

**Transcript**  
**Carlson and Hooper Discuss the Pew Poll of Muslim-Americans**  
**June 28, 2007**

**Carlson:** *In any case, the president has more critics than allies which may be why he has gotten no credit for his speech at the dedication—re-dedication of the Islamic Center in Washington, D.C. yesterday. Like him or not, listen to an excerpt of that speech and judge it on its substance. Here it is.*

*(Begin Clip)*

**George W. Bush:** *Men and women of conscience have a duty to speak out and condemn this murderous movement before it finds its path to power. We must help millions of Muslims as they rescue a proud and historic religion from murderers and beheaders who seek to soil the name of Islam. And in this effort, modern Muslim leaders have the most powerful and influential voice.*

*(End Clip)*

**Carlson:** *The president is right. Were moderate Muslim leaders to lead the war on terror, the civilized world would be much farther along than it is in that effort now. So, why haven't they led that fight? Joining me now is the spokesman for the Council on American-Islamic Relations, Ibrahim Hooper. Mr. Hooper, thanks for joining us.*

**Hooper:** *Thanks for having me.*

**Carlson:** *The president, I thought, made a really good point reminding us of all the instances in which the United States has laid down huge amounts of money, and in some cases lives, to help different Muslim populations around the world: in China, Bosnia, Kosovo, even Iran after the earthquake, Pakistan. And yet, we are still despised in the Islamic world. That strikes me as unfair.*

**Hooper:** *Well, I think it's based on our major policy blunders, particularly a failure to help resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the completely unjustified invasion of Iraq. I mean, those are the main causes for hostility towards the United States right now, but a lot of it may just be a result of being the only superpower left in the world and you're kind of the one that people are going to look to to have some kind of balanced policy and if it's not there, they're going to be upset.*

**Carlson:** *Huh, yeah, that's the conventional explanation. Unfortunately it's false, because it can't explain this: the Pugh Center, which does polling around the world, asked Muslim populations around the world, how do you feel about Osama bin Laden? And in the Islamic world, huge and disturbing percentages of the population had confidence in him. In Palestine, 57 percent of people asked said, we trust Osama bin Laden. In Pakistan, 38 percent-*

**Hooper:** *Well again, I think that-*

**Carlson:** *Indonesia, 41 percent.*

**Hooper:** *I don't think that's a reflection of support for the view point of Osama bin Laden, I think that's more a rejection of American interventionism, and you know, just saying that we don't like the way that things are right now and we're going to go with anything that is a rejection of that.*

*As I say, I don't think it's a reflection of support for that viewpoint at all because when you poll people, do you support these specific extremist views? They say no.*

**Carlson:** *But wait, the question was, do you support Osama bin Laden? I mean, I think your answer is a little bit too glib and it ignores the headline here, which is there is a problem in the Islamic world with support for violence, and support for terror ...*

**Hooper:** *No, but I -- what I'm saying is ...*

**Carlson:** *...and support for terror leaders like Osama bin Laden.*

**Hooper:** *If you break down what he actually believes and what al Qaeda, the al Qaeda philosophy is you know, the permission to kill other Muslims, permission to kill civilians, all of these kinds of things. When you ask Muslims about that, they say, "No way, we don't abide by that, that's not part of Islam."*

**Carlson:** *Look, if you went and asked a cross section of Americans, do you support Adolph Hitler, and 40 percent said yes ...*

**Hooper:** *No, but ...*

**Carlson:** *...you wouldn't say, well that's because they're dissatisfied with the policies of the United States government. You would say there's something wrong with these people.*

**Hooper:** *Then how do you -- how do you ...*

**Carlson:** *Anybody who would support a mass murderer has something wrong with them ...*

**Hooper:** *How do you ...*

**Carlson:** *...and my question is, why do Islamic groups such as yours spend so much time criticizing American foreign policy and so little time chastising your own people -- fellow Muslims, for having views that are sick?*

**Hooper:** *Well, I guess you should have read our news release of yesterday that congratulated President Bush for announcing that he'll name an envoy to the organization of the Islamic Conference. So, we -- when the when congratulation is in order, we do that, when criticism is in order, we criticize. So, we try and base it on whatever is put in front of us.*

**Carlson:** *So you don't think that there is a widespread attitude problem, not just in the Middle East, but in Indonesia, in Nigeria, in countries where there are no Arabs, but a lot of Muslims, there is not an attitude problem, an acceptance of violence to achieve political ends that you don't see in other parts of the world. You don't recognize that?*

**Hooper:** *No, there's a widespread rejection of American foreign policy, but there is not a widespread acceptance of killing of civilians or other forms of religious extremism, which time after time polls show Muslims don't accept, whether it's in the United States or worldwide.*

*And how do you explain polls that when there are polls taken of the general American public, asking is it OK that civilians are killed to achieve a military objective? A sizable portion says, "Yeah, that's OK." You're always going to get that kind of results.*

**Carlson:** OK, when -- let me put it this way. It makes me uncomfortable and frankly nervous that you don't recognize the elephant in this room. When you ask Nigerians, how do you feel about Osama bin Laden, and 52 percent of Nigerians, again, not Arabs, not tied in any way to our Iraq policy, our Palestine policy, 52 percent say we support Osama bin Laden. Bells go off, lights flash, that's a problem.

**Hooper:** What I'm saying is that any level of support for the extremist philosophy of al Qaeda is disturbing, but I don't think that's what we're talking about here. When they ask questions like that, people are saying, I reject the foreign policy as it applies to the Muslim world. But, again, when you ask them specifically, do they support this or that extremist view? They say, "No, we don't."

**Carlson:** OK, it's a pretty round-about way of expressing dissatisfaction with American foreign policy in my view. Ibrahim Hooper, thanks for joining us.

**Hooper:** Thanks for having me.