

Matsui Questions Military Surveillance of Anti-War Groups

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January 13, 2006

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Washington, DC – Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui (CA-5) sent the following letter to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld questioning the military’s surveillance of Americans by the Counterintelligence Field Activity. Of particular interest to the Congresswoman, is surveillance of a protest outside the Sacramento Military Entrance Processing Station in 2004.

January 13, 2006

The Honorable Donald Rumsfeld

Secretary

Department of Defense

1000 Defense Pentagon

Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Rumsfeld:

I have recently learned that the Department of Defense may have placed various anti-war groups within the United States under surveillance. I am concerned that such a program may violate First Amendment rights. Furthermore, the agency in the Department of Defense, the Counterintelligence Field Activity, which is reported to be authorizing and maintaining a database of surveillance related information, is just three years old and little is known about its authority, size or budget. Specific concerns have been raised to my office about a reported Counterintelligence Field Activity program within Sacramento, the Congressional District I represent.

I and many others are alarmed by military surveillance of American citizens practicing their First Amendment rights of free speech and assembly. Of special interest to me and my constituents is a document secured by NBC News which showed that such surveillance occurred at the Sacramento Military Entrance Processing Station and of a "planned protest" there in November of 2004. The fact that the Department of Defense knew about the protest ahead of time only raises more questions about the legality of this surveillance program. I would like to know the rationale behind the surveillance of the anti-war protest and what legal basis the Department of Defense conducts surveillance of such protests. I also would like to know if other protests or events were monitored in Sacramento, if any protestors were arrested for illegal activity and if the program is still ongoing.

Protecting American citizens' constitutionally guaranteed rights is extremely important to me and it is with this in mind that I respectfully question the integrity of this program. History has shown that there always is a fine line between legitimate security measures and possible intimidation and I hope that you will be able to shed some light on this alarming information.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I would appreciate a written response within thirty days.

Sincerely,

Doris O. Matsui

Member of Congress

cc: Honorable Daniel R. Stanley, Asst. Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs

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