

ROUGH DRAFT: *THE SEIGE*

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INTRODUCTION

When you see someone of Arab descent, do you think terrorist?

Many pro-Arab and pro-Muslim groups think that a vast majority of the public feels this way about Arabs and Muslims.

They believe this is due to the influence by films such as *The Siege*, directed by Edward Zwick, where Arabs and Muslims are cast as terrorists who hate the United States.

(Thesis) Although many Arab and Muslim groups say that *The Siege* was stereotypical and racist toward Arabs and Muslims, I found the film to be vacant of these stereotypes and racist tones.

(Argument 1) First of all I believe the film *The Siege* not to be stereotypical or racist toward Arabs and Muslims because the film separates these groups as a whole from the terrorist attacks.

(Argument 2) Second, I find that Zwick is not attacking Arab and Muslim groups, but instead he attacks the cruel and evil tactics used by the United States government against these minorities, some of whom were American citizens.

(Argument 3) Finally, after reading statements about the films production, I believe Zwick has no intention of being stereotypical toward these groups, but instead tries to show what problems can arise when a society has such discriminating views about a certain minority.

BACKGROUND

The film *The Siege* shows what would happen if the United States was faced with a multitude of terrorist bombings within its own borders.

In the movie, Denzel Washington plays Anthony Hubbard, who is head of the counter-terrorism branch of the F.B.I.

His job, along with the help of Frank Haddad, played by Tony Shalhoub, and other agents, is to discover who is behind these bombings in New York City.

Also trying to find out who is behind the bombings is a woman who works for the C.I.A. named Sharon, played by Annette Benning.

Sharon is interested in the case because she along with other members of the C.I.A. trained Arab and Muslims how to make these types of bombs.

The reason for teaching them how to build these bombs was so they would use them against the United States' enemies in the Middle East.

It is now years later, and these same people that they trained are using these tactics against the United States.

The tricky part for the F.B.I. is that the terrorists work in cells that are not affected by the outcomes of the others, unlike the usual terrorist cells.

As a result, when they killed the members of one of the cells, it did not stop the rest of the cells from carrying out their attacks.

To add a twist to the story, Sharon's Palestinian informant who supplies her with information on the movements of terrorists groups is actually the last terrorist cell.

In an attempt to stop these terrorists the U.S. government institutes Marshall Law on New York City.

This basically means that the U.S. Army, which is led by General William Devereaux (Bruce Willis), is allowed to use force and any other means necessary to weed out the terrorists.

Unfortunately, the use of Marshall Law was found unconstitutional when former Abraham Lincoln invoked the use of this procedure during his presidency.

Even with all these measures put out to stop the terrorists, they will stop at nothing, because they believe that they are doing the work of Allah.

BACKGROUND

The problem that has arisen after the movie was made is that pro-Arab and pro-Muslim groups have found the movie to be stereotypical and racist.

They feel that this movie is like many others in that it only casts Arabs as American-hating terrorists.

They believe that if these trends continue, it will lead Americans to be stereotypical and racist toward their Arab ethnicity.

Also pro-Muslim groups view this movie as anti-Muslim because during the bombing scenes, they show the Islamic terrorists practicing their religious rituals before an attack.

These rituals include the ceremonial washing of the body and wearing Egyptian silk that is worn for an individual's burial ceremony.

Members from both the pro-Arab and pro-Muslim groups suggested that Zwick change the film and make the whole Arab and Muslim connection to the bombings a mysterious cover-up by the government.

Other members have asked for apologies from Zwick, and others have asked for the sequences of the religious rituals to be cut out of the movie.