



DEFENDING DISSENT

foundation

DDF to FBI: Stop vilifying Islam and Muslim-Americans

**Founded in 1960 as the National
Committee to Abolish HUAC**

For Immediate Release

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Washington, DC | www.defendingdissent.org | September 16, 2011 –The Defending Dissent Foundation called on the FBI to immediately review its counterterrorism training curriculum to ensure that all materials and trainers accurately identify terrorist threats rather than relying on inaccurate, biased and counter-productive materials that vilify Islam and Muslim-Americans.

The Defending Dissent Foundation (DDF), a national civil liberties organization founded in 1960, made the call in response to an expose on Wired.com of FBI training materials that teach agents that "[main stream \(sic\) American Muslims are likely to be terrorist sympathizers.](#)" DDF advocates a counterterrorism policy based on proven indicators of criminal activity rather than religion or ideology. "The training material, aside from being offensive and counterproductive, is designed to lead FBI agents down a road which violates the Constitutional rights of Americans who practice Islam," said Sue Udry, DDF's executive director, "in fact, the FBI has consistently and inappropriately targeted Muslim Americans for surveillance, including infiltrating houses of worship."

The problem of biased training material is not limited to the FBI, it is a national disgrace. Senators Collins and Lieberman wrote to John Brennan, Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism and Deputy National Security Advisor on September 12, noting "[cases of trainers spewing inaccurate or even bigoted information to state and local law enforcement personnel, stigmatizing Muslim-Americans generally, and in effect, lending support or the false narrative that we are "at war" with Islam.](#)"

As the lead domestic counterterrorism agency, the FBI has a great responsibility to provide accurate, credible and effective training to its agents. "Where do they get these trainers?" asked Udry, " Director Mueller has a budget of over \$8 billion, with over 13,000 agents and 3,000 intelligence analysts. With those resources he can't find trainers who can actually identify the enemy without smearing the religious beliefs of millions of Americans?"

"The FBI must immediately review its training curriculum and purge it of unqualified trainers and materials, and develop a meaningful and rigorous vetting process to ensure unbiased and accurate training that does not assail core Constitutional rights," said Udry.

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*In Memory of
Frank Wilkinson,
Director Emeritus &
Chauncey Alexander,
President Emeritus,
and all who went before*

