
II. London: HQ of World Terrorism

British Parliament endorses terrorism

The British government's policy of providing safe haven and other forms of support to terrorist assassins, is openly admitted by its spokesmen. The British Crown's only concern has been, that these murderers target British rivals, or areas targeted for colonization or recolonization, and not Britain itself. No terrorist operations within Britain, or against British interests, have been tolerated.

That this is the official policy emerged into public view, when a lone member of parliament, Nigel Waterson, attempted to introduce legislation which would ban such terrorist safehousing and aid. On Jan. 25, 1997, Waterson introduced a "Conspiracy and Incitement Bill," which would have, for the first time, banned British residents from plotting and conducting terrorist operations overseas. Waterson proposed the bill in the aftermath of a scandal over Britain providing safe haven to Saudi terrorist Mohammad al Masari, who took credit for bombing U.S. military sites in Saudi Arabia in June 1996. Britain's grant of asylum to Al Masari, and its protection of other terrorists, provoked stormy protests from the Saudi, Israeli, and Egyptian governments, motivating Waterson to introduce the bill.

The bill was read before a specially mandated committee in late January, and then on Feb. 14 and 22. Insufficient votes to pass it on its third reading, meant that the bill did not get out of committee, and consequently became a dead letter. Although Waterson was a member of the then-ruling Conservative Party, the government refused to endorse his bill, ensuring its defeat.

House of Commons parliamentarian George Galloway, from the Labour Party, which has since come to power, led the fight against the Waterson bill, and served as de facto spokesman for the British Crown in explaining why the bill had to be trashed. The following is excerpted from Galloway's Feb. 14 speech before the committee, as reproduced in the House of Commons official proceedings of the debate on the bill:

Terrorists 'take tea' with the Queen

"The Bill will change political asylum in this country in a profound and dangerous way. It will change a state of affairs that has existed since Napoleon's time.

"How can the Iraqi opposition get rid of Saddam Hussein except by violent means? There is no other way in which he can be overthrown. Members of the Iraqi National Congress,

which occupies a very plush office opposite Harrods, spend every day plotting the violent overthrow of Saddam Hussein. I personally pray for their success, as does every right-thinking, honorable Member.

"We are all in favor of controlling terrorism in Britain. Surely not a single honorable Member has any truck with terrorism here, but we are talking about terrorism in other countries, and what is defined as terrorism by foreign dictatorships, where there is no democratic process.

"The legislation is rushed in response to a specific, and, for the government, highly embarrassing refugee case—that of Professor al-Masari, who was a thorn in the side of the government of Saudi Arabia.

"The bill will cause a grave diminution in the political rights of our people, which has been cherished for centuries . . . who welcomed to this country revolutionaries such as Kossuth after the wave of revolutions in 1848. Kossuth was a Hungarian who led an armed, terrorist struggle against the Austro-Hungarian empire from his sanctuary in London. He would have been prosecuted under the bill, had it existed at the time.

"Perhaps some Conservative members wish that Karl Marx had been prosecuted, but this country's reputation would have been gravely diminished if he had been, when he was laboring in the British Museum, and calling for the beheading of the European kings. Several of those monarchs wrote in congress to the British government to ask that he be prosecuted, but the then Conservative government replied that the mere advocacy of regicide was not a crime in Britain, and that Mr. Marx was free and welcome to continue his labors in the British Museum.

"By definition, a tyranny can be removed only by extraordinary measures. It is sometimes possible, although very rare, that massive civil disobedience and huge demonstrations can topple a regime, as some in eastern Europe were toppled, but much more often at one stage or another during a dictatorship, people have to bear arms and take armed action against it.

"Inevitably, in conditions of extreme repression, the leadership of such movements will gravitate to countries such as ours where freedom and liberty prevail. The bill will criminalize such people, even though they have not broken any law in Britain—or at least they would not have done so until the Bill became law—or cause any harm to the Queen's peace in her realm. They will fall open to prosecution in this country under the Bill because they are inciting, supporting, or organizing events in distant tyrannies, which are clearly offenses under the laws of such tyrants.

"I repeat the cliché, which is a cliché only because it is so obviously true, that one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter. [Cypriot Archbishop] Makarios was a wanted terrorist, and took tea with the Queen in Buckingham Palace. [Zimbabwe President Robert] Mugabe was a wanted Marxist-Leninist terrorist and then took tea with the Queen at Buckingham Palace."