

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 22, 2012

Contact: Marwa Elbially, (518) 951-6951, emarwa@hotmail.com

Dominick Calsolaro, (518) 859-5219, dcalsolaro@nycap.rr.com

ALBANY GROUPS DECRY SURVEILLANCE OF MUSLIMS IN ALBANY AND IN THREE STATES

The Muslim Solidarity Committee of Albany; Project SALAM (Support And Legal Advocacy for Muslims, <http://www.projectsalam.org>), based in Albany; and the University at Albany Muslim Student Association strongly protest surveillance of Muslim students by the NYPD. The Associated Press has revealed that from 2006–2009, the New York Police Department was carrying out illegal surveillance of Muslim students and their organizations, specifically Muslim Student Associations, all over the Northeast, including at the University at Albany and three other state university campuses (<http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/story/2012-02-18/NYPD-Intelligence/53143776/1>).

With no cause and no warrant, undercover agents and detectives spied on, trailed, and read the e-mail of Muslim students targeted only because of their religion and student group activities. According to the Huffington Post (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/02/21/nypd-spied-on-muslim-stud_n_1290544.html), officers from the NYPD's Cyber Intelligence Unit visited the websites, blogs, and forums of Muslim Student Associations as a "daily routine." Names of students from New Jersey, Connecticut, and upstate New York were compiled in police reports sent to New York City Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly. The 2006 report is online at <http://hosted.ap.org/specials/interactives/documents/nypd-msa-report.pdf>.

Yesterday, the syndicated radio program *Democracy Now!* interviewed ___Jawad Rasul, a student at City College of New York who was monitored by the NYPD and was named in a police report about an upstate New York whitewater rafting trip he took in 2008 with friends, which was monitored by an undercover informant. Also interviewed was Mongi Dhaouadi, executive director of the Connecticut chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), which is joining with the Connecticut Civil Rights Coalition to call for a state probe of the spying on Muslims. The interview is online at http://www.democracynow.org/2012/2/21/spying_on_campus_new_york_police.

We demand answers to the issues of the NYPD's jurisdictional overreach and the funding for such targeting. In addition, we want to know if any local colleges and universities, and law enforcement, were aware of this surveillance and/or cooperated with it. We join in protesting this surveillance with CAIR-Connecticut, the president of Yale University, Muslim Student Associations throughout the Northeast, and activist groups in the Northeast, and with several New Jersey Muslim Student Associations in asking the New York State Attorney General to investigate the NYPD's surveillance program.

Targeting and monitoring Muslim students is not only a violation of their privacy, but represents a real threat to the freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom of assembly of every resident of the U.S. These revelations of NYPD spying on Muslim students come on the heels of hearings, legislation, and press coverage designed to whip up Islamophobia as a prelude to new U.S. military interventions in the Middle East.

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