

2043 South Bend Ave.
PMB 191
South Bend, Indiana 46637
March 15, 2007

The Honorable Amy J. St. Eve
United States District Judge
Northern District of Illinois
219 South Dearborn Street
Chicago, Illinois 60604

Dear Judge St. Eve:

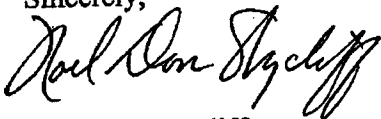
I write on behalf of Muhammad Salah, who shortly will come before you for sentencing. I cannot claim to know Mr. Salah well. However, I can tell you that what I do know of him suggests to me that he is not a danger to the community—on the contrary, he is an asset—and that if ever there was an ideal candidate for leniency, for probation, Mr. Salah is that candidate.

I got to know Mr. Salah and his family initially as a result of my writing about him, first as editorial page editor of the Chicago Tribune and later as public editor. Maybe I am naïve, but I was appalled to see my government going after a citizen in defiance of all the due-process principles I was taught decades ago in civics classes: trial and conviction before punishment; presumption of innocence; the right to confront one's accusers, and so forth.

What has impressed me most has been the way Mr. Salah and his wife and their children have reacted to all this. Maybe they didn't have a choice—but one always has a choice, right? They could have been surly and hateful and embittered. But all that I have ever seen is a stoic kind of acceptance that these trials are God's will and that their purpose in life is to defend against them in such a way that they and their local religious community and the broader community of their fellow citizens of all religions will be ennobled by their experience.

You have more than enough to read, so I won't impose further upon you. But please, be lenient with this good man and his family.

Sincerely,



Noel Don Wycliff

000009