

Mr. Robert S. Mueller, III
Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20535

October 4, 2011

Dear Director Mueller:

The undersigned civil and human rights groups write to express our deep concern regarding recently-publicized FBI training materials that manifest anti-Muslim bias and factual inaccuracies.¹ We appreciate that the FBI now recognizes the need for a comprehensive review of its counterterrorism training materials referencing religion and culture.² We especially applaud

³ This statement, however, conflicts with assertions contained in previously published FBI intelligence products. We urge you to expand your comprehensive review of training materials to include intelligence products that contain similarly erroneous and biased information, to withdraw them where necessary, and to issue new guidance clearly stating that religious practices and political advocacy are protected activities under the First Amendment, and are not indicators of future violence.

restricted from public distribution until it was leaked on the internet sometime later, identifies a four-

⁴ According to this

- Increased isolation from former life
- Wearing traditional Muslim attire
- Growing facial hair
- Frequent attendance at a mosque or a prayer group
- Travel to a Muslim country
- Increased activity in a pro-Muslim social group or political cause
- Proselytizing.⁵

Such innocuous behaviors may indicate strong religious beliefs, and each is entirely protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution. Millions of Muslim-Americans may engage in some or

- Giving up cigarettes, drinking, gambling and urban hip-hop gangster clothes
- Wearing traditional Islamic clothing, growing a beard
- Becoming involved in social activism and community issues.⁸

The NYPD report has been referenced in testimony and reports by Members of Congress and policy think-tanks arguing for increased scrutiny of Muslim-Americans and the Muslim community.⁹ Indeed, the fundamentally flawed FBI and NYPD reports drive much of law

mosques and racial and ethnic mapping programs, to similar programs initiated by the Los Angeles Police Department and the NYPD, and anti-Muslim training programs offered to law enforcement around the country by private contractors.

The FBI report is wholly inconsistent with the 2011 White House strategy to prevent extremist

¹⁰ Identifying common religious practices as evidence of dangerousness only drives a wedge between the government and religious communities, and undermines effective law enforcement.

recognition that training materials that mischaracterize Muslims and Islam as a threat to security are inappropriate. But FBI intelligence products that make the same erroneous claims must also be identified and withdrawn. We urge you to publicly

to Jihad,

Defending Dissent Foundation
Rutherford Institute
Asian Law Caucus
Muslim Consultative Network
Human Rights First
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)
Islamic Society of North America
Muslim American Society
Muslim Progressive Traditionalist Alliance
Women in Islam, Inc.
Jews Against Islamophobia
Women Against Islamophobia and Racism (WAIR)
Association of Muslim American Lawyers (AMAL)
Arab American Institute
Creating Law Enforcement Accountability and Responsibility Program (C.L.E.A.R.) at CUNY
School of Law
Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)
Council on American-Islamic Relations New York Chapter