



CITY OF DEARBORN

Home Town of Henry Ford

MAYOR JOHN B. "JACK" O'REILLY, JR.

October 9, 2015

Dear Friends,

The past week has presented some serious challenges for our community. First Bill O'Reilly on the FOX channel aired a segment that mischaracterized our community in a negative and false manner. I sent a letter challenging his "facts" and enlightening him on the harm that could stem from his misinformation. Then last night Dawud Walid from CAIR did an excellent job of representing our region in a discussion with Bill O'Reilly about the piece on Dearborn. While Mr. O'Reilly insisted that it was a lighthearted satirical segment, Dawud got him to admit that his facts were wrong. Mr. O'Reilly promised he would make sure that all facts are properly researched in the future. That does not help us this Saturday but it is significant.

The problem is that independent of the Bill O'Reilly Show, protests were already being organized in at least 20 communities across the United States. Dearborn is unfortunately one of those communities.

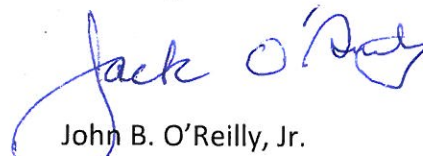
The professed object of these protests allegedly regards statements made by one religious leader not in our area. We have not been able to confirm the information but it won't change the fact that they are coming here. As we have learned from experience in the past the best way for the average person in our community to handle these incidents is to ignore them.

This demonstration is not really a forum for honest dialogue and anything that intensifies emotions will only intensify conflict. Unbelievably, this morning our own local television stations were telling about the rally and including the fact that the organizers were telling attendees to bring their guns. I cannot understand how that information was necessary for their local viewing audience except for stirring emotions on all sides.

I am asking all of our community leaders to promote one consistent message: go about your usual business and ignore our visitors. We cannot let them succeed in creating a false image of who we are that goes out over the media. They will ultimately leave our community and we can use the experience to strengthen our resolve to be one community supporting all of its members. I ask that you share this message and help us remain persons of faith, justice and unity.

Thank you

Sincerely,


John B. O'Reilly, Jr.
Mayor