

Article Details

» Letter to General Mattis from Nihad Awad

 RSS  Email  Print

September 22, 2010

Letter to General Mattis from Nihad Awad

Posted 9/8/2010 3:13:00 PM

September 8, 2010

General James N. Mattis
Commander
U.S. Central Command
7115 South Boundary Boulevard
MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, 33621

Via Fax: 813-827-3531, E-Mail: christopher.cigna@centcom.mil

Dear General Mattis,

I hope this letter reaches you in the best of health and spirits.

You are no doubt aware of the plan by a Florida church to burn copies of the Quran, Islam's holy text, on the upcoming anniversary of the 9/11 terror attacks. Pastor Terry Jones of the Dove World Outreach Center in Gainesville, Fla., says he will burn copies of the Quran to demonstrate that "Islam is of the devil."

This intentionally provocative plan has already gained international attention, resulting in protests from India to Indonesia and Afghanistan.

Your colleague, Gen. David Petraeus has warned that the plan to burn copies of the Quran could provoke violence against U.S. military personnel and citizens overseas. He said, "It could endanger troops and it could endanger the overall effort in Afghanistan."

Other faith communities have spoken out against this event. The National Association of Evangelicals asked the church to call off the burnings, warning that it could exacerbate tensions worldwide between Muslims and Christians. Richard Land, director of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission called the planned burnings "appalling, disgusting, and brainless."

Condemnations have also come from local and national public officials, including Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Attorney General Eric Holder, and from groups such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

I believe this attempt to desecrate copies of the Quran will harm our nation's image throughout the Muslim world and fear that those who seek to harm our nation will exploit the burnings to promote their own political agendas.

I would therefore respectfully request your help in convincing Pastor Jones that the Quran burning event, while protected by the First Amendment, is not in our nation's best interests.

A personal appeal by you to Pastor Jones' sense of patriotism may prevent this counterproductive and divisive event from complicating our relations with the Muslim world.

I believe a personal visit to the church would be the most effective method for delivering your request not to burn copies of the Quran.

It is our hope that Pastor Jones will listen to such an appeal if it comes from a top commander who is responsible for the safety of our nation's military personnel.

Thank you for your assistance in this important matter.

Sincerely,

Nihad Awad
National Executive Director

[Return](#)Privacy by  SafeSubscribeSM[CAIR is Zakat-eligible](#)