

## An extraordinary moment is spoiled (Herald News)

Letters to the Editor

By  
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An extraordinary moment is spoiled

Imam Mohammad Qatanani has engendered a great deal of support from an extraordinarily diverse group of people. There are also those who, regardless of facts or merits of his case, will stand against him. But one thing that all can surely agree on is that, both inside and outside the Newark courtroom, we have witnessed events that are historic.

It is only in this wonderful nation founded on soaring principles where a courageous rabbi would provide powerful testimony for an equally courageous imam; where an Episcopalian priest would testify that his daughter was so inspired by the peaceful nature of the imam that she decided to major in Arab studies.

We witnessed two county sheriffs testify that they feel better as people when they are in the imam's company. Regardless of the outcome, many will surely tell these inspiring stories to future generations.

The most extraordinary moment of the trial came when Rabbi David Senter gave his inspirational testimony in support of his friend.

It was a moment where you saw that people from different faiths and backgrounds can indeed live in peace and harmony; a moment where your spirits are lifted with a sense of hope for all of humanity; a moment to stand and cheer and be proud of the nation that we live in.

Unfortunately, the moment was fleeting. Rather than understanding the importance of the moment and allowing it to resonate, the U.S. prosecutor immediately resorted to tactics that have been used for generations to promote hatred against those deemed to be "others";

The tactic of taking religious words and passages out of context has been used for generations to promote anti-Semitism and most recently by right-wing fanatics bent on defaming Islam.

A moment of pride was quickly extinguished by a representative of our own government who engaged in tactics contrary to the moral values of our nation.

Salaheddin Mustafa, Clifton

Veterans have already given all

Deputy Mayor Robert Hare may be right about giving money for the Memorial Day parade in Passaic. But he's way out of line when he said that veterans should do something themselves.

They did something and they are still doing it.

Some lost their arms, some their legs. Some both.

And they are still doing it today, fighting to keep people free. It's hard for veterans groups to make ends meet. I belong to the Wallington VFW, which was once the second largest in the state. Now we're closed like many other posts.

But our town never lets us down. So instead of complaining, give thanks this Memorial Day that we have these brave men that are willing to give their lives and limbs for freedom.

God Bless America.

Peter DeVries, Wallington