

Leading by Example

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Since the events of 11 Sept., the practice of racial profiling, once considered at best politically incorrect, and at worst illegal, seems to be reluctantly tolerated as a necessary evil for protecting U.S. society.

According to an article in *The New York Times*, "Americans admit engaging in racial profiling in the wake of terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, even though the practice gives them misgivings and is highly offensive to Arab-Americans."

Worse, unwarranted attacks on individual Muslims or mosques is on the rise. Even those who are mistakenly identified as Muslim are not safe. Recently, a member of the Sikh

religion was slain in Texas in an attempt to exact revenge.

Prejudice, the engine for the persecution of innocent individuals, stems from fear and ignorance. We should ask ourselves what we, as engineers, can do about this situation. Engineering workplaces are usually ethnically diverse, particularly in the United States. It is not uncommon to have people of different nationalities, religions and colors all working together productively. This international atmosphere has

caused the majority of engineers to become sophisticated, tolerant and worldly.

The IEEE Code of Ethics requires members to refrain from all types of discrimination. This is a given.

What we must do in

these times is let our behavior stand as an example of how to treat people as individuals, not assigning them as representatives — sometime mistakenly — of a larger group.

The IEEE is an international organization. This is a chance for us to come together and lead. Let us seize this opportunity.

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