

NEWS ALERT



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Homeland Security Committee

Rep. Bennie G. Thompson, Chairman



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement of Chairman Bennie G. Thompson

“Assessing and Addressing the Threat: Defining the Role of a National Commission on Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism”

June 14, 2007 (Washington) – Today, Committee on Homeland Security Chairman Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) delivered the following prepared remarks for the Intelligence, Information Sharing, and Terrorism Risk Assessment Subcommittee hearing entitled “Assessing and Addressing the Threat: Defining the Role of a National Commission on Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism”:

“As the London train bombings in 2005 and the terror arrests of 12 Canadians in Toronto last summer made clear, the threat of homegrown terrorism is real. Indeed, the recent arrests of U.S. citizens who were plotting attacks against the Fort Dix military base in New Jersey and JFK airport in New York remind us that the threat in this country is equally great.

Almost six years after 9/11, it is high time that we start to understand how radicalization can lead to terrorism and what we should do about it.

I commend Ms. Harman for her efforts in sponsoring the Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act of 2007, and I believe that the creation of a national commission to study this problem and to recommend a legislative plan of action is the right step. Such Commissions have had a major impact before. The Gilmore Commission, for example, made 164 recommendations regarding responses to terrorism involving weapons of mass destruction. All of those 164 recommendations have been adopted – in whole or in part – by the Federal Government.

Moreover, the National Commission on Terrorism, on which Chairwoman Harman served in the late nineties, was a valuable resource for American counter-terrorism efforts both before and after the 911 attacks. And the work of the 9/11 Commission itself set in motion the creation of this Committee and the daily work we do to help secure the homeland.

I believe that the creation of a national commission on radicalization and homegrown terrorism will continue this tradition and help define our approach to these pressing problems.”

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