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(letter to the editor)

CAIR can help Americans to look in mirror

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The reaction of passengers and of US Airways to the Muslim imams' behavior at the Minneapolis airport, and Edward Jenkins' letter of last Saturday in which he condemned the Council on American-Islamic Relations for defending the imams, may be seen as expected, given the daily conditioning Americans have undergone since 9/11.

This year, the Department of Homeland Security initiated its "See Something, Say Something" program, endorsed by The Dispatch in an editorial on Sept. 7. Readers were advised to be "ever watchful" for suspicious activities and to report them, even though it may get innocent people questioned, because "that's the price of living in a nation whose sense of domestic tranquility was shattered five years ago."

Neither Asma Mobin-Uddin, president of CAIR Ohio, nor CAIR the organization deserve Jenkins' insults. Jenkins lacks knowledge of the outstanding character of these people and the important job they are doing in defending Muslims against the prejudice that has been so ingrained by some media and by our own government, and in encouraging the Muslim population, especially recent immigrants, to see themselves accepted as normal and loyal members of American society.

Countering the hysteria by which President Bush succeeds in selling his "war on terror," which has resulted in the creation of millions of America haters, is a new book by OSU professor John Mueller, who recently was well received for an address at a Columbus Council on World Affairs luncheon.

The book is entitled *Overblown: How Politicians and the Terrorism Industry Inflate National Security Threats, and Why We Believe Them*. I wrote Mueller to commend him, saying that he had made clear the result of failing to follow the common-sense advice of those such as columnist Gwynne Dyer, who warned after 9/11 that overreaction is the objective of terrorists. Iraq is one of the results of this failure; inappropriate (and disabling) fear of differences in the American populace is another.

CAIR is good medicine for this illness that we have, as is Mueller's book, which offers a basic perspective for our nation to see itself in the mirror.

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