



FLORIDA CIVIL RIGHTS ASSOCIATION

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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J WILLIE DAVID, III
State President

June 14, 2011

Mayor Buddy Dyer
City of Orlando
P.O. Box 4990
Orlando, Florida 32802

buddy.dyer@cityoforlando.net
and by US First Class Mail

APOLOGY AND CLARIFICATION OF TERRORISTS REMARKS

Dear Mayor Dyer,

I'm writing to you to express the deep concern of the Florida Civil Rights Association over your offensive and insensitive remarks made to the news media portraying residents of this great city and members of the Orlando Food Not Bombs as "food terrorists".

Public statements about "terrorists" should always be taken seriously and given soberly. Terroristic descriptions of others and similar statements should never be used by any public official to describe any group of people exercising peaceful civil disobedience to prove a political point regarding civil rights or civil liberties. Not even during the height of the civil rights movement in the early 20th century was any peaceful demonstrators called terrorists.

Mayor Dyer in this day and age responsible elected officials should not call political dissidents any form of terrorists, especially where there is no evidence to support such a claim.

There is no known evidence of any citizens of Orlando and Orlando Food Not Bombs members providing food to the homeless at Lake Eola Park in a manner on par with the terrorists' acts of 9-11, African Embassy Bombings, or any other terrorist act in the recorded history.

Mayor Dyer your remarks were wrong, unacceptable and brought unnecessary local and national news attention to our city and you should be ashamed. Any negative attention should be avoided in light of the State's current economy.

- See ABC Orlando affiliate WFTV <http://www.wftv.com/news/28174410/detail.html>
- See ABC World News with Diane Sawyer <http://abcnews.go.com/US/arrested-feeding-homeless-orlando/story?id=13802769>

Mayor Dyer your remarks are particularly offensive in light of the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the US Department of Homeland Security efforts to put the public on notice that terrorist have contemplated evil acts against the world's food supply. Mayor Dyer, the malicious contamination of food for terrorist purposes is a real and a current threat.

The Florida Civil Rights Association condemns your efforts to place these residents and the Orlando Food Not Bombs members in a bad light by connecting their arrests directly or indirectly equating their acts to those of Al-Quada.

Florida Civil Rights Association
Letter to Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer
Re: Apology and Clarification of Terrorists Remarks
June 14, 2011
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Mayor Dyer, civil disobedience has a proud tradition. It helped bring about civil rights, end to the Vietnam War, and open the door for women's right to vote. African-Americans boycotted and defiantly drank out of "whites-only" water fountains - all of these involved good people willing to break the law. "Non-violent civil disobedience is justified when there is a history of long-standing harm or violation of people's fundamental rights, when legal and policy means have failed.

The City of Orlando has the power to reconsider its policy on feeding the homeless at Lake Eola Park. In 2006, Commissioners Samuel B. Ings and Robert F. Stuart voted against criminalizing Orlando's residents for feeding people. Mayor Dyer, I believe we can find a better solution than creating a city of criminals out of good people.

The citizens of Orlando can not afford to have a Mayor known for crying wolf, meaning to give a false alarm regarding "food terrorists".

Because your words were not only out of character but unusually harsh, the Florida Civil Rights Association calls on you, the City's leader and spokesperson, to reasonably address the problems related to poverty, hunger, and the legal ways to address them.

Moreover, the Florida Civil Rights Association respectfully asks that you immediately issue a **formal apology** and **clarification** for remarks you made to the news media comparing residents of the City of Orlando and the Orlando Food Not Bombs members to "terrorists".

Thank you for your immediate attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

J Willie David, III
President
Florida Civil Rights Association

C: City Commissioner Phil Diamond - District 1 (Next Election 2014)
City Commissioner Tony Ortiz - District 2 (Next Election 2012)
City Commissioner Robert F. Stuart - District 3 (Next Election 2014)
City Commissioner Patty Sheehan - District 4 (Next Election 2012)
City Commissioner Daisy Lynum - District 5 (Next Election 2014)
City Commissioner Samuel B. Ings - District 6 (Next Election 2012)
FCRA, Legal Affairs, Attorney Skinner Louis
FCRA, Communications and Media Relations, Attorney Kyan Ware
University of Central Florida's Students (UCF)
Community Organizations
Food Not Bombs
Churches
News Media