

Civil rights group on FBI list; Michigan Militia, affirmative action supporters are labeled threats in terrorism symposium report.

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An FBI report released Monday to a national civil rights group shows that federal and state law enforcement agencies label social activists, animal lovers and white supremacists all as potential terrorists.

The document, prepared by a counter-intelligence agent at the Detroit FBI office, summarized information on possible "terrorist activities" for a 2002 Domestic Terrorism Symposium hosted by the Michigan State Police and attended by law enforcement groups.

"The purpose of the meeting was to keep the local, federal and state law enforcement agencies apprised of the activities of the various groups and individuals within the state of Michigan who are thought to be engaged in terrorist activities," the report said.

Groups mentioned in the report were considered to be potential terrorists.

Among those included were BAMN (By Any Means Necessary), the national civil rights and affirmative action organization, and Direct Action, an anti-war group.

The report cited a six-day civil rights conference that BAMN staged in Ann Arbor, while acknowledging that the group had held peaceful demonstrations.

Direct Action was linked to the East Lansing Animal Rights Movement; both groups took part in a protest in Lansing aimed at the FBI.

The report was released in response to a Freedom of Information lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union on behalf of nine local organizations and individuals, including Direct Action. ACLU affiliates in 15 additional states have filed similar requests on behalf of more than 100 groups and individuals.

Kary Moss of the Michigan ACLU said the agencies involved could better spend their efforts and time investigating criminals.

"We think we can be both safe and free," Moss said. "Being safe doesn't mean we have to give up our right to engage in expressing our opinions whatever they may be as long as those opinions do not translate into illegal action."

Other groups cited in the FBI report include the Michigan Militia and the Aryan World Church, which a state police detective called a "Christian-based white supremacist group from Dodgeville, Michigan."

BAMN spokesman Luke Massey said including his group with white supremacists or linking it to terrorism is "absolutely outrageous."

"The American people are going to be outraged that their government is spying on groups standing up for affirmative action and education," Massey said.

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