Written by **Rebecca Terrell** on April 13, 2023

House GOP Subpoenas FBI for Spying on Catholics

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The U.S. House Judiciary Committee has issued a subpoena to the FBI for information on its agents' clandestine activities in Catholic churches.

Chairman Jim Jordan, an Ohio Republican, sent a letter to FBI Director Christopher Wray complaining about the agency's lack of transparency since the leak last January of its internal report, known as the "Richmond document," which categorized Catholic Americans as potential domestic terrorists. Jordan demanded full cooperation from Wray in turning over all relevant information without redactions.

> We now know the FBI, relying on information derived from at least one undercover employee, sought to use local religious organizations as "new avenues for tripwire and source development."
>
> Chilling. pic.twitter.com/X6Ksb9ryoM
>
> — Rep. Jim Jordan (@Jim_Jordan) April 10, 2023

He tweeted, "We now know the FBI … sought to use local religious organizations as 'new avenues for tripwire and source development,'" calling the news "chilling."

His letter explains that "the FBI sought to enlist Catholic houses of worship as potential sources to monitor and report on their parishioners," and argues that Americans "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."

Jordan condemned the FBI, noting that its Richmond document was "reviewed and approved by two senior intelligence analysts and even the local Chief Division Counsel," and wrote, "We know from whistleblowers that the FBI distributed this document to field offices across the country." However, he admitted that no one outside the FBI knows how many agents infiltrated Catholic churches as a result.

> Josh Hawley:
>
> "The Biden Administration uses law enforcement against anyone who disagrees with them." pic.twitter.com/q7zeIW9pre
>
> — Citizen Free Press (@CitizenFreePres) April 12, 2023

Missouri Republican Senator Josh Hawley told Sean Hannity on Tuesday that it is common for the Biden administration to use law enforcement against anyone who disagrees with them:

> Hawley: All I know is what the House Judiciary Committee turned up, which is actual evidence that the FBI did go, Sean, and cultivate — I think they called it — "undercover sources" at these Catholic parishes. That they stood up a program to try to get into these Catholic Churches. And, Sean, you and I both know, if they're doing it in Catholic churches, they're doing it in other Christian churches. They're probably doing it in Orthodox communities. It's all over. I mean you know for a fact that they're not just cherry picking. This is a policy on their part. And we've seen it before Sean. We've seen them use SWAT teams against pro-life Catholics. We have seen them go after parents who dare to question what they're doing in schools. This is a pattern and practice of this administration to use law enforcement against anybody who questions them, and especially to use it against people of faith.

> Merrick Garland told me – under oath – the FBI was not targeting Catholic parishes. That appears to have been a lie. I want the truth pic.twitter.com/HE8ncapeYz
>
> — Josh Hawley (@HawleyMO) April 11, 2023

Hawley has also accused U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland of lying under oath about the FBI not targeting Catholics. On Tuesday he sent a letter to Garland, recalling this testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee in March:

> Hawley: Attorney General Garland, let me just ask you: does your department have a problem with anti-Catholic bias?
>
> Garland: Our department, um, is, ah, protects all religions and all ideologies. It does not have any bias against any religion of any kind.
>
> Hawley: Well, you could have surprised me, because given the resources that you are expending, and the — apparently — intelligence assets that you are deploying, against Catholics, it appears, and other people of faith, while simultaneously turning a blind eye while people are executed gang-style in the streets of our cities, including in my home state, your answer, frankly, surprises me.

Hawley's April 11 letter demanded that Garland reveal how many undercover FBI informants are working in Catholic parishes and religious organizations, and how many FBI field offices have been instructed to infiltrate traditional Catholic parishes.

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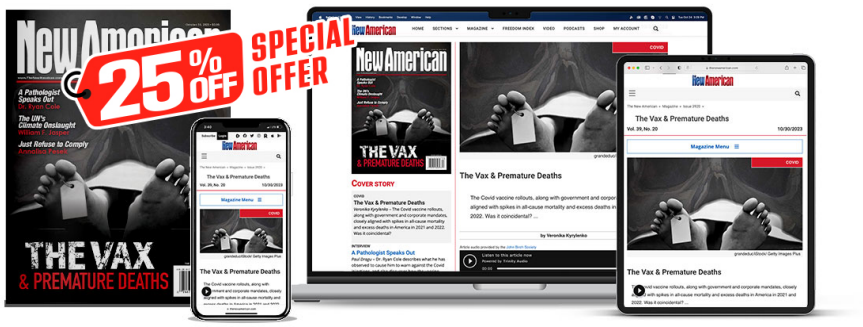

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