



FBI Chief: Muslim Brotherhood Supports Terrorism

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Elements of the [Muslim Brotherhood](#), the Islamist group whose ideology has inspired terrorists such as Osama bin Laden, are in the United States and have supported terrorism here and overseas, [FBI Director Robert Mueller](#) told a House committee Thursday.

Mueller joined seven other Obama administration intelligence and law enforcement officials at a hearing of the [House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence](#).

They spoke of the Brotherhood's U.S. ties as word spread in Egypt that President Hosni Mubarak was prepared to resign. Mubarak has repeatedly said his administration, in place since 1981, is the one thing keeping an Islamic state led by the Brotherhood from taking over Egypt.

While Mueller, [Director of National Intelligence James Clapper](#) and other witnesses spelled out a variety of threats, they and some committee members highlighted the Brotherhood's ties in the United States. It was a significant departure from earlier hearings, which focused on groups more directly involved with terrorism.

"I'm concerned that the Muslim Brotherhood is using peaceful protests in Egypt for a power grab, and our government doesn't seem to grasp their threat," [Rep. Sue Myrick, R-N.C.](#), told the committee and the witnesses. "The Muslim Brotherhood isn't a danger because they are terrorists, but because they push an extremist ideology that causes others to commit acts of terrorism."

Clapper agreed that "there are entities associated with the Muslim Brotherhood here in the United States." Mueller told Myrick that he would provide the committee with greater detail on the Brotherhood's activities in closed session.

However, Clapper [also characterized](#) the Brotherhood in Egypt as a mostly secular umbrella organization. "The term 'Muslim Brotherhood'...is an umbrella term for a variety of movements,



in the case of Egypt, a very heterogeneous group, largely secular, which has eschewed violence and has decried Al Qaeda as a perversion of Islam," Clapper said in response to a question from Myrick. "They have pursued social ends, a betterment of the political order in Egypt, et cetera.....In other countries, there are also chapters or franchises of the Muslim Brotherhood, but there is no overarching agenda, particularly in pursuit of violence, at least internationally."

Clapper's "secular" reference is odd, given the [Brotherhood's motto](#) is "Allah is our objective. The Prophet is our leader. The Qur'an is our law. Jihad is our way. Dying in the way of Allah is our highest hope."

In [a statement](#) issued after the hearing, Myrick expressed astonishment at Clapper's assessment. "'Either the Administration doesn't know who the Muslim Brotherhood is, which shows incompetence," she said, "or they are apologizing for them, which is inappropriate for those in charge of protecting the American people. Let's be clear – the Muslim Brotherhood is NOT secular."

During the hearing, Myrick said she was also concerned about the Brotherhood's attitudes toward government. "The danger of the Muslim Brotherhood is not just encouraging terrorism through their ideology, but also trying to take over government, so everyone has to succumb and live under their ideology," Myrick said.

The scope of the Brotherhood's vision for the United States was spelled out in a 1991 document called the ["Explanatory Memorandum."](#) In that memo, which federal prosecutors introduced as evidence in two trials of the now-defunct [Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development](#), Brotherhood leaders said they planned to create an Islamic state in the United States.

In that document, the Brotherhood's stated goal was "a kind of grand Jihad in eliminating and destroying the Western civilization from within and "sabotaging" its miserable house by their hands and the hands of the believers so that it is eliminated and God's religion is made victorious over all other religions."

The memo also listed [29 organizations working](#) in the United States to further the Brotherhood's goals. They include the [Islamic Society of North America](#) (ISNA), the [Muslim Students Association](#) (MSA), the [North American Islamic Trust](#) (NAIT) and the [Islamic Association of Palestine](#) (IAP). The IAP and the Holy Land Foundation shared many members and directors, including those who founded the [Council on American-Islamic Relations](#) (CAIR).

Clapper told the committee the U.S. government has no relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood in America. However, In response to a question from Rep. Peter King, R-N.Y., Mueller said "we do not have a relationship with CAIR," although some FBI officials have attended the same events as CAIR representatives. The [FBI suspended formal ties](#) with CAIR in 2009, citing CAIR's ties with Hamas, the Middle Eastern terrorist group that controls the government in Gaza, and the [ties of some CAIR leaders](#) with Hamas front groups.

Much of the evidence tying CAIR to [Hamas](#), another offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, was presented during the two trials of the Holy Land Foundation. [Five HLF officials were convicted](#) in 2008 of illegally sending millions of dollars to Hamas.

Much of the hearing testimony focused on the threat still posed by al-Qaida, the Islamist terrorist group responsible for the 9/11 attacks. [Anwar al-Awlaki](#), the U.S.-born cleric who now leads al-Qaida unit based in Yemen, al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), has become perhaps the greatest threat, [Clapper said](#).

While AQAP has primarily focused on attacks in Yemen and Saudi Arabia, Clapper said, "it is increasingly devoted to directing and inspiring attacks on the U.S. Homeland and other targets in the West, as well as Western interests in Yemen."

Other witnesses were CIA Director Leon Panetta, Michael Leiter, director of the National Counterterrorism Center; Lt. Gen. Ronald Burgess, director of the Defense Intelligence Agency; Caryn A. Wagner, under secretary for intelligence and analysis, Department of Homeland Security; Thomas A. Ferguson, principal deputy under secretary of Defense for intelligence; and Philip S. Goldberg, assistant secretary of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research.