

Muslim group asks IRS to look at Obsession DVDs: "Anti-Muslim" film distributed as newspaper insert

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The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) has urged the IRS to investigate the distribution of more than 20 million "anti-Muslim" DVDs to see if the distributor, the Clarion Fund, has violated its tax-exempt status.

The producers of the film, *Obsession: Radical Islam's War Against the West*, say it will "change the way you look at the world." It was delivered to homes as a newspaper insert.

"Independent observers have suggested that the distribution of the DVD was an obvious attempt by the Clarion Fund to participate in campaign activities and intervene in the 2008 presidential election," CAIR said.

The film was distributed after the Labor Day start of the general election season, and 95 percent of the papers that carried the DVD were in swing states. CAIR has asked the IRS to strip the Clarion Fund of its tax-exempt status if it finds evidence of wrongdoing.

"A nonprofit group's tax-exempt status should not be misused to promote political candidates or to influence the outcome of an election," said Nihad Awad, CAIR executive director.

An investigative report from the *St. Petersburg Times* tied the Clarion Fund to the Israel-based group Aish HaTorah. The report claimed that the Clarion Fund's address was the same as that of the fund-raising arm of Aish HaTorah. The group that produced the film, HonestReporting, had the same address on its 2006 tax return.

Aish HaTorah posted a link to the controversial film on its Web site. -*Religion News Service*