

San Francisco Labor Council Resolution – Adopted Feb. 27, 2012 by unanimous vote

Oppose City of San Francisco’s Cooperation with FBI and ICE Racial or Religious Profiling and Surveillance

Whereas, the FBI had its origins during and after World War One and in the 1920s – in a massive campaign to root out, brand as “terrorist”, deport or jail union organizers, anti-war campaigners and immigrants. Portrayed in the press as heroic “gangbusters,” the FBI relentlessly pursued the objective of destabilizing the labor and civil rights movements. Many hundreds of FBI informants and agents were deployed to sabotage labor organizing and the mass campaigns of popular leaders like Marcus Garvey and Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. The FBI worked to undermine mass popular movements like the veterans’ 1932 Bonus Army occupation in Washington, and Dr. King’s Poor People’s Campaign for jobs and economic justice [forerunners of today’s Occupy movement]. In the 1960s and ‘70s, the FBI employed the COINTELPRO program to infiltrate and destroy popular organizations in the Black, Puerto Rican, Chicano, Native American and other communities; and

Whereas, the FBI’s domestic “counter-terrorism” efforts over the last decade have led to racial and religious profiling, harassment, surveillance and infiltration operations aimed primarily at communities of color and American Muslim communities – in their homes, places of worship and workplaces, as well as while traveling. At the same time, Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) has profiled, demonized and subjected to indefinite detention immigrant workers and families from Latin America and elsewhere; and

Whereas, in September 2010 FBI agents led coordinated, pre-dawn raids or issued Grand Jury subpoenas on 23 trade union, anti-war and solidarity activists in the Midwest. In May 2011, FBI and a police SWAT team smashed into the Los Angeles home of veteran immigrant rights and solidarity activist Carlos Montes. Just as it did in the 1920s, the FBI tried to justify these fishing expeditions by invoking the mantra of “counter-terrorism.” However, many believe the FBI’s real intent was to shut down these outspoken activists and try to intimidate the labor, solidarity and anti-war movements; and

Whereas, since 9/11, the FBI has recruited more than 600 state and local law enforcement agencies to be part of Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs) organized and run by the FBI in 103 cities nationwide – just as ICE uses “Secure Communities” to effectively deputize local police and use them to target immigrant workers; and

Whereas, local police have been asked to utilize scarce resources for full-time “counter-terrorism” tasks with the JTTF under a secret 2007 agreement with the FBI which was only made public last year. The previously-secret agreement purports to allow police working with the FBI to ignore state and local civil rights protections, and avoid local civilian oversight and scrutiny; and

Whereas, the California state Constitution guarantees an inalienable right to privacy and bans the intrusive surveillance and intelligence practices that are currently being used by the FBI. In addition, SFPD Department General Order requires reasonable suspicion of serious criminal activity, written authorization by the Police Chief and civilian oversight for any intelligence gathering involving First Amendment activities. The City of Refuge Ordinance prohibits the City from assisting federal immigration enforcement, and the city charter requires that all SFPD activities be subject to local civilian control and oversight; and

Whereas, after a hearing with community members, the S.F. Human Rights Commission issued a report – endorsed by the Board of Supervisors – demanding that SFPD be held to local standards and oversight. In April 2011, the Coalition for a Safe San Francisco, Asian Law Caucus and ACLU raised concerns at a Police Commission hearing after discovering that the SFPD had entered into a secret MOU agreement with the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force that violated state and local law and policies. Both the Police Commission and Police Chief stated publicly that they wanted SFPD officers to follow the stronger state and local civil rights standards, but left in place the previously-secret agreement with the FBI that blocks that from occurring.

Therefore be it Resolved, that the San Francisco Labor Council alert its affiliated unions to stay vigilant, to respond in the event community members are subjected to abusive FBI or ICE practices in violation of their civil and constitutional rights; and

Be it further Resolved, that the Council denounce the racial or religious profiling and surveillance practices of the FBI and ICE. We condemn the continuing raids against immigrant workers and families from Latin America and elsewhere. We condemn the FBI raid on the home of Los Angeles activist Carlos Montes and the FBI raids and subpoenas on 23 anti-war, solidarity and labor activists in the Midwest, and demand restitution; and

Be it further Resolved, that the Labor Council demand that S.F. law enforcement not participate in any racial or religious profiling and surveillance conducted by the FBI, by the Joint Terrorism Task Force, by ICE or by the “Secure Communities” program; and

Be it finally Resolved, that copies be sent to the Mayor of San Francisco; members of the Board of Supervisors; the Chief of Police of San Francisco; and to the office of the FBI Special Agent for this district.

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Submitted by:

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Amended by:
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