

‘Outrageous!’: Are FBI Agents Spying Inside American Churches?

House Judiciary Chairman Jim Jordan (R-OH) has taken on the task of subpoenaing FBI Director Christopher Wray over the targeting of Christian churches in America.

Jordan and other congressional Republicans are critical of how the FBI is handling domestic terrorism threats, accusing them of targeting groups based on faith practices.

Newsweek reported that the criticism stemmed from the “agency’s handling of a domestic extremism analysis that proposed developing sources among church leaders to look for signs of radicalization among Catholic parishioners.”

The probe initiated by Jordan claims that Wray’s FBI misused the agency’s resources for domestic violent extremism for “political purposes.

“This shocking information reinforces our need for all responsive documents, and the Committee is issuing a subpoena to you to compel your full cooperation,” Jordan wrote in his letter to Wray.

“Americans attend church to worship and congregate for their spiritual and personal betterment,” Jordan added. “They must be free to exercise their fundamental First Amendment rights without worrying that the FBI may have planted so-called ‘tripwire’ sources or other informants in their houses of worship.”

This stemmed from the internal memo that was leaked in February by former FBI Special Agent and federal whistleblower Kyle Seraphin.

The document titled "Interest of Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremists in Radical-Traditionalist Catholic Ideology Almost Certainly Presents New Mitigation Opportunities" shows that the FBI was looking to plant themselves deeper into church communities, specifically those that "prefer Latin Mass" and "hold to conservative social teachings," according to Yahoo! News.

Within the memo's pages, the FBI office in Richmond, Virginia, addresses Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremists (RMVE) and their interests in "Radical-Traditionalist Catholics" or RTCs.

Virginia Democrat Sen. Tim Kaine came to the defense of the FBI, justifying the infiltration of religious organizations because Muslims had been targeted in the past and this was all just a big miscommunication.

"I think the key is communication," said Kaine to ABC13. "If the FBI has a concern like that, then go to the church leaders and say 'Hey look, we have a concern and we don't want your members to get unwittingly caught up in something.'

"We've done the same thing for years working in tandem with mosques because there have been groups that have tried to target or radicalize, especially young people," the senator added.

The FBI released a statement to Newsweek clarifying their position on the matter saying that the agency "remains fully committed to cooperating with Congress's oversight requests consistent with its constitutional and statutory responsibilities."

The House Judiciary Committee recently released a statement exposing another document entitled "Opportunities" written by the FBI, stating:

"In addition to [redaction], engage in outreach to the

leadership of other [Society of Saint Pius X] chapels in the FBI Richmond [area of responsibility] to sensitize these congregations to the warning signs of radicalization and to enlist their assistance to serve as suspicious activity tripwires.”

How did the FBI conclude that Catholic churches, specifically ones that perform traditional Latin Mass, are breeding grounds for White Supremacists?

They used data compiled by the Southern Poverty Law Center of Montgomery, Alabama.

“The FBI purported to categorize Catholic Americans based on theological distinctions and relied on the Southern Poverty Law Center to suggest that certain kinds of Catholic Americans may be domestic terrorists,” Jordan said.

While Christians should not fear government intrusion, they need to be aware of it. Countries like China and the USSR infiltrated churches early on in their transition to a communist government. With such practices come unlawful imprisonment and accusations, which Americans, especially pro-life Americans, are experiencing today.

A knee-jerk reaction would be anger at this revelation, and rightfully so. But Christians have a much stronger weapon at their disposal that the enemy has sought to minimize for years: corporate prayer.

These types of actions are taking place in a society that has rejected and turned away from God and the spiritual protection that He offers. It has opened its heart to demonic spiritual forces, and authoritarian governments always target the church first, because the devil knows that it must remove the influence of the church from society for his plan to succeed.

There is hope, however, because Satan is not capable of erasing the light of Jesus Christ from the earth. A remnant of

the faithful always remains, even if the American government becomes as authoritarian as the communist governments it once stood against.

Pray for strength to endure and persevere in the face of deception, persecution and manipulation. The question is not if persecution will come to America, but who will stand up against it and continue to proclaim the name of Jesus to a world that needs to hear it? {eo}

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James Lasher is Staff Writer for *Charisma Media*.