



FBI documents the ACLU is releasing today reveal that from 2004 through at least 2008, the San Francisco FBI conducted a "mosque outreach" program through which it compiled intelligence on American Muslim religious organizations and their leaders' and congregants' constitutionally protected beliefs and activities, without any suspicion of wrongdoing.

The ACLU previously disclosed that the FBI turned its "community outreach" programs into a secret and systematic domestic intelligence-gathering initiative. Now, FBI documents obtained by the ACLU of Northern California, the Asian Law Caucus, and the San Francisco Bay Guardian through a Freedom of Information act lawsuit show that the FBI used the similar guise of "mosque outreach" to gather intelligence on mosques and Muslim religious organizations.

The documents also show that the FBI categorized information about American Muslims' First Amendment-protected and other entirely innocuous activities, as well as mosque locations, as "positive intelligence" and disseminated it to agencies outside the FBI.

As a result, the agency wrongly and unfairly cast a cloud of suspicion over innocent groups and individuals based on their religious beliefs and associations, and placed them at risk of greater law enforcement scrutiny as potential national security threats. None of the documents indicate that the FBI told individuals interviewed that their information and views were being collected as intelligence and would be recorded and disseminated.

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