

The meeting took place with Commissioner Kelly, David Cohen, Mr Silber, one of the authors of the report; and Community Affairs Officers. There were approximately 30 Muslims.

Following NYPD power point presentation of the report and a Muslim rebuttal of its main points and methods, CAIR and ICNA representatives and many others spoke very effectively about different flaws of the report.

There was much agreement among Muslim presenters that the report as currently written is badly flawed and there needs to be more safeguards against potential misuse by police in NYC and around the nation and that the picture in the report does not represent the mainstream Muslim community but rather throws the net of suspicion of all Muslims--a form of profiling.

We all shared concern about the report's warning signs of radicalism since they are common to increased religiosity, to immigrants or to young people. We shared concerns that the report was focused on Muslims only and fed into the right wing hysteria that is all too prevalent. Some of us spoke movingly of our children and families as they have been or might be affected by policies arising from this report.

Some Muslim participants asked about methodology and its implications. Some asked how the report would be used. Some compared it to the Pew Report which paints a very different picture-- we were told that it came out when this was in its finishing stages. We asked why there was not community input solicited. We made a point that the meeting we were at was a positive step but that it should have taken place before publication. One response the Commissioner gave was that sections of the report were leaked before the publication (with statements against it 2 hours before its release) so they hurried release-- the implication (not clear statement however) was that this is why the Muslim community was not consulted.

NYPD reps were very sure of their "facts" about radicalization- - so called facts based on a small sample of radicals that were caught, and cases that varied in credibility. Even when responsible for "acceleration" of radicalization, and even when they played the role of spiritual sanctioner, Police Informants were not mentioned in the report.

And though he had been flown in from the West Coast to defend his work at this event apparently, Mr Silber (one of the 2 authors of the report) was very sure of his analysis-- not the usual academic self-critical approach. His power point presentation basically rehashed the report with some extra graphs and visuals. It is good that Kelly (and Cohen) agreed to amendments to the report.

I imagine it will take some argument for the authors to reconsider their problematical use of Salafi as a term for threat; also the misrepresentation of the complexity of Islamic Scholarship including Maududi; the report also uses loaded terminology like "to Commit" jihad, ie like "commit" a crime, and the idea of "Islamic" terrorism. As we see in the footnotes, the report does not reference other similar reports but only news articles.

Mr Kelly suggested that this might be done. Would these reports be pre-cooked intelligence however, gathered to fit foregone conclusions?

The group suggested that damage had been done to community relations and that it was time to define what damage control would be done to maintain relations. What lessons can we learn? Can there be a public statement about report deficiencies? At least Commissioner Kelly agreed to amendments, as well as a process of regular meetings.

Participants reminded NYPD of the very positive aspects of our community, and of its civic engagement in positive ways. A point was made that Commissioner Kelly has a relatively good record reaching out and appreciating the value of diversity.

Some of us had some written talking points that helped inform our exchange. JazakAllah to the sisters who kept mentioning the importance of meeting regularly--the Commissioner agreed to monthly dialogue meetings. JazakAllah to everyone who backed up each others points and concerns.

Insha'Allah the combination of personal and theoretical, the agreement of participants will result in a successful dialogue group though clearly the NYPD will want a strong hand in maintaining a high degree of control. Perhaps they would think twice about overlooking us so completely again. There are many problems with the report not least that real terrorists could easily evade detection by reading the "indications. " All of us clearly conveyed that we want a safe new York.

As the meeting concluded many of the Muslim participants did their prayers together.

Thanks to those who helped facilitate this meeting--JazakAllah . May Allah forgive me for any errors here or elsewhere.

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