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Councilmember Robert Jackson's Statement on the intentional screening of *The Third Jihad* to NYPD officers for training purposes, and NYPD statements thereto

After initially sharing my comments with a local news outlet –which were taken out of context- I have learned additional details surrounding the making of *The Third Jihad* and its use as training material for officers of the New York Police Department that raise grave concerns.

As the only member of the New York City Council of Muslim faith, I obviously care for the wellbeing and safety of all New Yorkers. I condemn any message or behavior that distorts or misuses the tenets of any faith to promote a message of hate and intolerance.

I have reviewed the entirety of the film, which its producers claim is about violent Muslim extremists and portrays characters plotting to and harming others in the name of their faith. The film clearly blurs that message into conveying that the majority of Muslims aspire to infiltrate American communities with the sole purpose of harming, and that is clearly inaccurate, divisive, and dangerous.

The NYPD's intention of continuously using this film to train fellow officers on how to address or understand Islam and Muslim-Americans in our great city is not only irresponsible, it has committed a great disservice to the officers who are charged with protecting and serving us all.

It is nothing short of disturbing that Deputy Commissioner Paul J. Browne has repeatedly dismissed many New Yorkers' valid concerns and intentionally misrepresented the facts about the extent of his knowledge about the film, Commissioner Kelly's role in the film, and the extent to which the film has been used in official NYPD training. In my opinion this requires his immediate removal as the NYPD's chief spokesperson. Lying to all New Yorkers while serving as a high-ranking civil servant is unacceptable. Commissioner Kelly should apologize, not only to the countless Muslim-Americans who were hurt by his lamentable decision to be a part of this film and allowing it to be shown to at least 1,400 NYPD officers, but to all New Yorkers for the

NYPD's misinformation about the facts surrounding it.

I recognize that upholding public safety for all New Yorkers is challenging and of top priority for all of us, but it must not come at the expense of treating the Muslim community or any other religious or ethnic group like second-class citizens. I feel confident in speaking for all New Yorkers of good conscience, as well as the NYC Muslim community, when I say that we stand with the good and noble work of the 35,000 officers of the NYPD to ensure the safety of our great city from any threat, but we should not tolerate immoral, hateful or misguided actions by anyone in the NYPD or any other city agency.

Clearly, an appropriate, comprehensive and grassroots approach to cultural sensitivity training for NYPD officers at every level is needed, but a re-training of the officers who were exposed to *The Third Jihad's* hateful rhetoric is critically required. As part of this effort, Commissioner Kelly should immediately launch a department-wide review of policies and practices with the goal of eliminating the infiltration of messages that represent misinformation and intolerance.

As long as the NYPD allows for an environment where officers can be trained based on biased and false information, the safety of all New Yorkers may be compromised and the integrity and confidence in our great police force will be undermined. I call on Mayor Bloomberg and Commissioner Kelly to address these issues swiftly.

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