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In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful
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POLL: MAJORITY OF U.S. MUSLIMS SUFFERED POST-9/11 BIAS

More than three-in-four also experienced acts of kindness

(WASHINGTON, DC - 8/21/02) - According to results of a poll released today by a national Islamic civil rights and advocacy group, a majority (57 percent) of American Muslims say they experienced bias or discrimination since the 9/11 terrorist attacks and almost all respondents (87 percent) said they knew of a fellow Muslim who experienced discrimination.

But that same poll of 945 individuals, conducted by the Washington-based Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) in late July and early August, indicates more than three-in-four American Muslims (79 percent) also experienced kindness or support from friends or colleagues of other faiths. That kindness often took the form of verbal reassurances, support during the anti-Muslim backlash following the attacks and even offers to help guard local mosques.

Surveys were faxed, mailed and e-mailed to Muslim individuals and organizations nationwide. Less than 1 percent (.7 percent) of respondents indicated they were not Muslim.

"The results of this survey show that while we have all gone through a traumatic year in our nation's history, there is hope for the future if Americans who support and practice tolerance challenge the vocal minority who seek to divide our nation," said CAIR Executive Director Nihad Awad.

Other survey results include the following:

- * 48 percent of respondents said their lives changed for the worse in the year following the attacks.
- * Those who said their lives changed for the better (16 percent) often cited a deepened knowledge of Islam made necessary by requests to explain their faith to others.
- * The most frequent forms of bias experienced by the respondents were verbal abuse, religious or ethnic profiling and workplace discrimination.
- * 67 percent of respondents said the media have grown more biased against Islam and Muslims.
- * 45 percent of respondents said Fox News was the media outlet that exhibited the most biased coverage.
- * PBS, the BBC and ABC were named as media outlets worthy of praise for their coverage.
- * 70 percent of respondents were registered to vote or will register before the next election. (Seventy-seven percent of respondents were eligible to vote.)

When asked to name the political party that best represents the interests of the American Muslim community, more respondents named the Democratic Party (16 percent) and Green party (5 percent) than the Republican Party (3 percent). Yet 36 percent of Muslim respondents said they voted for George W. Bush in the last presidential election. (Thirteen percent voted for Ralph Nader and 9 percent voted for Al Gore.)

That seeming anomaly may be explained by the number of respondents (66 percent) who rated the Bush administration's post-9/11 interaction with the American Muslim community as 3 or lower on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 was poor and 10 was excellent. (Eighty-one percent rated CAIR's performance during the past year as 7 or higher.)

Muslims from more than 40 different states (and the District of Columbia) responded to the survey, with the most responses coming from California, Texas, Virginia, New York, Michigan, Maryland, Ohio, Florida, New Jersey, Illinois, and Pennsylvania. (In descending order.)

There are an estimated seven million Muslims in America and some 1.2 billion worldwide. Islam is one of the fastest growing religions in America.