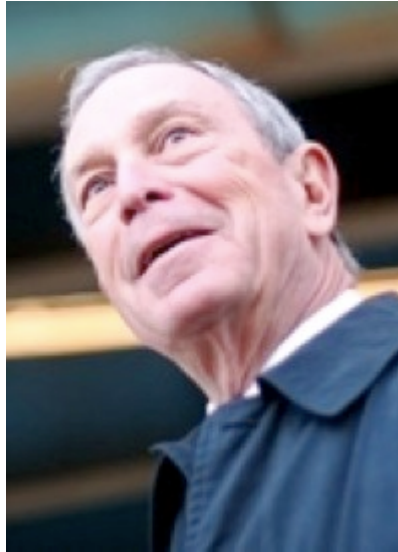




Written by [Rebecca Terrell](#) on November 13, 2009

NYC Mayor Welcomes Suspected Terrorist

New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg denies knowing that one of his guests at City Hall this week is a Muslim leader long suspected of conspiracy in the 1993 World Trade Center (WTC) bombing. The New York Post reports that Bloomberg and Police Commissioner Ray Kelly played host to Islamic imam Siraj Wahhaj and other religious and community leaders on Wednesday to discuss last week's massacre in Fort Hood, Texas. The roundtable meeting was closed to the media.



As participants were leaving, a television reporter asked Bloomberg if he felt awkward knowing Wahhaj was there. Bloomberg first denied the presence of the suspected terrorist. When the reporter corrected him, he acknowledged Wahhaj and made the excuse that dialogue helps "prevent tragedies." Wahhaj's name was left off a guest list given to reporters for a photo op after the meeting, but a spokesman for the mayor's office later confirmed that the Muslim leader was invited. When reporters questioned Wahhaj, he verified the invitation and said Bloomberg greeted him when he arrived. The [CBS affiliate](#) in New York reports that Bloomberg now claims he would not have welcomed Wahhaj had he realized his background.

It is surprising to know that Bloomberg was unaware of Wahhaj's terrorist connections. The notorious Muslim leader is reputedly an "unindicted co-conspirator" in the 1993 WTC bombing. He has denied involvement but defended those convicted of the plot. He blames instead the FBI and CIA, calling them the "real terrorists" involved.

Wahhaj has sparked other controversial headlines over the years. In 1995 he served as a character witness for Omar Abdel-Rahman, a terrorist now serving a life sentence for conspiracy associated with the WTC bombings. Last year Wahhaj spearheaded a highly publicized Islamic ad campaign in New York. It was then that the [New York Post](#) referenced the imam's anti-American sentiments: "In time, this so-called democracy will crumble, and there will be nothing, and the only thing that will remain will be Islam." Last month [Fox News](#) quoted Stephen Schwartz, executive director of the Center for Islamic Pluralism, calling Wahhaj "a hatemonger, there's no question about it. He's the number one advocate of



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radical Islamic ideology among African-Americans. His stuff is very appealing to young Muslims who are on a radical path."

Ironically, Wahhaj has the distinction of being the first Muslim to lead the opening invocation for the House of Representatives, two years prior to the WTC bombings.

Photo of Mayor Bloomberg: AP Images



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