



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

Is the U.S. Exporting Terrorism?

The CIA is worried that the United States will become known as an exporter of terrorism, according to a recent revelation by the Internet whistleblower site WikiLeaks.org.

The leaked [three-page CIA report](#) explained that a number of American citizens have gone abroad in recent years to conduct terrorism, helping al-Qaeda, radical Israeli terrorist groups, and Irish terrorists. The report notes that while the intelligence agencies have focused upon attempts by al-Qaeda to recruit Americans to terrorize other Americans, “less attention has been paid to homegrown terrorism, not exclusively Muslim terrorists, exported overseas to target non-US persons.” The report concludes that the United States has indeed become an exporter of terrorism, [citing](#) several examples of American citizens who have gone abroad to commit terrorist acts:



Contrary to common belief, the American export of terrorism or terrorists is not a recent phenomenon, nor has it been associated only with Islamic radicals or people of Middle Eastern, African or South Asian ethnic origin. This dynamic belies the American belief that our free, open and integrated multicultural society lessens the allure of radicalism and terrorism for US citizens.

The CIA report [concluded](#) that “American Freedoms Facilitate Terrorist Recruitment and Operations,” *essentially charging that the freedom of American citizens could threaten the national security of the United States*. Thus, of primary concern to the CIA is the risk to its illegal and unconstitutional (it uses the term “extrajudicial”) rendition and torture program for accused terrorists:

If the US were seen as an exporter of terrorism, foreign partners may be less willing to cooperate with the United States on extrajudicial activities, including detention, transfer, and interrogation of suspects in third party countries. As a recent victim of high-profile terrorism originating from abroad, the US Government has had significant leverage to press foreign regimes to acquiesce to requests for extraditing terrorist suspects from their soil. However, if the US were seen as an “exporter of terrorism,” foreign governments could request a reciprocal arrangement that would impact US sovereignty.

The CIA [report](#) was “prepared by the CIA Red Cell, which has been charged by the Director of Intelligence with taking a pronounced ‘out-of-the-box’ approach that will provoke thought and offer an alternative viewpoint on the full range of analytic issues.”

The CIA report also [belies](#) the Bush administration-era idea that Americans must go abroad to fight the



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terrorists before they come here. According to the CIA, the terrorists are already here and they are American citizens with freedom:

Primarily we have been concerned about Al-Qa'ida infiltrating operatives into the United States to conduct terrorist attacks, but AQ may be increasingly looking for Americans to operate overseas. Undoubtedly Al-Qa'ida and other terrorist groups recognize that Americans can be great assets in terrorist operations overseas because they carry US passports, don't fit the typical Arab-Muslim profile, and can easily communicate with radical leaders through their unfettered access to the internet and other modes of communication.

The natural result of the report is that American citizens may find themselves increasingly in the cross-hairs of CIA investigations and intelligence operations that manipulate domestic public opinion in the coming years, all in the name of stopping international terrorism.



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