

RELEASE IN PART
B6

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, March 29, 2012 12:11 PM
To: H
Subject: FW: FYI. Associated Baptist Press - New religious-freedom council picks criticized

-----Original Message-----

From: Samuelson, Heather F
Sent: Thursday, March 29, 2012 11:33 AM
To: Mills, Cheryl D
Subject: RE: FYI. Associated Baptist Press - New religious-freedom council picks criticized

I spoke to PPO -- they did not have a say in these appointments.

Under the International Religious Freedom Act which governs this Commission, "three Commissioners are selected by the President, two by the leaders of the President's party in Congress, and four by the congressional leaders of the party not in the White House."

One of the individuals below was selected by Boehner, the other by McConnell.

-----Original Message-----

From: Mills, Cheryl D
Sent: Thursday, March 29, 2012 7:31 AM
To: Samuelson, Heather F
Subject: Fw: FYI. Associated Baptist Press - New religious-freedom council picks criticized

Were we consulted

----- Original Message -----

From: H [mailto:HDR22@clintonemail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 29, 2012 05:58 AM
To: Mills, Cheryl D; Sullivan, Jacob J; Adams, David S
Subject: Fw: FYI. Associated Baptist Press - New religious-freedom council picks criticized

Not helpful. Need to discuss w WH.

----- Original Message -----

From: bstrider [mailto:bstrider]
Sent: Wednesday, March 28, 2012 10:13 PM
To: H
Subject: FYI. Associated Baptist Press - New religious-freedom council picks criticized

Pelosi's staff today asked me about this controversy and for guidance on who she should put forth for appointment...

<http://www.abpnews.com/content/view/7266/53/>

New religious-freedom council picks criticized

By Bob Allen

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

WASHINGTON (ABP) – Two new commissioners appointed to an independent panel that advises the State Department on international religious freedom violations are drawing criticism for holding views described as out of the mainstream.

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) picked Zuhdi Jasser, president and founder of the American Islamic Forum for Democracy, for his choice on a bipartisan panel appointed by leadership of both houses of Congress and the White House.

Jasser fills a slot vacated by Southern Baptist Convention Religious Liberty Commission President Richard Land, who was appointed in September 2001 by President George W. Bush and then reappointed, after rotating off briefly, by Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-Tenn.) in 2005, Land was ineligible for reappointment due to newly imposed term limits.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations described Jasser as a "mere sock puppet for Islam haters and an enabler of Islamophobia."

The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom's other new member, appointed by House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio), is Princeton University professor Robert George, who has faced questions about his own ties to anti-Muslim organizations.

George, a Catholic, is also co-author, with Southern Baptists Timothy George and Chuck Colson, of the Manhattan Declaration, a 2009 conservative document that has recently drawn attention for comparisons to a historic declaration by church leaders opposed to Nazi Germany in the 1930s.

With Land's departure, the commission's only remaining Baptist is William Shaw, immediate past president of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., and pastor of White Rock Baptist Church in Philadelphia, appointed by President Obama. There are three remaining vacant positions yet to be filled.

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Bob Allen is managing editor of Associated Baptist Press.
Sent from my Verizon Wireless BlackBerry