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Dissent or Terror: New Report Details How Counter Terrorism Apparatus Was Used to Monitor Occupy Movement Nationwide

MADISON, WI -- DBA Press and the Center for Media and Democracy today released the results of a year–long investigation: "Dissent or Terror: How the Nation's Counter Terrorism Apparatus, In Partnership With Corporate America, Turned on Occupy Wall Street."

The report, a distillation of thousands of pages of records obtained from counter terrorism/law enforcement agencies, details how state/regional "fusion center" personnel monitored the Occupy Wall Street movement over the course of 2011 and 2012. Personnel engaged in this activity at fusion centers include employees of municipal, county and federal counter terrorism/homeland security entities. Such entities include local police departments, the FBI and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (including U.S. DHS components such as the Transportation Security Administration).

The report also examines how fusion centers and other counter terrorism entities that have emerged since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 have worked to benefit numerous corporations engaged in public–private intelligence sharing partnerships.

While the report examines many instances of fusion center monitoring of Occupy Wall Street activists nationwide, the bulk of the report details how counter terrorism personnel engaged in the Arizona Counter Terrorism Information Center (ACTIC, commonly known as the "Arizona fusion center") monitored and otherwise surveilled citizens active in Occupy Phoenix, and how...
this surveillance benefited a number of corporations and banks that were
subjects of Occupy Phoenix protest activity.

While small glimpses into the governmental monitoring of the Occupy Wall
Street movement have emerged in the past, there has not been any reporting--
until now-- that details the breadth and depth of the degree to which the
nation's post-September 11, 2001 counter terrorism apparatus has been applied
to politically engaged citizens exercising their Constitutionally-protected First
Amendment rights.

The report reveals for the first time:

- How law enforcement agencies active in the Arizona fusion center
dispatched an undercover officer to infiltrate activist groups organizing
both protests of the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) and the
launch of Occupy Phoenix-- and how the work of this undercover officer
benefited ALEC and the private corporations that were the subjects of these
demonstrations.

- How fusion centers, funded in large part by the U.S. Department of
Homeland Security, expended countless hours and tax dollars in the
monitoring of Occupy Wall Street and other activist groups.

- How the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has financed social media
"data mining" programs at local law enforcement agencies engaged in
fusion centers.

- How counter terrorism government employees applied facial recognition
technology, drawing from a state database of driver's license photos, to
photographs found on Facebook in an effort to profile citizens believed to
be associated with activist groups.

- How corporations have become part of the homeland security “information
sharing environment” with law enforcement/intelligence agencies through
various public–private intelligence sharing partnerships. The report
examines multiple instances in which the counter terrorism/homeland
security apparatus was used to gather intelligence relating to activists for
the benefit of corporate interests that were the subject of protests.

- How private groups and individuals, such as Charles Koch, Chase Koch
(Charles' son and a Koch Industries executive), Koch Industries, and the
Koch–funded American Legislative Exchange Council have hired off–duty
police officers-- sometimes still armed and in police uniforms -- to
perform the private security functions of keeping undesirables (reporters
and activists) at bay.

How the FBI applied "Operation Tripwire," an initiative originally intended to apprehend domestic terrorists through the use of private sector informants, in their monitoring of Occupy Wall Street groups. [Note: this issue was reported on exclusively by DBA/CMD in December, 2012.]

The report is authored by Beau Hodai, DBA Press publisher and Center for Media and Democracy contributor.

Read the full report and Appendix Sourcewatch.org.

Read the full report on DBA Press here and view the document archive on DBA Press here.

In addition to the report, PR Watch will be publishing articles extracted from the report throughout the week at PRwatch.org.