

'HADJI GIRL' MARINE APOLOGIZES TO MUSLIMS

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

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NC Marine: 'I apologize for any feelings that may have been hurt in the Muslim community'

(WASHINGTON, D.C., 6/14/06) - The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) today welcomed an apology by a U.S. Marine who posted a song on the Internet that the group, and Pentagon officials, termed "insensitive" and "inappropriate."

Cpl. Joshua Belile, who lives in North Carolina and recently returned from duty in Iraq, says the "Hadji Girl" video describing an encounter with an Iraqi woman posted on youtube.com in March was just a "joke."

The song's lyrics included: "I grabbed her little sister and put her in front of me. As the bullets began to fly, the blood sprayed from between her eyes, and then I laughed maniacally. . . I blew those little f**kers to eternity. . . They should have known they were f**king with the Marines."

Belile said that he apologizes to anyone who may have been offended by the lyrics. He told the Jacksonville Daily News: "I apologize for any feelings that may have been hurt in the Muslim community. This song was written in good humor and not aimed at any party, foreign or domestic. . . I will never perform this song again, and I will remove all video and text in relation to this that I have control of."

SEE: Humor Attempt Falls Flat (Jacksonville Daily News)

<http://www.jdnews.com/SiteProcessor.cfm?Template=/GlobalTemplates/Details.cfm&StoryID=42520&Section=News>

SEE: Military Condemns Music Video On Killing Iraqis (Reuters)

http://today.reuters.com/news/newsArticle.aspx?type=domesticNews&storyID=2006-06-13T202534Z_01_N13423235_RTRUKOC_0_US-IRAQ-USA-VIDEO.xml

SEE: Hadji Girl Video

<http://www.cair.com/video/marine-hadji-girl.wmv>

(The video's audio is slightly out of synchronization.)

"We welcome Corporal Belile's apology and will leave it to military authorities to determine whether any disciplinary action is warranted," said CAIR Executive Director Nihad Awad. "Our intent was never to target an individual Marine, but instead to address the larger issue of insensitivity to the suffering of Iraqi civilians."

Awad repeated his call for congressional hearings on the behavior of American military personnel in Iraq and in other Muslim nations such as Afghanistan.

CAIR, America's largest Muslim civil liberties group, has 32 offices and chapters nationwide and in Canada. Its mission is to enhance the understanding of Islam, encourage dialogue, protect civil liberties, empower American Muslims, and build coalitions that promote justice and mutual understanding.

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