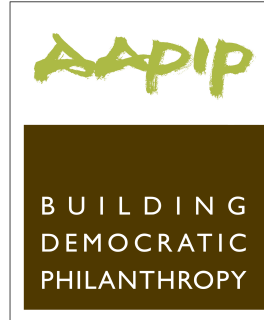


AMEMSA FACT SHEET

Domestic Policies Impacting AMEMSA Communities



The Civic Engagement Fund (CEF) supports AMEMSA organizations to increase their individual and shared capacities around issue areas of common concern; to build ownership around their own capacity development; and to better serve their communities through collective action.

Since 9/11 and the subsequent “War on Terror”, stereotyping, profiling, surveillance and hate crimes have significantly increased for AMEMSA communities.

Domestic and International Policies have disproportionately targeted and discriminated against those people from any region that could somehow be tied to what the US defines as Terrorism. This means that Muslims or anyone appearing to be Muslim (based on name or physical appearance for example) is profiled by the local and federal law authorities as well as by individuals. 1

- ◆ Civil rights complaints filed with one Muslim advocacy group rose from 366 in 2000 to 2,467 in 2006, an increase of 674%. 2

- ◆ As of January 2002, the Intergroup Clearinghouse reports that there have been more than 1,700 cases of discrimination against Arab Americans, Muslim Americans, Sikh Americans, and South Asian Americans. 3

The following is a selection of recent policies that have negatively impacted AMEMSA communities. It should be noted, that these policy and administrative changes also cause harm to all communities by furthering the divisions perpetuated by racism.

National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS)/ “Special Registration” – a program imposing entry and exit special registration requirements on male nonimmigrants (temporary residents), aged 16 and older, from 25 designated countries (24 Arab and other predominantly Muslim states, plus North Korea). Citizens of a designated country were required to be interviewed and fingerprinted. The requirements applied on the basis of national origin, not on the basis of one’s country of citizenship. The program began in 2002, and was recently terminated on April 27th, 2011. 4

- ◆ When Special Registration was completed, 14,000 men of the nearly 83,000 who complied with the program were set to be deported. 5

- ◆ Thirty-five percent of those who have been deported are of Pakistani descent. 5

No Fly List – a list, created and maintained by the United States government’s Terrorist Screening Center (TSC). As of summer 2010, the list contained about 8,500 names,

according to the TSC. The exact number constantly fluctuates and is secret, however TSA says that tens of thousands are on these lists without providing names. People first learn that they are on the lists -- or are mistaken for someone on the lists -- when they encounter problems at the airport, and are not allowed to fly. 6

Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) - a law enforcement unit that uses an inter-agency approach to countering terrorism. In each JTTF, federal and local police cooperate according to direction provided by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). 7

- ◆ Before September 11, 2001, there were about sixteen JTTFs in the U.S. Today, there are 103. 7

- ◆ According to its advocates, JTTFs investigate leads and insure the “timely collection and sharing of intelligence absolutely critical to [terrorism] prevention efforts.” Yet behind that civic image, JTTFs have also violated First Amendment rights by investigating people engaging in free speech and association. 7

- ◆ JTTFs were instrumental in government monitoring of Muslims and Iraqis in the aftermath of 9/11 and in the run-up to the Iraq war. 7
- ◆ In February 2003, agents at all 56 FBI field offices were instructed to “count the mosques” in their areas as an investigative tool. 7

“These revelations should disturb us on multiple levels: the lies, the shadowy role of the FBI, the threats to citizens and non-citizens alike, and the rampant potential violations of civil liberties. This goes far beyond the irreparable S-Comm program and opens a window onto the dystopian future our government has planned. With so much at stake, this process must at all costs be transparent going forward.”

Gitanjali Gutierrez from the Center for Constitutional Rights, on the connection between SCOMM and FBI’s NGI Project

Secure Communities

(SCOMM) - a program [that began in 2009 under the Obama administration] allows state and local police to check the fingerprints of an individual they are booking into a jail against Department of Homeland Security (DHS) immigration database. If there is a “hit” in an immigration database, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is automatically notified, even if the person has not been convicted of any criminal act. Immigrants have been targeted by

local authorities throughout the country. 8

- ◆ By March 2011, under President Obama, the program was expanded to over 1,210 jurisdictions. ICE seeks to have all 3,141 jurisdictions (state, county, and local jails and prisons) participating by 2013. 9
- ◆ On August 11, 2011, the Obama Administration announced it is terminating all Memorandum of Agreements with states, resulting in states no longer having an option to opt out of SCOMM, making the program mandatory. 9

FBI’s Next Generation Identification’ (NGI) Project –

a little-known FBI project to accumulate a massive store of personal biometric information on citizens and non-citizens alike. NGI goes beyond collecting and disclosing fingerprints. Through NGI, the FBI expands personal information collection to other types of biometrics including palm print scans, iris scans, and scar, mark, tattoo, and facial recognition. 10

- ◆ NGI is the next generation Big Brother. It’s a backdoor route to a national identification to be carried not in a wallet, but within the body itself. 10
- ◆ The FBI’s biometric-based project is vulnerable to hackers and national security breaches and carries serious risks of identity theft. If your biometric identity is stolen or corrupted in NGI, it will be hard to fix. Unlike an identity card or pin code, biometrics are forever. 10

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