

SYMPOSIUM IN HONOR OF PROFESSOR SAID ELGHOBASHI  
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Statement by:

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For more than a year now, I had been enthusiastically looking forward to this scientific conference celebrating the career of Professor Said Elghobashi. Alas, that has not come to pass: an unexpected situation has made it impossible for me to travel on the days of this conference. I regret it greatly and can do no more than assure you that my reasons are not frivolous. I am grateful to the organizers for agreeing to read these remarks.

I can't exactly remember how I came to know Said but DFD meetings have been our intermittent link over the years. During the years I have known him, two words summarize his essence: personal dignity. I have never known a moment in our interactions when he was otherwise. We were both born in countries with very long histories but chose to make the United States our home. As immigrants, we both shared the view that success is essential to gain respect, and that, as part of that same ethos, we owe something to our communities. For instance, we both hold the view that mentoring of younger colleagues is critical for the continuity with the present and also the innovation that propels us into the excitement of the future. We also share the view that personal integrity underlies everything of importance; indeed, there is nothing without it. In recent years, we have both shared the sense that Abraham Lincoln's "house divided against itself" has reared its ugly head again in this country, damaging the long-term prosperity of its citizens and diminishing the possible contributions that it could make to the well-being of the world at large; that so many values we held dear for long are in danger of being eroded. Even as an optimist, I know that we have to wade through difficult times. I suspect that Said is inclined to think similarly.

It is enough of a background for saying that Said's conduct of himself has been a judicious mix of idealism and pragmatism. When I think of his scientific work, it is clear to me that it too reflects those same personal values. The professed goal of his research has been to use DNS of turbulent flows to solve fundamental problems---but it has not strayed away from problems of practical importance, such as the interaction of the flow and the particle, leading to a better understanding of a very important topic, namely combustion. You all know his work, more of which will be mentioned at the scientific sessions of the conference. So it eliminates the need for me to dwell on it here.

I take this opportunity to wish Said and his family the very best in the future. To Said himself, congratulations on a terrific career in UCI and best wishes for a rewarding retirement. From observation though not from personal experience, I hold the view that some of the best work has sometimes come in one's retirement. I think it is so because retirement offers the possibility of doing something good without the investment of personal ego.

Greetings to all the friends assembled in honor of Said, and goodbye.