

What Did We Learn From Ted Cruz' Hearing?

U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) held a hearing on the Obama administration's "willful blindness" to radical Islamic terrorism in the U.S., and while two key witnesses refused to show up, there was still a lot to be learned.

Cruz, as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Oversight, Agency Action, Federal Rights and Federal Courts, called the hearing—titled *Willful Blindness: Consequences of Agency Efforts to Deemphasize Radical Islam in Combating Terrorism*—in response to the U.S. government's reaction to the Orlando nightclub shootings two weeks ago. It was intended to investigate the deadly consequences for the safety and security of the American people under current Obama administration policies.

"This year alone, the Obama administration has twice purged mentions of 'ISIS' and 'Islamic terrorism' from highly significant public records—one involving French President Hollande's remarks about the Paris terror attacks and the other involving the terrorist's 911 call during the horrific Orlando attack," Cruz said during his opening remarks. "The Administration was forced to abruptly reverse course when the public outcry became too great.

"We cannot combat and defeat radical Islamic terrorism without acknowledging it exists and directing our resources to stopping it. And an Orwellian doublethink that seeks to excerpt any reference to it, as the Administration did to the President of France, or erase pledges of allegiance to ISIS, as the Administration did with the Orlando terrorist, is counterproductive to keeping this country safe."

[Click here](#) to read Sen. Cruz's opening statement in its

entirety.

The hearing was briefly interrupted by three women wearing pink T-shirts claiming the hearing was the byproduct of “islamophobia” among Republicans. But Cruz also noted two key witnesses—John Carlin, an Assistant Attorney General for the Department of Justice’s National Security Division, and Michael Steinbach, the Executive Assistant Director for the FBI’s National Security Branch—had refused to appear before the subcommittee.

Skipping that first panel, the subcommittee moved on to its second panel, which included:

- **Dr. M. Zuhdi Jasser**, Founder and President of the American Islamic Forum for Democracy
- **Farhana Y. Khera**, President and Executive Director of Muslim Advocates
- **J. Richard Cohen**, President of the Southern Poverty Law Center
- **Chris Gaubatz**, National Security Consultant at Understanding the Threat
- **Michael German**, a former FBI Special Agent who is now a fellow at the Brennan Center for Justice
- **Andrew C. McCarthy**, the former Chief Assistant United States Attorney for the Southern District of Justice

They were also joined by Philip Haney, a retired Customs and Border Protection Officer, who served as a key whistleblower in the hearing. He said in his prepared testimony there were direct links to actions taken by the U.S. government in 2009 and acts of terrorism on the U.S. soil that followed.

He offered the following timeline of events:

- Oct. 15, 2009—he was ordered to modify approximately 820 Treasury Enforcement Communications System (a system to keep track of individuals entering and exiting the country and of individuals involved in or suspected to

be involved in crimes) records, most of which were related to the Muslim Brotherhood network in the U.S.

- Jan. 27 & 28, 2010—then-Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano hosted a meeting with Muslim-American leaders where the Obama Administration's "Countering Violent Extremism" agenda is suggested; among those in attendance are known Muslim Brotherhood affiliates that were named co-conspirators in the Holy Land Foundation terror-financing trial.
- Spring of 2010—the CVE Working Group is constituted, including six known affiliates of the Muslim Brotherhood. At the same time, Customs and Border Patrol officers were removing the links for many of these individuals, and others with known Muslim Brotherhood ties, from TECS. These people had substantial influence over U.S. counterterrorism policy.
- Aug. 30, 2011—the "Tablighi Jamaat Project" is launched. Tablighi Jamaat is an ultra-orthodox Islamic sect that preaches that Muslims should replicate the life of Muhammad and tells them it is their duty to "travel the world converting non-believers to the one true faith." It has been directly linked to terror plots throughout the Western world.
- Nov. 15, 2011—he is transferred for temporary duty to the National Targeting Center and is soon assigned to the Advanced Targeting Team. Those CBP entities are tasked with risk assessment and identifying homeland security threats potentially before they arrive at U.S. ports of entry.
- March 15, 2012—lawyers and senior officials of DHS express concerns over the NTC's investigation of Tablighi Jamaat because it hadn't been designated as a terrorist organization and the investigation may be seen as discriminatory.
- June and July of 2012—the Tablighi Jamaat investigation is shut down, despite 1,200 "law enforcement actions," nearly 300 "possible connections" to Islamic terrorism,

and the fact that about one-fourth of the detainees at Guantanamo Bay were directly linked to Tablighi Jamaat.

- Aug. 22, 2012—an investigation is launched into the Institute of Islamic Education and files are entered into TECS.
- Sept. 21, 2012—all files (67) about the Institute of Islamic Education are purged from TECS and he is investigated by DHS officials.
- Sept. 21, 2014—he is relieved of his service weapon, his access to CBP computer systems—including TECS—is suspended, his security clearance is revoked, and he is placed into sequestration for the remaining 11 months of his career.
- Dec. 2, 2015—the San Bernardino attack occurs, which is directly linked to both Tablighi Jamaat and the Institute of Islamic Education through the Darul Uloom Al-Islamiya mosque in San Bernardino.
- June 12, 2016—the Orlando attack occurs, which is also directly linked to both Tablighi Jamaat and the Institute of Islamic Education through Omar Mateen's mosque in Fort Pierce, Fla.

“The threat of Islamic terrorism does not just come from a network of armed organizations such as Hamas and ISIS, who are operating ‘over there’ in the Middle East,” Haney told the subcommittee. “In fact, branches of the same global network have been established here in America, and they are operating in plain sight—at least to those of us who have been charged with the duty of protecting our country from threats, both foreign and domestic.

“The goal of the Global Islamic Movement, which is based on Quran , is actually very simple: to establish Sharia Law everywhere in the world—including here in America.”

Haney said what is more complicated—he used the word “kaleidoscopic” to describe it—are the methods and tactics used to achieve that goal. He said the quranically authorized

methods range from Dawaa's "peaceful dialogue and persuasion" to the violent methods—including jihad—that have made headlines more than 28,000 times since 9/11.

"In fact, there are at least two other 'operative verbs' in the Quran that occur four times more frequently than the verb 'jihad,' and both are several dimensions more violent than the strictly literal meaning of jihad," he said. "The threat we face today—that continues growing, despite the willful blindness of those who insist on pretending otherwise—are not the tactical methods of violent extremism, terrorism or even operative verbs such as jihad, but rather, the historical and universally recognized Islamic strategic goal of implementing Sharia law everywhere in the world, so that no other form of government (including the U.S. Constitution) is able to oppose its influence over the lives of those who must either submit to its authority, become second-class citizens, or perish."