

FBI Meeting Talking Points

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- On August 26, 2018, CBS 60 Minutes updated its nationwide broadcast of “Collateral Damage.” It describes how innocent Chinese Americans are wrongly accused of espionage-related crimes as the government steps up the fight against theft of U.S. trade secrets and intellectual property by China.
- The 60 Minutes program also has an online segment titled “The Spy Who Wasn’t.” It describes the lasting impact on innocent Chinese Americans far beyond the heavy legal fees and dropped charges. Their finances, careers, reputations, emotions, and families are severely damaged if not totally ruined.
- Something went wrong when innocent people are wrongly accused and prosecuted. Even when charges are dropped, to these Chinese Americans and to the Asian American community, justice has not been served. It is unfair and unjust. It can happen to any of us.
- For the FBI, it is unlikely that you are satisfied when a prosecution falls apart. The Department of Justice prides itself on your investigations and measures its performance by high conviction rates.
- Protection of the innocent, compassion, fairness, integrity, and accountability are well-known core values of the FBI. They are supposed to inspire and earn public trust. However, if they have little or no meaning when it comes to Chinese Americans, they are empty words.
- The broad-brush “whole-of-society” and “grains of sand” approach arguably led to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the internment of 120,000 Japanese men, women, and children during World War II. They have intended and unintended consequences.
- FBI’s current words and actions may subject innocent people to become collateral damage, scapegoats, and easy profiling targets, not to mention the continuation of stereotypes, fear, suspicion, and even hate against a specific group of people in the American society, whether they are intended or not.
- Informants, be it a company or an individual, may make allegations out of a sense of responsibility, but it is also possible that human mistakes, implicit bias, explicit prejudice, false sense of patriotism, self-interest, lack of knowledge, pride, and incompetence are part of the motivation. Checks and balances have failed to protect the innocent.
- I deeply appreciate the chance to participate in today’s meeting. This is one aspect that I hope the FBI would consider and include as an integral part of a continuing dialogue.