

MACCLC

Muslim American Civil Liberties Coalition

CIVIL LIBERTIES COALITION CALLS FOR HEARINGS & ACCOUNTABILITY FOR NYPD Responds to Reports of NYPD-CIA Collaboration

(New York, NY, August 25, 2011)—The Muslim American Civil Liberties Coalition (MACCLC) is deeply troubled by the news of the New York City Police Department's collaboration with the Central Intelligence Agency to spy on American Muslim communities. The reporting suggests that the CIA may be violating the prohibition on domestic spying. Despite Mayor Bloomberg's insistence otherwise, it is clear that the NYPD is spying on entire communities without any particular suspicion of criminal activity. Community-based surveillance falls well beyond the purview of even the NYPD's broad preventative mandate.

From growing reliance on unsubstantiated and discriminatory theories about radicalization, to revelations about law enforcement's use of Islamophobic training materials, to a number of reports documenting government informants literally encouraging and devising terrorist plots, there is a growing body of evidence to confirm what Muslim communities have been long been saying: the NYPD and FBI are engaging in blatant religious, racial, and national origin profiling and broad-based surveillance of Muslim communities, absent suspicion of criminal activity. The FBI's own guidelines authorize the agency to undertake "assessments" prior to any indication of criminal activity. Now every American must ask about the role of the CIA in these operations.

Together, these practices paint a dangerous picture of the ways in which law enforcement engages with Muslim communities under the banner of national security. These McCarthyite spying techniques threaten the civil rights of all Americans, and deepen the long-existing rifts between communities of color and police in the United States.

Since 2007 MACCLC has raised concerns about NYPD policies that encourage police officers to spy on Muslim communities when there is no indication of wrongdoing. Despite MACCLC's best efforts, the NYPD has refused to engage meaningfully with those that draw attention to problems with its policies. We believe the time has come for this issue to be taken up more broadly.

MACCLC calls on:

- the New York City Council to investigate and oversee the NYPD's operations, as well as a City Comptroller Audit;
- the Obama Administration to initiate a federal investigation into the extent to which the CIA has engaged in domestic spying within the United States, in violation of law and its mandate;
- Congress and the New York State Senate to hold hearings into the NYPD's, FBI's, and CIA's surveillance and policing practices in Muslim communities with a focus on the role of informants;
- Congress and New York State Senate to pass enforceable anti-racial profiling legislation;
- NYPD and the Department of Justice to revise their internal guidelines to disallow the use of surveillance and informants absent suspicion of specific criminal activity.

MACCLC also calls on the civil liberties community and civil society to send a message to the NYPD and Mayor Bloomberg that the public has not granted them a mandate for this surveillance operation.

Submitted on behalf of Muslim American Civil Liberties Coalition members:

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