parlayed the incident into a whirlwind global publicity campaign. In recent months this has included an appearance for his son on the Dr. Oz show, a photo-op with the Queen of Jordan at the UN, and a world tour for the family. The tour took the family to Mecca and to meetings with various world leaders, including the genocidal president of Sudan, Omar al-Bashir. To top it all off, the media’s favorite all-American family then decided to relocate to Qatar in response to an offer from the Qatar Foundation for Ahmed to study at its Young Innovators Program.

“Muslims … must exploit every opportunity to reveal the truth of Islam”? In retrospect, it looks like Mr. Mohamed not only “exploits” opportunities, but also does his best to create them. The whole incident seems to be a pre-planned family plot intended to reinforce the Islamophobia narrative and gain some publicity for the family in the bargain.

Instead of a classic case of Islamophobia, the clock boy affair might better be seen as a classic case of stealth jihad. It’s reminiscent of the “[flying imams](http://www.meforum.org/1809/exposing-the-flying-imams)” incident several years back in which a group of six imams praying loudly in Arabic and otherwise behaving in unusual ways scared the daylights out of fellow passengers on a flight to Phoenix. After being ejected from the plane prior to take off, the imams turned around and sued not only the airline and the police, but also passengers who had reported their suspicious behavior to the flight crew. Eventually U.S. Airways and the imams settled out of court for an undisclosed amount. Fearful that the incident would have a chilling effect on airport security, Congress passed a law to give immunity to citizens who report suspicious behavior.

Will the Ahmed affair have a similar chilling effect? Will teachers be more likely to look the other way when Muslim students act suspiciously? We are continually reminded that if we see something we should say something. But what if the penalty for seeing and saying is to be held up for ridicule by everyone from the press to the president? By instantly granting celebrity status to the Muslim community’s young Tom Edison, the social elites were implying that the teachers and police back in Irving were just paranoid rednecks. In fact, Ahmed himself said something to that effect. In an interview with Al-Jazeera, he [stated](http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2015/10/19/obamas-cool-clock-muslim-boy-gets-award-jihad-tied-cair/) that he was detained “because I’m a Muslim.” “There is a lot of stereotypes [sic] for people who are foreigners and [when] they have Muslim names … no, this would not have happened to any of my classmates.”

As a reward for his battle against Islamophobia, CAIR presented Ahmed with the [American Muslim of the Year Award](http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2015/10/19/obamas-cool-clock-muslim-boy-gets-award-jihad-tied-cair/) at its 21st annual “Champions for Justice” banquet. By sheer coincidence, the ubiquitous CAIR was the group that provided legal counsel for the flying imams in their successful action against U.S. Airways. CAIR, which bills itself as a civil rights group, is considered by some to be the premier stealth jihad organization in the U.S. It has close ties with the Muslim Brotherhood, and in a 2008 court decision it was designated as an unindicted co-conspirator in a large-scale terrorist funding operation. And, although CAIR is considered by the U.S. government to be a model of moderation, the government of the United Arab Emirates includes it on its list of worldwide terrorist organizations.

But, to employ the obvious pun, who cares about all that when CAIR features photogenic “Champions of Justice” at its annual banquet and when the media treats it as though it were a branch of the Red Cross? The most disturbing aspect of the clock boy affair is not its apparently duplicitous nature, but the willingness of establishment institutions to sign up for the campaign against Islamophobia.

It’s to be expected that CAIR will put a happy face on all things Islamic. As the Geico commercial says, “that’s what they do.” But why the social and political elites continued to lend a hand even after the clock story had unwound is harder to fathom. What they are celebrating is a process by which Americans are made to feel ashamed for raising security concerns.

That was an understandable reaction fourteen years ago. [Mark Steyn](http://www.steynonline.com/7244/the-clock-ticks-on) reminds us of an incident that occurred at the check-in-desk of U.S. Airways in Portland on the morning of September 11, 2001. Ticket agent Michael Tuohey relates [the encounter](http://www.oprah.com/oprahshow/Amazing-But-True):

I got an instant chill when I looked at [Mohammed Atta]. I got this grip in my stomach and then, of course, I gave myself a political correct slap … I thought, “My God, Michael, these are just a couple of Arab businessmen.”

9/11 woke up America, but since then many Americans have fallen into a semi-comatose state, knocked slap-happy by repeated politically correct blows to the head. Thanks in part to the PR work of groups like CAIR and their boosters in media and government, a sizable number of citizens have gone back to sleep. The digital clock that Ahmed Mohamed brought to school was fully intact except for its casing. The clock-and-bull story manufactured by the social elites is also carefully put together—except for one detail. Someone removed the alarm.

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