



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

July 18, 2012

The Honorable Michele Bachmann
103 Cannon House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Bachmann:

Thank you for your prompt response to my letter of July 12, 2012. As you know, I asked you to provide information to support your claim that the Muslim Brotherhood has effected “deep penetration”¹ into the U.S. government.

In your initial letters to the Inspectors General of several federal agencies,² you wrote the following:

“...information has recently come to light that raises serious questions about the impact on the federal government’s national security policies and activities that appear to be a result of influence operations conducted by individuals and organizations associated with the Muslim Brotherhood.”

A careful review of your 16-page response reveals that you fail to provide any credible evidence for your claims, engage in guilt by association, and continue to rely on discredited sources.

Allow me to be more specific.

My July 12, 2012 letter asked for credible, substantial evidence to support the allegations in your letters to the Inspectors General. You wrote that information has “recently come to light” regarding alleged Muslim Brotherhood influence within the U.S. government – information I urged you to share with the proper authorities given the seriousness of your accusations.

¹ <http://www.sctimes.com/article/20120710/NEWS01/307100003/Bachmann-warns-Muslim-Brotherhood>

² The Departments of State, Justice and Homeland Security, and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

However, your response simply rehashes claims that have existed for years on anti-Muslim Web sites and contains no reliable information that the Muslim Brotherhood has infiltrated the U.S. government.

Guilt by Association

Your initial letter to the State Department references the Muslim Brotherhood and states that “the apparent involvement of those with such ties raises serious security concerns.” You cite Huma Abedin, Deputy Chief of Staff to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, as an example of those “with such ties” to the Muslim Brotherhood. This is a striking claim to make about a top adviser in the State Department.

In discussing this claim, you provide absolutely no information about Ms. Abedin herself. Instead, you write that “her late father, her mother and her brother [are] connected to Muslim Brotherhood operatives and/or organizations.” Your letters fail to explain your claims regarding Ms. Abedin’s mother and brother.

With regard to Ms. Abedin’s father, you point to a single passage from an article claiming that he founded “the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, an institution that had the quiet but active support of the then General Secretary of the Muslim World League, Dr. Umar Abdallah Nasif.” You then write, “As the Pew Forum notes, the Muslim World League has a longtime history of being closely aligned and partnering with the Muslim Brotherhood.” Put together, the primary source of evidence for your serious claims against Ms. Abedin is that her deceased father founded an institute that received unspecified “support” from a man who at one point led an organization that was aligned with the Muslim Brotherhood. In making this connection, which is five times removed from Ms. Abedin, you engage in guilt by association.

Further, in questioning how Ms. Abedin received a high-level security clearance, you imply that our top intelligence agencies did not adequately investigate Ms. Abedin. Accusing the men and women of the U.S. intelligence community of failing to do their jobs requires far more substantial information than what you have provided to date.

Discredited Sources

Your response does not address concerns about the primary source of your information, MuslimBrotherhoodinAmerica.com, which you reference prominently in your letters. The founder of that Web site, Frank Gaffney, has a long history of making unsubstantiated anti-Muslim allegations. Mr. Gaffney even accused General David Petraeus of “submission” to Islamic law,³ New Jersey Governor Chris Christie of “treason” for appointing a Muslim judge,⁴ and anti-tax advocate Grover Norquist of “enabling and empowering Muslim Brotherhood influence operations.”⁵ Your response fails to explain how your claims are any more credible than Mr. Gaffney’s accusations against these individuals.

³ <http://thinkprogress.org/politics/2011/04/28/161792/frank-gaffney-david-petraeus-sharia/>

⁴ <http://www.rightwingwatch.org/content/gaffney-chris-christie-may-be-guilty-misprison-treason>

⁵ <http://thinkprogress.org/politics/2011/04/12/157627/frank-gaffney-grover-norquist-feud/>

The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), a premier civil rights organization tracking hate groups, describes Mr. Gaffney as “the anti-Muslim movement’s most paranoid propagandist.”⁶ According to SPLC, Mr. Gaffney has called Islam “communism with a God.” SPLC also quotes Mr. Gaffney as saying that the Muslim Brotherhood is practicing “civilization jihad” through “influence operations” – phrases that appear verbatim in your letter.

Your allegations are particularly disconcerting given your position on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. You have previously criticized the Obama Administration by stating that “leaks are unacceptable in all circumstances.”⁷ If the individuals and organizations named in your letters pose such grave threats to U.S. national security, why would you risk undermining your efforts by discussing your letters with media outlets⁸ and posting them on your Web site?⁹

Again, thank you for your timely response. If you find any credible information regarding Muslim Brotherhood “deep penetration” into the U.S. government, I urge you to share it with the proper authorities immediately.

As the revered journalist Edward R. Murrow once said, “We must remember always that accusation is not proof, and that conviction depends upon evidence and due process of law.”

Sincerely,



Keith Ellison
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable I. Charles McCullough III, Inspector General, Office of the Director of National Intelligence

Ambassador Harold W. Geisel, Deputy Inspector General, U.S. Department of State

The Honorable Michael E. Horowitz, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Justice

Mr. Charles K. Edwards, Acting Inspector General, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Ms. Lynne M. Halbrooks, Acting Inspector General, U.S. Department of Defense

⁶ <http://www.splcenter.org/get-informed/intelligence-files/profiles/frank-gaffney-jr>

⁷ <http://bachmann.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=300669>

⁸ Sandy Rios in the Morning. June 20, 2012. <http://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/sandy-rios-in-morning-on-afr/id400516424?i=117134919>

⁹ <http://bachmann.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=299447>