



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on September 27, 2010

FBI Targets Antiwar Activists

Members of left-wing war protest organizations plan vigorous protests Monday and Tuesday after a series of FBI raids on September 24 against the homes of war protesters in Chicago, Minnesota, Michigan, and North Carolina. No one was arrested in the raids, though FBI officials seized dozens of boxes of personal effects, mainly electronics and letters, from the houses. The FBI said they expected no arrests from the searches under a grand jury inquiry on what officials termed an investigation on “material support for terrorism.”



The FBI raids come just days after the agency’s Inspector General [concluded](#) on September 20 that the FBI had illegally conducted surveillance against anti-war groups between 2001 and 2006 on the same material support for terrorism grounds. The scathing [FBI Inspector General’s report](#) concluded that FBI actions had “little or no basis” in law, that those actions were “unreasonable and inconsistent with FBI policy” and that the FBI made false and misleading statements to the public and to Congress about its surveillance of peaceful anti-war activists who hadn’t broken any laws.

The [September 24 FBI searches](#) seem to be focused upon an organization known as the [Freedom Road Socialist Organization \(FRSO\)](#), a left-wing anti-war group with branches and coalition partners across the country, and any possible links the organization has to Colombian and Palestinian rebels. The FRSO was not among the groups targeted during the Bush administration investigations condemned by the Inspector General’s office.

“There is no imminent threat to the community and we’re not planning any arrests at this time,” anonymous officials [told](#) the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* for September 24. One of those peace protesters whose home was searched was Mick Kelly, who [told](#) the Associated Press: “The FBI is harassing anti-war organizers and leaders, folks who opposed U.S. intervention in the Middle East and Latin America.”

Kelly [told](#) antiwar activists that the search warrants for the current searches were “regarding ability to pay for his own travel to Palestine and Columbia from 2000 to today. Kelly has apparently made several trips to Palestine and Colombia, and FBI officials were looking for information on any ties to the Colombian FARC or Palestine’s Hezbollah, both of which the U.S. government has labeled terrorist organizations.

The activists involved have done nothing wrong and are refusing to be pulled into conversations with the FBI about their political views or organizing against war and occupation, the Freedom Road Socialist Organization [complained](#) on its website September 25.

The activists are speaking out individually as well. “We have done nothing wrong,” Chicago-area activist Joe Iosbaker [told](#) Chicago’s WLS-TV. All we ever did was work against U.S. military aid to the governments of Colombia and Israel and support the people of Israel and Columbia in their struggle for justice.



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The documents seized seemed to go beyond a mere FBI interest in the activists' alleged links to FARC and Hezbollah. "They took documents showing their political involvement in the 70s, the 80s, and the 90s. They took baby cards. They took postcards from old girlfriends," Iosbaker's attorney Melinda Power [told](#) Chicago's WLS-TV.

FBI officials stressed to the press that they received probable cause search warrants from a federal judge. Chicago-based television station WLS [reported](#) that because they are scheduled to appear before a grand jury next month, Iosbaker and Weiner could not say why they think their work may have captured the FBI's attention.

Photo: AP Images

Hat tip for this story: [Jason Ditz of the valuable AntiWar.com](#)



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