

For Immediate Release

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**Project SALAM and Masjid As-Salam Endorse Protest of FBI Raids
at the Leo O'Brien Federal Building on September 29 from 5 PM to 6 PM**

ALBANY, NY - Albany area peace and justice activists are calling for a demonstration outside of the Leo O'Brien Federal Building on North Pearl Street for 5 pm - 6 pm on Wednesday, 9/29/10 to protest FBI raids on the homes of antiwar and international solidarity activists in Minneapolis, Chicago, North Carolina and Michigan.

Project SALAM and Masjid As-Salam, fully endorse the rallies against the targeting of peace activists by the FBI. We are not surprised at what has happened given the targeting and phony preemptive prosecutions of Muslims all across the country.

Preemptive prosecutions of hundreds of innocent Muslims have taken place all across the country. Formerly the FBI limited its ideological preemptive prosecutions to Muslims. Now the FBI is expanding its scope to include ideological prosecutions of peace activist and the political left.

On March 8, 2007, at a press conference following Yassin Aref sentencing on terrorism related charges, the prosecutor said in response to a reporter's question about whether Aref was a terrorist:

“Did he actually himself engage in terrorist acts? Well we didn't have the evidence of that, but he had the **ideology**....Our investigation was concerned with what he was going to do here and in order to **preempt** anything else we decide to take the steps that we did take [to set up a fake sting].”
(Press Conf. Tran. p. 7)*

The “ideology” on which the FBI focused were people who were sympathetic to “terrorists” and might help them in the future even if they were not “people who are going to participate in (terrorism) directly” (p.13). The Aref prosecutor said,

“There is concern that (Aref) is one of those people...and the sting **preempted** anything that might have happened later on.” (p. 13)

In other words, the FBI at that time was investigating and prosecuting ideological crimes – the ideology of being sympathetic toward “terrorism”.

It is ironic that members of the right wing tea party can say publicly that if their followers do not get what they want from the government they can resort to their “2nd amendment rights”; the Klu Klux Klan can own a private training base where members are indoctrinated in hate, and learn to shoot modern weapons. According to the FBI none of this indicates sympathy to “terrorism”, and is not prosecuted by the FBI presumably because it involves protected 1st and 2nd amendment rights. But if someone communicates with a member a foreign terrorist organization in order to persuade the organization to give up terror, that person can be prosecuted for Material Support of Terrorism (*Humanitarian Law Project v. Holder*). All the pieces are in place for another right wing witch hunt for “terrorist sympathizers”, and “Muslim-lovers”.

It is up to us to draw together in solidarity against this threat from our own government. In the words of Pastor Neimoller who became a victim of the Nazis:

First they came for the Jews [Muslims] - and I did not speak out because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for the Communists [Peace Activists] – and I did not speak out because I was not a Communist.

Then they came for the Trade Unionists [Liberals] – and I did not speak out because I was not a trade unionist.

Then they came for me – and there was no one left to speak for me.

Event Schedule:

5-6 PM - Rally at the Leo O'Brien Federal Building on North Pearl Street and Clinton Avenue, Albany
Speakers will include, the Honorable Dominick Calsoloro and others.

*See http://www.projectsalam.org/downloads/Post_Sentence_PC_02-04-10.pdf