



Written by [Daniel Sayani](#) on March 10, 2011

Pro-IRA Congressman Probes Terrorism

One of the most controversial political happenings of the political season, in the 112th Congress, is Republican Rep. Peter King's launch of an inquiry probing the extent and nature of Radical Islam in the United States. Rep. King's panel looks towards investigating radicalization in the American Muslim community, and Rep. King, Chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, insists that the congressional hearings are "absolutely essential": "I am facing reality[;] my critics are not. Al Qaeda is changing its tactics. They realize that it's very difficult to attack from the outside[;] they're recruiting from within.



According to a [Reuters report](#):

King, who will lead a hearing on Thursday, has questioned the cooperation by Muslim Americans with U.S. law enforcement authorities and accused mosques of being a breeding ground for radicalization.

"I think there's positive to come from this if people are open to hearing what comes out of the hearings, and not just a sound bite or two," said Juan Carlos Zarate, a Bush administration terrorism adviser who is now at the Center for Strategic & International Studies.

Critics say the hearings smack of the effort in the 1950s by Republican Senator Joseph McCarthy, who presided over congressional hearings to expose and ostracize Communists and their sympathizers in the United States.

Muslim and civil rights advocates have condemned King's assertions, countering that Muslims in the United States are being unfairly targeted and pointing to tips they have provided to authorities in the past.

"This hearing does not represent the mainstream view," said Imam Shamsi Ali, who organized a protest against the probe in New York.

"I don't see any reason for that perception about Muslims not cooperating," he said, noting a Muslim vendor alerted authorities to the failed Times Square car bombing in 2010.

That incident, coupled with an alleged bomb plot uncovered last month involving a 20-year-old Saudi student studying in Texas, are among several plots that have boosted concerns by U.S. officials that al Qaeda and its affiliates are determined to strike inside the United States any way they can.

"I think the administration realizes they have to take on this issue of domestic violent extremism," Zarate said, noting the administration has been a little slow to do so. "They've got to take it on because it is of increasing concern and more importantly it's becoming a divisive issue."



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While Rep. Peter King's hearings are at least perhaps praiseworthy in their intent, this is a classic example of the proper message being presented by the wrong messenger. Rep. King, while claiming to be leading the fight for internal security as the United States is faced by the looming threat of Islamist terrorism, has not demonstrated any acumen or knowledge on the true nature of the terrorist menace facing America — in other words, he does not seem to have any knowledge of, or concern with, the Islamo-Communist menace threatening America's safety and security.

While American Muslim clerics, communal leaders, and representatives from groups such as the Council on American Islamic Relations and the Muslim American Society will be subpoenaed to Congress to testify on the dangers of Islamic jihad, none of the more egregiously pro-Islamist terrorism leftist groups has been called upon to testify. Rep. King, to date, has not subpoenaed groups such as the ANSWER Coalition (and its political wing, the Party for Socialism and Liberation), Ramsey Clark's International Action Center, United for Peace and Justice, the International Solidarity Movement, and the International Socialist Organization, among other such groups, which adhere to any permutation of Marxist-Leninist, Maoist, and Trotskyite thought.

Furthermore, Rep. King's own personal connections with the known terrorist group the Irish Republican Army (IRA) cast doubts on his own true commitment to fighting terrorism and raise suspicions as to whether Rep. King is truly knowledgeable of the extent of the dangerous connection between Islamists and various leftist groups.

The well-documented links between Rep. King and the Irish Republican Army date back to 1982, when King was Nassau County Comptroller. King would make frequent trips to Northern Ireland and has spent 30 years of his political career stoutly defending the IRA and its often bloody methods. King was a vocal and frequent House champion for the IRA's political wing, Sinn Féin, and its leader, Gerry Adams, and was even banned from the BBC by British censors for his pro-IRA views. King once called the IRA "the legitimate voice of occupied Ireland," and refused to denounce the IRA when one of its mortar bombs killed nine Northern Irish police officers. [According to *The New York Sun*](#):

In America, King became involved with Irish Northern Aid, known as Noraid, a New York based group that the American, British, and Irish governments often accused of funneling guns and money to the IRA. At a time when the IRA's murder of Lord Mountbatten and its fierce bombing campaign in Britain and Ireland persuaded most American politicians to shun IRA-support groups, Mr. King displayed no such inhibitions. He spoke regularly at Noraid protests and became close to the group's publicity director, the Bronx lawyer Martin Galvin, a figure reviled by the British.

Mr. King's support for the IRA was unequivocal. In 1982, for instance, he told a pro-IRA rally in Nassau County: "We must pledge ourselves to support those brave men and women who this very moment are carrying forth the struggle against British imperialism in the streets of Belfast and Derry."

By the mid-1980s, the authorities on both sides of the Atlantic were openly hostile to Mr. King. On one occasion, a judge threw him out of a Belfast courtroom during the murder trial of IRA men because, in the judge's view, "he was an obvious collaborator with the IRA." When he attended other trials, the police singled him out for thorough body searches.

During his visits to Ireland, Mr. King would often stay with well-known leaders of the IRA, and he socialized in IRA drinking haunts. At one of such clubs, the Felons, membership was limited to IRA veterans who had served time in jail. Mr. King would almost certainly have been red-flagged by British intelligence as a result, but the experience gave him plenty of material for the three



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novels he subsequently wrote featuring the IRA.

Adding to the gravity of Rep. King's support of the IRA is the fact that the IRA has clearly documented links with the Soviet Union. Just as the Soviet Union utilized terrorist forces in the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America to destabilize anti-communist governments and install pro-Soviet regimes, it also operated through the IRA, which it armed and funded — a history which is well-documented.

In the summer of 1925, just two years after the IRA's defeat in the Civil War, the organization sent a delegation to Moscow to solicit finance and weaponry from the Soviet Union. The group was led by the well-known Cork gunman P.A. Murray, who met privately with Joseph Stalin. Though Stalin expressed reservations about the IRA's determination and competence, soon afterwards both parties made a secret agreement: the IRA would spy for the Soviets in Britain and America, as well as support their strategic goals, and in return receive a monthly payment of £500.

In addition, according to Irish historian [Sean Gannon](#), the IRA has also supported Islamic terrorists and Nazis. Links between the IRA and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) have been well-known:

Irish Republicanism has a cozy relationship with Middle East terrorism. This began in the early 1970s when Muammar Gaddafi's then-terror-sponsoring regime began supplying the IRA with the financial, military and logistical assistance it required to prosecute its brutal anti-British offensive. Four Libyan arms shipments in the mid-1980s (when Adams, despite his increasingly absurd denials, sat on the IRA's ruling Army Council) proved particularly devastating, reinvigorating its floundering military campaign; a fifth, the Eksund, was intercepted by the French navy in October 1987.

By this time, contacts had been established with Hizbullah which led, intelligence sources believe, to the development of new tactics such as the "diversionary" mine attacks used with deadly effect in south Lebanon and Northern Ireland, most notoriously at Warrenpoint, County Down in 1979 where 15 British soldiers were killed. More recently, Britain has claimed that IRA-developed bomb-making technology passed on to Hizbullah has been used against its forces in Iraq.

But the most enduring regional relationship forged by the Republican movement was that with the PLO. This too dated from the early 1970s, when Fatah organized arms and terrorist training for IRA and INLA operatives in Libya and Lebanon. And while Yasser Arafat attempted to distance himself from the IRA after Lord Louis Mountbatten's murder in 1979 (although a senior IRA defector has claimed the PLO was involved in financing the attack in which two teenage boys and an 82-year-old woman were also slaughtered), IRA-PLO cooperation continued well into the 1990s.

For a congressman who prides himself on fighting terrorism, the reality of his record of support for the IRA, one of the world's bloodiest terrorist groups — with clearly documented links to the PLO and Soviet Union — presents a problematic credibility issue. It is ironic (and unrealistic) that a pro-IRA congressman believes that he is in the proper position to probe the scope and nature of American terrorism.

Photo: Rep. King marching in an Independence Day parade.



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