

PETER KING USES TAX EVASION CASE AS PROOF OF HEZBOLLAH INVOLVEMENT IN US

Peter King is having another of his fear-mongering hearings on the Islamic threat in the US—this one focused on “Iran, Hezbollah, and the Threat to the Homeland.” As part of that, they’ve released a whopping 2-page report on that threat, including such claims such as this one:

After 9/11, many in law enforcement and intelligence assumed Hezbollah would only strike inside our borders if Israel or the U.S. attacked Iran’s nuclear facilities. Iran’s *unprovoked* plot to assassinate Saudi Arabia’s ambassador in Washington has changed that thinking. [emphasis original]

Apparently, Peter King hasn’t read Holder’s legal defense of assassination in response to perceived threats.

More interesting still is the list of “US cases involving Hezbollah,” a list of 19 federal cases. One of the cases is the Scary Car Broker plot, in which the US-based business owners are not alleged to have known of any tie to Hezbollah (if, in fact, one exists).

Even worse, it includes US v. Chahine, the case against Nada Prouty’s brother-in-law Talal Chahine.

The government never accused Chahine of any ties to Hezbollah—not in any legal forum where they’d have to prove their case. Rather, they accused him (and got a guilty plea from Prouty’s sister) of tax evasion. While the tax evasion case was valid, the entire case derived from Prouty’s brother Fadi’s efforts to dig up a crime that

would justify his service as an informant, which he was doing to beat his own weapons charges. That is, as so often happens, this was an instance of FBI trading one criminal charge for the hope of netting a terrorist. Along the way, Fadi convinced Chahine not to go clean on his tax evasion, presumably at the direction of the FBI. Ultimately, the only tie between Chahine and Hezbollah consisted of a radical cleric's presence at a charity event benefiting orphans to which Chahine had donated. And, as Prouty lays out, a 4-year investigation into Chahine never showed any ties to terrorism.

In fact, government records would later show that even after a second raid of Talal's residence in September 2005, no actual evidence of terrorism was obtained, nor was incriminating evidence of terrorism ties ever found in the nearly four years of tapped phones, intercepted faxes, and closely monitored bank activities.

As Prouty also notes, the government let Chahine skip the country (Fadi had warned him he'd be indicted), which she suggests they wouldn't have done if he were a legitimate terrorist threat.

So apparently, according to Peter King, any time a Lebanese immigrant commits tax evasion, it counts as a Hezbollah case.

As someone who has himself funded a terrorist group, King ought to know it takes more to fund terrorists than that.