

ISLAMIC CENTER OF REDDING

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To Whom It May Concern:

President Dwight D. Eisenhower once said the Islamic world's *"traditions of learning and rich culture have for centuries contributed to the building of civilization"*. He affirmed America's founding principle of religious freedom and stated that, *"America would fight with her whole strength for your right to have your own church and for you to worship according to your own conscience. For without that concept America would be something else than what we are."*

Siddique Abdullah Hasan, a Muslim imam, is a central figure in Gary Anderson's play, *Lucasville: The Untold Story of a Prison Uprising*. Imam Hasan is currently on death row because he and his fellow Muslims religious freedoms were being taken away and he therefore took part in a rebellion to correct these wrongs for his people.

As an imam, I found it very interesting that a central character in the play was an imam. During the year prior to my seeing the finished play, Mr. Anderson invited me to participate in workshops and focus groups about his play. He wanted my input to insure that our Muslim faith and the portrayal of the Muslim leader, Imam Hasan, would be represented accurately in the play. Having been able to act the part of Imam Hasan in Mr. Anderson's workshop, I was greatly looking forward to seeing the final product as an audience member. I was not disappointed and it was worth the wait.

I noticed with some pleasure that many people in the college audience were listening and studying the Muslim character as he spoke of the Muslim faith and religious philosophy. I watched with great fascination as the audience leaned forward to observe the prayer ritual. For many, I am sure this was the bridging of a cultural gap.

I was satisfied that the Muslim religious themes, and the quotes from the Holy Qur'an, were handled with all appropriate respect and that the prayer ritual was presented with great dignity.

I would recommend this play highly to those interested in seeking justice against wrongful convictions and as a way to partner in education of other faiths.

Sincerely,

Imam Abu Bakr H. Salahuddin
Islamic Center of Redding