

**Trojan Horses: Covert Foreign Malign Influence Operations in America**  
**Testimony before**  
**The House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on South**  
**and Central Asia**

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My name is Mike Gonzalez. I am the Angeles T. Arredondo Senior Fellow on E Pluribus Unum at The Heritage Foundation. The views I express in this testimony are my own and should not be construed as representing any official position of The Heritage Foundation.

Chairman Huizenga, Ranking Member Kamlager-Dove, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on foreign malign influence activities threatening our country. Nations around the world take advantage of the open nature of American society to seek influence or cause us harm. This is the case whether it's adversaries and outright enemies such as China and Cuba, which will use any opportunity to infiltrate our institutions and destabilize our country,<sup>1</sup> or shadowy non-government organizations or individuals seeking to surreptitiously implant Islamist concepts such as sharia in our midst, and also sow chaos.<sup>2</sup>

These foreign actors infiltrate and influence the K-12 educational system that instructs our future generations, the institutions of higher education that produce our leaders, the government agencies that make up our government, the lobbying firms that write far too many of our laws, the museums that exist to transmit our heritage to future generations, or they set up militant organizations that will coordinate protests, marches and outright riots and then amplify the ensuing anarchy. This is a problem that should concern you, our elected leaders, and it is one you are in a position to remedy. The time is propitious. We just marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the September 11 attacks. A quarter century has passed since that horrific tragedy, and current events tell us that the younger generation has not been taught the lessons of the attack.

It simplifies matters if we separate the threats into two very broad different buckets, one Islamist and the other Marxist. Though they emanate from different ideologies, sometimes American and foreign forces inspired by these two sets of beliefs form alliances against what they see as a common enemy, which, again broadly, one can define as the Christian, capitalist West. This is sometimes referred to as the "Red-Green Alliance," red being the color of communism and green the color of Islam. This

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<sup>1</sup> Mike Gonzalez and Mary Mobley, How the Revolutionary Ecosystem Sustains Pro-Palestinian Protesters and the BLM Movement, Heritage Foundation Special Report, June 25, 2024. [https://www.heritage.org/sites/default/files/2024-06/SR284\\_2.pdf](https://www.heritage.org/sites/default/files/2024-06/SR284_2.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Doree Lewak, CAIR blamed 9/11 on US support for Israel, recommended bin Laden's writings in back-to-school guide: 'Evil propaganda' The New York Post, August 28, 2026. <https://nypost.com/2026/08/28/us-news/cair-blamed-9-11-on-us-support-for-israel-recommended-bin-ladens-writings-in-back-to-school-guide/>

coalition is also the result of the Marxist Left's decision sometime in the 1960s to abandon the industrial worker and farmer (the "hammer and sickle") as the locus of revolution in favor of groups based on race, ethnicity, sex, sexual preference, etc. The critical theory scholar Herbert Marcuse was a pioneer of this strategy, writing in 1966 that revolutionaries would henceforth come from "the ghetto population."<sup>3</sup> More recently, the French communist leader Jean-Luc Mélenchon put it this way in April, "if you are counting on the white, Catholic workers to make socialism in France, you will have wait long, because this will not take place."<sup>4</sup> The mayhem we experience on our streets and our college campuses, over the omnicause of Gaza, Venezuela, Cuba, ICE, the environment, social justice (as David Horowitz used to say, "the issue is never the issue, the issue is the revolution) is the result of the Red-Green Alliance. I want to recommend to this subcommittee in this regard the research work of Asra Nomani at Fox News and Stu Smith at the Manhattan Institute, who devote much of their professional lives to unearthing the social turmoil caused on our streets by members of the Red-Green Alliance.

## Islamist

It's important to note at the top of this conversation the difference between Islam and Islamism, its political dimension. Journalist Sam Westrop defines Islam as "a fourteen-century-old faith of over a billion believers," and Islamism as "a modern, totalitarian ideology that seeks to impose, through violent or non-violent means, a theocratic state operating under absolute Islamic law."<sup>5</sup> The name for that Islamic law is *sharia* and we shouldn't as a nation avoid a separate discussion on whether the imposition of sharia on society is part and parcel of the entire religion, and not just a separate domain of its political version. Shadi Hamid, a Georgetown University fellow and Washington Post columnist wrote earlier this year that "practicing Muslims — despite being repeatedly asked to — can't disavow 'sharia' even if they wanted to. Sharia, roughly translated as Islamic law, includes guidelines on how to pray, fast and otherwise observe what it means to submit to God in daily practice. These commitments are not incidental to Muslim identity. For believers, they are the point."<sup>6</sup> The numbers in Europe, where the process of Islamification has gone further than here, do not augur well at any rate. According to a survey, 46 percent of Muslims living in France believe that shariah should be applied to the country where they live. The numbers for Germany are similar, 45.1 percent.<sup>7</sup> With that out of the way, let's discuss some of the groups exerting influence.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the nation's largest Muslim interest group, was founded in 1994 ostensibly to advocate for the civil rights of Muslim Americans. "We are similar to a Muslim NAACP," once said Ibrahim Hooper, CAIR's communication director.<sup>8</sup> In reality, CAIR, an organization that wields real influence in this country, is tightly linked to the Muslim

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<sup>3</sup> Douglas Kellner, introduction to Herbert Marcuse, *The New Left and the 1960s*, Collected Papers of Herbert Marcuse 3 (London: Routledge, 1968), 125

<sup>4</sup> Jean-Luc Mélenchon stigmatise les "ouvriers blancs catholiques," YouTube, Sud Radio, April 13, 2026. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=efz1lYqTSLw&t=13s>

<sup>5</sup> Sam Westrop, A Guide to Islamism in Texas, February 11, 2026, Islamist Watch, <https://www.meforum.org/islamist-watch/resources/reports/a-guide-to-islamism-in-texas>

<sup>6</sup> Shadi Hamid, "Muslims Shouldn't Have to Assimilate to Belong," The Washington Post, April 8, 2026. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2026/04/08/muslims-religion-republicans-assimilation/>

<sup>7</sup> IFOP. ÉTAT DES LIEUX DU RAPPORT À L'ISLAM ET À L'ISLAMISME DES MUSULMANS DE FRANCE. [https://www.ifop.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/analyse\\_ifop\\_2025.11.18.pdf](https://www.ifop.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/analyse_ifop_2025.11.18.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> *Columbus Dispatch* (Ohio), Jan. 1, 2002, quoted by Daniel Pipes and Sharon Chadha, CAIR: Islamists Fooling the Establishment, *Middle East Quarterly*, Spring 2006, Volume, 13, Number 2. [https://www.meforum.org/middle-east-quarterly/cair-islamists-fooling-the-establishment?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com#\\_ftn1](https://www.meforum.org/middle-east-quarterly/cair-islamists-fooling-the-establishment?utm_source=chatgpt.com#_ftn1)

Brotherhood, one of the world's most influential terrorist networks. Both Florida and Texas have designated CAIR and the Muslim Brotherhood as "foreign terrorist organizations."<sup>9</sup> Florida Governor Ron DeSantis said the Brotherhood was attempting to establish "a world-wide Islamic caliphate." In addition, Florida Representative Randy Fine has introduced legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives designating CAIR as a "terrorist organization" at the Federal level, citing, among other things, the fact that the U.S. Justice Department named CAIR as "an unindicted co-conspirator" in the 2007 Holy Land Foundation terrorism financing case.<sup>10</sup>

The Muslim Brotherhood is a transnational Islamist terror group founded in Cairo, Egypt in 1928 and which today receives support from Turkey and Qatar. It created the terrorist group Hamas, which carried out the October 7, 2023 massacre of Israeli civilians. Though Hamas—like the Muslim Brotherhood—is a Sunni Islamist organization, it receives support and acts as a proxy for Iran, whose theocrats practice the opposing Shia version of Islam. The Muslim Brotherhood therefore sits at the intersection of all the world's worst terror groups. It even has ties to Hezbollah, the Shia terrorist group that controls parts of Lebanon and also acts as a proxy for Iran's mullahs. The nexus here is al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya, the Muslim Brotherhood's Lebanese branch, which has a growing alliance with Hezbollah.<sup>11</sup>

At one point, the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development was the largest Islamic pressure group in the United States. Its genesis reveals an intricate network. The Muslim Brotherhood founded Hamas in 1987 as its Palestinian branch. Court papers attest that "After Hamas's formation, the Muslim Brotherhood directed its world-wide chapters to establish so-called 'Palestine Committees' to support Hamas from abroad."<sup>12</sup> The U.S. branch of the Palestine Committee "also created other organizations in the United States to support Hamas. The Committee created not only HLF [the Holy Land Foundation] but also the Islamic Association for Palestine ('IAP'), which was a media entity." To summarize, the HLF was the chief fundraising arm of the Muslim Brotherhood-created Palestine Committee, which included the IAP, its public relations arm. For additional evidence, Muslim Brotherhood documents from 1991 include the Bylaws of the Palestine Committee, and identify the IAP as a part of this structure.<sup>13</sup>

The government shut HLF down after 9/11<sup>14</sup> and President George W. Bush designated it a Specially Designated Global Terrorist under Executive Order 13224.<sup>15</sup> In 2008, HLF and its senior

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<sup>9</sup> Caitlin McCormack, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis designates Muslim Brotherhood, CAIR as 'foreign terrorist organizations', follows Texas' lead, The New York Post. Dec. 9, 2025. <https://nypost.com/2025/12/09/us-news/florida-gov-ron-desantis-designates-muslim-brotherhood-cair-as-foreign-terrorist-organizations-follows-texas-lead/>

<sup>10</sup> H.R. 4097, A Bill, 119<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2025. <https://www.congress.gov/119/bills/hr4097/BILLS-119hr4097ih.htm>

<sup>11</sup> Talha Ismail Duman, Beyond Sectarianism: Hezbollah and the Lebanese Muslim Brotherhood's Evolving Alliance in the Context of the Al-Aqsa Flood, June 15, 2025. Journal of Sakarya University Faculty of Technology. [https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/sakaifd/article/1642480?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/sakaifd/article/1642480?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

<sup>12</sup> United States V. The Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. July 13, 2012. [https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCOURTS-ca5-08-10678/pdf/USCOURTS-ca5-08-10678-0.pdf?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCOURTS-ca5-08-10678/pdf/USCOURTS-ca5-08-10678-0.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

<sup>13</sup> Bylaws of the Palestine Committee of the Muslim Brotherhood, By Palestine Committee. The Investigative Project on Terrorism. [https://www.investigativeproject.org/document/24-bylaws-of-the-palestine-committee-of-the-muslim?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.investigativeproject.org/document/24-bylaws-of-the-palestine-committee-of-the-muslim?utm_source=chatgpt.com) and <https://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/24/bylaws-of-the-palestine-committee-of-the-muslim.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> EBSCO, Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development (HLF). <https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/political-science/holy-land-foundation-relief-and-development-hlf>

<sup>15</sup> Department of State, Executive Order 13224. <https://www.state.gov/executive-order-13224>

leaders were indeed found guilty in connection to the funding of Hamas.<sup>16</sup> Money transfers in the amount of tens of thousands of dollars were shipped to the Gaza Strip to fund Hamas efforts under the guise of charitable donation.<sup>17</sup> Found during inquiry were documents discussing, in part, Mujahid Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, the Muslim Brotherhood leader who founded Hamas.<sup>18</sup>

Many of the groups exerting a malign influence in the United States were founded by individuals associated with the Holy Land Foundation and the Islamic Association of Palestine after they were disbanded. In the case of CAIR, two founders, Omar Ahmad and Nihad Awad, were respectively the president and public relations director of the Islamic Association of Palestine, one of whose past presidents, Rafeeq Jabar, was also a CAIR co-founder.<sup>19</sup>

CAIR is a prime example of what researchers Daniel Pipes and Sharon Chadha have called “Islamists fooling the establishment,” in a 2006 report for the Middle East Quarterly.<sup>20</sup> They cite as evidence how President George W. Bush invited CAIR’s executive director, Nihad Awad, to be next to him at the podium when he visited the Islamic Center in Washington just a few days after the September 11, 2001 attacks as an attempt to prevent a backlash against Muslims. Yet this is the same Nihad Awad with ties to the IAP and therefore the Brotherhood. The Anti-Defamation League said in a 2015 report that “key CAIR leaders often traffic in openly antisemitic and anti-Zionist rhetoric,” naming Awad.<sup>21</sup> Bush’s Secretary of State Colin Powell also invited CAIR representatives to a Ramadan dinner soon after that. CAIR has also been involved in sensitivity training sessions at law enforcement agencies in multiple states.

A recent news item illustrates how CAIR operates and the influence it wields. The group was caught trying to promote a “Back-to-school resource guide,” that, among other things, justified and minimize the terror attacks on 9/11.<sup>22</sup> The guide attempted to draw contrasts between the attacks, which left almost 3,000 Americans dead, with violent but minor actions by racial supremacists and animal rights extremists. Worse yet, CAIR’s guide listed 9/11 mastermind Osama bin Laden’s *Letter to America* as a recommended resource within the material, alongside a charitable depiction of the terrorist leader as a rebel formerly allied to the United States. The textbook additionally criticized the U.S. response to 9/11, typifying our government’s actions as “aggressive” and claiming that they resulted in the “erosion of civil liberties.” The study material also accused the U.S. government—the same government that was then led by President Bush, who had invited Awad to share the stage with

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<sup>16</sup> Investigative Project on Terrorism. “US v. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, et al.” Accessed September 10, 2026. <https://www.investigativeproject.org/case/65/us-v-holy-land-foundation>

<sup>17</sup> Investigative Project on Terrorism. *Infocom Search 86*. In *US v. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, et al.* Accessed September 10, 2026. [https://www.investigativeproject.org/case\\_docs/us-v-holy-land-foundation/3685/infocom-search-86.pdf](https://www.investigativeproject.org/case_docs/us-v-holy-land-foundation/3685/infocom-search-86.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> Investigative Project on Terrorism. “Pamphlet Containing Information on Charitable Committees.” In *US v. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, et al.* Accessed September 10, 2026. [https://www.investigativeproject.org/case\\_docs/us-v-holy-land-foundation/3681/pamphlet-containing-information-on-charitable-committees.pdf](https://www.investigativeproject.org/case_docs/us-v-holy-land-foundation/3681/pamphlet-containing-information-on-charitable-committees.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> Daniel Pipes and Sharon Chadha, CAIR: Islamists Fooling the Establishment, Middle East Quarterly, Spring 2006, Volume, 13, Number 2. [https://www.meforum.org/middle-east-quarterly/cair-islamists-fooling-the-establishment?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com#\\_ftn1](https://www.meforum.org/middle-east-quarterly/cair-islamists-fooling-the-establishment?utm_source=chatgpt.com#_ftn1)

<sup>20</sup> Pipes and Chadha

<sup>21</sup> The Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR), Background, ADL, August 21, 2015.

[https://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounder/council-american-islamic-relations-cair?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounder/council-american-islamic-relations-cair?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

<sup>22</sup> Screenshots of the guide on Instagram. [https://www.instagram.com/p/Dcbw8fJmiWa/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/p/Dcbw8fJmiWa/?img_index=1) included in Lewak’s New York Post article.

him—of instituting policies which promoted stereotypes of Muslims and lessened their freedoms. The guide unsurprisingly said the terror attack was justified because of the U.S. “support of Israel.” Terrorism itself is portrayed as something “defined differently by different groups.”

Following public coverage of the back-to-school guide, CAIR yanked the report off the web, but not before journalists were able to make screen grabs. But New York City Councilwoman Vickie Paladino told the Daily Signal that CAIR’s school guide and the reference to Bin Laden’s manifesto prove that “CAIR is a terrorist organization. There’s really no other way to put it. They’re the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood, and it’s frankly insane that we’ve allowed them to operate in the United States at all, much less gain such a level of influence that they’re now involved with school curriculum,” Paladino said.<sup>23</sup>

Nor is CAIR the only Islamist group with ties to the Muslim Brotherhood and IAP that is operating inside the United States and having an undue, baleful influence. There are many others which have contributed to making life difficult on our college campuses and the streets of our cities. American Muslims for Palestine (AMP) is a prime example. AMP was founded in 2005 by individuals who belonged to groups shut down as a result of the Holy Land Foundation case, which means that AMP is another Hamas front. “At least nine individuals who worked for or on behalf of these shuttered charities came together to run a new organization called American Muslims for Palestine,” former Treasury official Jonathan Schanzer explained to the House Ways and Means Committee on November 15, 2023.<sup>24</sup>

AMP employs Marxist rhetoric—probably to appeal to today’s college students, reared by their professors on a steady diet of Marxist diatribe—and took a direct role in the student encampments that roiled campuses in 2024. AMP executive director Osama Abu Irshaid spoke on May 23, 2024 at the encampment on the campus of George Washington University, saying, “They are trying to destroy you before you succeed in bringing this imperialism to an end.” America and its “elite colleges,” he said, “are only structures in an imperial project. Israel is only another structure in an imperial project. Zionism is no less evil than white supremacy or any other type of supremacy.” Abu Irshaid promised students that “we are going to change this country forever...to take back America.”<sup>25</sup> Irshaid previously served as editor of *Al-Zaitounah*, one of AIP’s Arabic periodicals. Irshaid was also listed as a research fellow with the United Association for Studies and Research (UASR), another Palestine Committee branch.<sup>26</sup>

AMP has direct ties to radical U.S. groups such as Black Lives Matter. AMP was one of four organizations to organize a 200-strong Palestinian contingent that traveled to Ferguson, Missouri, in 2014 when thousands of leftist activists from around the country converged on the St. Louis suburb

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<sup>23</sup> Pedro Rodriguez, “CAIR NJ Recommended Bin Laden’s ‘Letter to America’ to Explain 9/11 to Kids,” The Daily Signal, Sept. 3, 2026, <https://www.dailysignal.com/2026/09/03/cair-nj-bin-laden/>

<sup>24</sup> Jonathan Schanzer, “From Ivory Towers to Dark Corners,” testimony before the Ways and Means Committee, U.S. House of Representatives, November 15, 2023, <https://gop-waysandmeans.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Schanzer-Testimony.pdf> (accessed June 11, 2024).

<sup>25</sup> See video at: Middle East Media Research Institute, “Executive Director of American Muslims for Palestine...,” X, May 23, 2024, <https://x.com/MEMRIReports/status/1793570395943059754> (accessed June 11, 2024).

<sup>26</sup> John Rossomando, American Muslims for Palestine Leader Visits Rep. Connolly, State Department, The Investigative Project, May 3, 2017, [https://www.investigativeproject.org/6070/american-muslims-for-palestine-leader-visits-rep?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.investigativeproject.org/6070/american-muslims-for-palestine-leader-visits-rep?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

after the police shooting of Michael Brown to form BLM into an international network.<sup>27</sup> At the height of the George Floyd violence in spring and summer 2020, AMP played an active role in organizing protests for BLM and supporting BLM in other ways. AMP also works with other radical groups. In January 2024, it worked with the communist ANSWER Coalition to organize a march that brought 400,000 people (an organizer estimate) to Washington, DC. ANSWER has organizational ties to the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL).<sup>28</sup>

Another group is Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), an AMP affiliate. SJP was arguably the most active and the most powerful of the activist organizations at the height of the campus encampment protests in 2024. It was one of the three principal organizers of the Columbia University protests that became the epicenter of the movement in April 2024 (the other two being Jewish Voice for Peace and Within Our Lifetime). The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) calls SJP “the primary organizer of anti-Israel events on campus, with dozens of chapters,” noting that it is “AMP’s main partner on campus.”<sup>29</sup> Park MacDougald at Tablet writes that SJP in fact has no “formal corporate structure of its own but operates as AMP’s campus brand,” quoting a suit filed on May 1 by the law firm Greenberg Traurig against AJP Educational Fund, the fiscal sponsor of AMP.<sup>30</sup> SJP also worked with BLM and was one of the groups that brought a contingent of Palestinians to Ferguson.

SJP cofounder Hatem Bazian, a former chairman of AMP’s board, was a regular speaker at Islamic Association of Palestine events and had close personal ties with Rafeeq Jabar, the former Islamic Association of Palestine President and co-founder of CAIR. According to journalist Abha Shankar of Campus Watch, a 2006 convention of another Muslim Brotherhood front group, the Muslim American Society, “ended up being ‘an IAP reunion’ and ‘a precursor of AMP leadership.’ A panel discussion featured future AMP director Osama Abu Irshaid and future AMP President Hatem Bazian. AMS President Rafeeq Jaber served as moderator.”<sup>31</sup>

At the state level, Texas is arguably one of the biggest battlegrounds. As The Middle East Forum explained in its February 2026 “Guide to Islamism in Texas,”<sup>32</sup> the problem is widespread in the Lone Star State. “Of the 8,000+ Islamic nonprofit organizations in the United States, almost 650 are based in Texas,” it said. “Reflecting national trends, approximately ¼ of these Texas Islamic institutions reveal some degree of Islamist influence or control, split mostly between 7 major networks.”

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<sup>27</sup> Stephen Tamari, “Ferguson to Palestine,” Middle East Research and Informational Project, December 1, 2014, <https://merip.org/2014/12/ferguson-to-palestine/> (accessed May 27, 2024).

<sup>28</sup> ANSWER Coalition, “National March for Gaza Brings Massive Crowd to Joe Biden’s Doorstep,” January 14, 2024, [https://www.answercoalition.org/national\\_march\\_for\\_gaza\\_brings\\_massive\\_crowd\\_to\\_joe\\_biden\\_s\\_doorstep#:~:text=Yesterday's%20National%20March%20for%20Gaza,Muslim%20Task%20Force%20for%20Palestine](https://www.answercoalition.org/national_march_for_gaza_brings_massive_crowd_to_joe_biden_s_doorstep#:~:text=Yesterday's%20National%20March%20for%20Gaza,Muslim%20Task%20Force%20for%20Palestine) (accessed June 11, 2024).

<sup>29</sup> Anti-Defamation League, “Profile: American Muslims for Palestine,” March 29, 2013, <https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/american-muslims-for-palestine-2013-03-29-v4.pdf> (accessed June 11, 2024).

<sup>30</sup> Park MacDougald, “The People Setting America on Fire,” Tablet, May 6, 2024, <https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/news/articles/people-setting-america-on-fire-soros-tides-wespac> (accessed June 11, 2024).

<sup>31</sup> Abha Shankar, Revised Complaint Bolsters AMP’s Ties to Old Hamas-Support Network, Campus Watch, April 5, 2019, <https://www.meforum.org/campus-watch/revised-complaint-bolsters-amp-ties-to-old-hamas>

<sup>32</sup> Sam Westrop, A Guide to Islamism in Texas, February 11, 2026, Islamist Watch, <https://www.meforum.org/islamist-watch/resources/reports/a-guide-to-islamism-in-texas>

The most important of these seven is the Qutbist network, which comprises the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas and their offshoots. “Numerous mosques maintain Qutbist ties, such as the Sachse Muslim Society, which in January and February 2026 ran events with former Hamas fundraiser Monzer Taleb, as well as Ahmed Taha, a Muslim Brotherhood supporter who has promoted calls for the killing of Jews,” said the report, which named four private full-time schools operating in Texas run by MB and Hamas-linked Islamists. Other networks are running several non-profits and madrasahs (or Islamic schools) throughout Texas.

## China

China is the world’s largest communist dictatorship (as well as the world’s second largest country in terms of population, period) and thus must take center stage in any discussion on how Marxist foreign actors impact the lives of Americans. As my employer The Heritage Foundation put it in a paper earlier this year, “The People’s Republic of China has engaged in systematic and aggressive influence operations across America which threaten U.S. interests.”<sup>33</sup> It should surprise nobody who follows China-related news that “the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) strategy for exploiting subnational governance to advance its objectives is led by its official foreign influence agency, the United Front Work Department (UFWD),” adds Heritage. “The UFWD, through its various front organizations, including the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, has established an extensive network of associations, sister cities, cultural groups, friendship societies, and business forums in all 50 states.”

Since we ourselves are a big country with 50 states and multiple municipalities, it helps to illustrate the problem by looking at a single city, Chicago. Enrollment has fallen steadily in Chicago Public Schools (CPS) because the stranglehold of the teachers’ unions on the public system has left it in a parlous state, but CPS remains one of the largest districts in the country, with 316,224 students attending 626 schools, a number that includes charter schools, in the 2025-2026 school year.<sup>34</sup> That’s a lot of minds to mold, so Beijing is building in the Windy City what China’s Deputy Consul General in Chicago Zhang Yiqi does not shy from calling a “pro-China force.”<sup>35</sup> One of the educational materials to be used is a K-12 book, “West Meets East: 100 American Secondary School Students’ Tales About China,” which tells China’s narrative so as to let students “fall in love with China” and to “foster support for China.”

Memorandums of Understandings signed between American school principals and counterparts in China allow the Chinese schools to then develop curricula and even train teachers. One particular high school principal who signed such an MOU at the Chinese Consulate last year, Ryan Glowacz of Taft High School, defended the arrangement by saying that since Taft was an International Baccalaureate School, his mission was to “educate global citizens to create a better world.”<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> A Plan for Winning the New Cold War. “11 Ways States and Local Communities Can Counter the Chinese Communist Party” <https://www.heritage.org/winning-the-new-cold-war/11-ways-states-and-local-communities-can-counter-the-ccp>

<sup>34</sup> Stats and Facts, CPS, <https://www.cps.edu/about/stats-facts>

<sup>35</sup> Natalie Winters, White House correspondent, X post.

<https://x.com/nataliegwinters/status/2095178360830022095?s=46&t=i91hM5vGvTvDvZyDMKyY4A>

<sup>36</sup> Todd Crawford, Chicago Public Schools’ China Partnerships Draw New Scrutiny, Vision Times, September 8, 2026. <https://www.visiontimes.com/2026/09/08/chicago-public-schools-china-partnerships-draw-new-scrutiny.html>

It's a lofty sentiment no doubt, but missing from the equation is the ideological manipulation to which he has just signed up his unsuspecting students. Glowacz's counterpart at Jinan No. 9 High School, Du Haifeng, is also deputy secretary of the school's Communist Party Committee. China is a communist dictatorship where the CCP is in control of even minute and mundane details and does not miss an opportunity to spread its ideology in America. According to Vision Times, Jinan No. 9 High's publicly available 2025-26 work plan says the school's operations are guided by "Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era," and aims to expand its "ideological-political classroom." Xi is China's dictator. The Chicago consulate made clear that Xi's 2023 Initiative was to have 50,000 American students visit China as exchange students over a five-year period, an initiative called the Young Envoys Scholarship (YES). Taft intends to do its part by sending 20 of those to China in 2027. Xi Van Fleet, a China-born author, summed up this story by posting on X, "The same schools that have brainwashed American kids to fall in love with the CCP also brainwash them to hate America!"<sup>37</sup>

It's important to note at this point that China and its media, as well as the United Front Work Department, always trot out the same argument that supporters of Islamification do to defend themselves: its critics are being racist. As the commentator Michael Lucci recently put it, "The CCP describes anything that challenges their broad influence operations, human rights abuses, genocide, aggression towards its neighbors, and theft of American IP is considered racist."<sup>38</sup> This argument falls apart, however, when one considers that none of this criticism is leveled at capitalist, free, democratic Taiwan, which is just as ethnically Chinese as the People's Republic, but because of the attributes I just used to describe it, feels no need to influence or otherwise control our actions.

The Chicago example demonstrates an important aspect of China's broad strategy to subvert America's classrooms and universities. This effort at one point came under the banner of Confucius Classrooms, for K-12, and Confucius Institutes for institutions of higher learning. As Majority Leader of the House of Representatives Steve Scalise put it last December, "Disguised as programs promoting Chinese language and culture and advancing cultural exchanges, these classrooms are an important element of the CCP's global influence campaign that work to build ties with American schools to push propaganda and sway policy."<sup>39</sup>

Parents Defending Education, an organization that has distinguished itself by doing stellar work in this area, notes that enhanced scrutiny on the Confucius programs over the past decade and a half has led China not to give up on its ambitions, but to try a different approach.<sup>40</sup> That new strategy is Xi's YES initiative, of which Taft's students have just become unwitting pawns. "While Confucius programming appears to have ceased operation at the majority of participating universities and K-12 schools following pressure from the federal government, another project seems to have popped up in its place. The Young Envoys Scholarship (YES) program, run by the China Education Association for International Exchange (CEAIE), states that it facilitates study abroad opportunities for

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<sup>37</sup> Xi Van Fleet X post, Sept 2, 2026, <https://x.com/XVanFleet/status/2095245067095069167>

<sup>38</sup> Michael Lucci X post, Sept. 9, 2026 <https://x.com/Michael7ucci/status/2097664971488276953?s=20>

<sup>39</sup> Steve Scalise, Majority Leader, December 4, 2025.

[https://www.majorityleader.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=5762&utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.majorityleader.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=5762&utm_source=chatgpt.com)

<sup>40</sup> I myself first wrote an in-depth paper about it more than a decade ago: Mike Gonzalez, China's Public Opinion Warfare: How Our Culture Industry Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the PRC, Heritage Backgrounder, February 5, 2015. <https://www.heritage.org/asia/report/chinas-public-opinion-warfare-how-our-culture-industry-learned-stop-worrying-and-love>

American youth ‘to deepen and expand cross-cultural understanding among countries’.”<sup>41</sup> The CEAIE does not mince any words about its aims. It “notes on its Chinese website that it is guided by ‘Marxism-Leninism’ and Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism and ‘always adhere to the leadership of the Party and integrate the Party’s work into the entire process of the association’s operation and development’.” Some 83 universities and 27 K-12 schools have been documented as participating in the YES program, according to Parents Defending Ed.

China’s influence operations are not limited to infiltrating schools and universities. More than a decade ago I wrote a Heritage Backgrounder on how the PRC censors Hollywood studios and forces them to present a benign picture of China’s communist dictatorship, lest they be shut out of China’s lucrative box office.<sup>42</sup> “Censorship can be imposed in a multitude of ways. For example, Chinese censors can be invited to visit a movie set, as was the case during the filming of Disney and Marvel’s Iron Man 3, when they were “asked to advise on creative decisions,” I wrote.

More insidiously, China, like our other enemies, takes full advantage of our internal divisions to sow chaos on American streets. Many, if not most, of our protest marches, demonstrations, and outright riots are organized and coordinated by nonprofits that are part of what is known the “Singham Network.” It is named after Neville Roy Singham, a shadowy American multi-millionaire who lives in Shanghai and who for eight years served as a “strategic technical adviser” to China’s tech giant Huawei. In 2017, Singham sold his Chicago software consultancy Thoughtworks for \$785 million and used the proceeds to set up such non-profits as the People’s Support Foundation (PSF) or to funnel money to his network through an anonymous donor fund administered by Gold Sachs.<sup>43</sup> In a very good paper on Singham which contains much of this information, the Network Contagion Research Institute reported that Singham “currently lives and works in Shanghai, where he shares premises with Shanghai Maku Cultural Communications Ltd., a Chinese propaganda firm focused on presenting a positive image of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) to the global south.”<sup>44</sup> NCRI gives examples of how close Singham is to the CCP. “In July 2023, Singham was photographed at a strategic communications workshop hosted by the CCP in Shanghai,” NCRI said.

It is PSF and other funding mechanisms that then channels money to such U.S.-based Marxist organizations as the People’s Forum, The Act Now to Stop War & End Racism (ANSWER) Coalition, the International People’s Assembly, and others. Singham also funds the Tricontinental Institute for Social Research, a global Marxist think tank, and BreakThrough News (BT News), a media platform that is used to amplify the protests, etc.

The networking is intricate. “In May 2023, BT News joined other Singham Network-linked media outlets in attendance at the Shanghai-based Global Communications Conference of the Global

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<sup>41</sup> Little Red Classrooms, Young Envoys Scholarship Program. Parents Defending Education. August 13, 2026.

<https://defendinged.org/investigations/little-red-classrooms-young-envoys-scholarship-program/>

<sup>42</sup> Mike Gonzalez, China’s Public Opinion Warfare: How Our Culture Industry Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the PRC, Heritage Backgrounder, February 5, 2015. <https://www.heritage.org/asia/report/chinas-public-opinion-warfare-how-our-culture-industry-learned-stop-worrying-and-love>

<sup>43</sup> People’s Support Foundation (PSF), Influence Watch. <https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/peoples-support-foundation-psf/>

<sup>44</sup> About Us,” *Maku Group*, Captured by WayBack Machine June 19, 2023, [web.archive.org/web/20230619143607/maku.group/about-us](http://web.archive.org/web/20230619143607/maku.group/about-us) quoted in NCRI’s paper “Contagious Disruption: How CCP Influence and Radical Ideologies Threaten Critical Infrastructure and Campuses Across the United States” 2024, pg 8. <https://networkcontagion.us/reports/ccp-influence-and-radical-ideologies/>

South. The conference was hosted by the School of Communications at the East China Normal University, a public institute funded by the CCP's Ministry of Education and the Shanghai Municipality," said the NCRI paper.<sup>45</sup> BT News never criticizes China or Russia, but consistently presents them in an overwhelmingly positive light. As I wrote in a paper with Mary Mobley two years ago, "Tricontinental collaborates with Dongsheng News, originally started by Singham as a newsletter and which is now a news site that covers Chinese news in several languages. Dongsheng means 'The East is Ascending.' 'Dongsheng's editors, in China, come from Tricontinental, but its address leads to The People's Forum,' reported The New York Times, which quoted Singham as defending Dongsheng's China coverage by saying that it "provides unique progressive coverage of China that has been sadly missing."<sup>46</sup>

The Singham Network is not just a conduit for CCP influence in our country. The demonstrations and riots organized by all entities involved in the Singham Network run out of Shanghai—protests that are opportunistically held for whatever reason there is, whether Gaza, Venezuela, Cuba, the environment, ICE, social justice, etc.—disrupt the life of all Americans and introduce violence into our lives. If this hearing is interrupted by CodePink it will be further evidence of this. Singham is married to Jodie Evans, the co-founder of CodePink and his network funnels funds into the group. Unsurprisingly, according to press reports, various parts of our government have opened investigations into the Network.

As all these examples make clear, China's influence operations are multi-frontal, which is why the Heritage Plan for Winning the New Cold War advises that "to counter this activity, action is required at the federal, state, and local levels." The United Front Work Department "through its various front organizations, including the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, has established an extensive network of associations, sister cities, cultural groups, friendship societies, and business forums in all 50 states."<sup>47</sup> The paper advises to, 1. Risk-manage CCP-linked investments that threaten state security, 2. Divest state funds from China, 3. Ban Chinese technology and firms from state procurement processes, 4. Stop malign CCP activities in education and enforce transparency for donations and grants, 5. Ensure every state has the tools to investigate and coordinate with the FBI to dismantle CCP police operations including police stations, 6. Ban dangerous Chinese apps, including from all government devices, and block access to their domains on public networks, 7. Require transparency of and investigate any CCP censorship of media and events that receive state tax privileges or other legal advantages, 8. Screen and reject all land purchases from foreign malign actors that could threaten U.S. national security, 9. Educate state and local actors about the espionage tactics deployed by the CCP and restrict or ban the activities of CCP-linked groups that pose espionage risks, 10. Prohibit lobbyists working for the CCP or their interests from lobbying at the state and local levels, and 11. Discourage ESG compliance and regulations that harm states by passing legislation to protect state pensions and instate economic interests.

## **Cuba**

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<sup>45</sup> NCRI. Pg 21

<sup>46</sup> Mike Gonzalez and Mary Mobley, How the Revolutionary Ecosystem Sustains Pro-Palestinian Protesters and the BLM Movement. Heritage Special report. pg. 25 [https://www.heritage.org/sites/default/files/2024-06/SR284\\_2.pdf](https://www.heritage.org/sites/default/files/2024-06/SR284_2.pdf)

<sup>47</sup> A Plan for Winning the New Cold War.

The discussion of how China uses its influence to disrupt our streets leads directly to that other communist dictatorship 90 miles from our borders, whose regime has tried to destabilize us for the 67 years of its existence, Cuba. This is not a practice of decades gone by. Many Americans may dismiss Cuba's regime as a toothless ideological dinosaur, thinking that no threat could come from a regime lobbying insults from a city in ruins. And Cuba is indeed a failed state. Decades of Marxism have now pauperized a once-rich island-nation to which Europeans emigrated to and left Cubans in chains. Havana however remains a house of hatred; its crumbling architecture a testament to smoldering rage. From training Marxist terrorists in the 1960s, to the pro-Hamas mayhem at U.S. universities in 2024 and 2025, to the spread of transnational crime syndicates in U.S. cities, Cuba's rulers have long plotted America's demise. Today, more than ever, Americans need to understand that Havana is ground zero for communist instability.

For example, on the night of April 30, 2024, at the Midtown, Manhattan headquarters of the Singham network-funded the People's Forum, the head of the group Manolo De Los Santos stood in front of more than 100 keffiyeh-clad protesters and gave them a rousing, Cuban-style speech. The rally had been delayed in order to give straggling protesters heading downtown from the Columbia University encampment enough time to arrive. When they had all gathered, De Los Santos urged them to repeat the events of the fateful year of 2020, when American cities were shaken because of the BLM riots, and "make it untenable for the politics of usual to take place in this country." The Columbia students, he said, had decided that "resistance is more important than negotiations." He urged those present to "go back out. We have to be the bodies willing to stand between the police and our students." Breakout sessions on "resistance" followed the speech and the rally ended at 9:30 p.m., giving those present enough time to head back uptown. Three hours later, protesters stormed Columbia University's Hamilton Hall. A reporter for the Free Beacon watched the rally on zoom and quoted from his report in a paper I published this January.<sup>48</sup>

De Los Santos may be paid out of Shanghai, but is basically a Cuban agent. He is a New York City-residing Dominican who has been going to Cuba for indoctrination for the past two decades. His bio at yet another group he has ties to, the Black Alliance for Peace, describes him this way, "based out of Cuba for many years, Manolo has worked toward building international networks of people's movements and organizations. In 2018, he became the founding director of the People's Forum in New York City, a movement incubator for working-class communities to build unity across historic lines of division at home and abroad."<sup>49</sup>

De Los Santos has shepherded groups to Cuba for years, including members of BLM chapters. More importantly, De Los Santos has several times tweeted out photos of himself with Cuban figurehead dictator Miguel Diaz-Canel (figurehead because the real power remains within the Castro family). Earlier this year, De Los Santos took part in the flotilla that visited Cuba, and was seen, again, meeting with Diaz-Canel and members of Cuba's Communist Politburo. De Los Santos is also a researcher at that other key Singham Network institution, the Tricontinental Institute for Social Research, named after both the Tricontinental Conference where Castro convened Third World leaders and terrorists in 1966, and the Frankfurt School that turned Marxism cultural in the mid-20th century.

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<sup>48</sup> Mike Gonzalez, The House of Terror: How Cuba Has Exported Death and Chaos for Six Decades, The Heritage Foundation, Jan. 9, 2026. <https://www.heritage.org/sites/default/files/2026-01/BG3946.pdf>

<sup>49</sup> The Black Alliance for Peace, "Ending U.S. Aggression on Cuba Is a Key to World Peace," August 29, 2021, <https://blackallianceforpeace.com/events/endusaggressiononcuba> (accessed January 6, 2026), quoted in my paper.

Cuba relies on Chinese-propped organizations in its efforts to destabilize American lives even when its senior officials are involved. On September 28, 2024, the Cuban and Venezuelan foreign ministers, Bruno Rodriguez and Ivan Gil Pinto, addressed activists at a packed Apollo Theater in Harlem, at a fund raiser convened by the People's Forum. According to a report by Peoples Dispatch, another media platform funded by Singham's Shanghai network, "all proceeds were donated to the Middle Eastern Children's Alliance (MECA) as part of the international fundraiser 'The People Stand with Gaza,' coordinated between MECA and the Shut It Down for Palestine coalition."<sup>50</sup> Shut It Down for Palestine is a Red-Green coalition of seven groups, three of which are Marxist and the other four Islamists, and several of which are also funded by Singham. Their marches have blocked access to strategic chokeholds in U.S. cities, such as the Brooklyn Bridge and JFK Airport. As for the Middle Eastern Children's Alliance, it is a California outfit with "fiscal and personnel ties" to the Syrian-based Marxist group the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, which the State Department has designed as a terrorist organization, according to reporting by both NCRI and National Review.<sup>51</sup> Despite this baggage, the Middle Eastern Children's Alliance designs K-12 curriculum material in the Golden State.

Also speaking at the event were the Singham financed De Los Santos and Vijay Prashad, a Marxist Indian academic who used to teach at Trinity College in Connecticut and now heads Singham's Tricontinental Institute. All of them gave barn-burning speeches denouncing the United States. De Los Santos said the presence of the two communist Latin leaders "energize our movements and help us find the strength to continue fighting." Prashad, meanwhile, railed against the United States and the West as he spread Russian and Chinese talking points. "Let it be known. Let it be known: Cuba will never be a colony. Let it be known. Let it be known, that the West is out of touch. The West led by the United States is completely out of touch. The whole world wants the genocide against the Palestinians to end. Now the whole world, but not the West, not the western leaders. The whole world wants the war in Ukraine to end, but not the Western leaders, not NATO. They want the war to continue."

Rodriguez appeared to blame the United States for Israel's defense of its population after it was attacked by Hamas on Oct. 7, 2023, saying, "The crime of genocide that imperialism is committing against the people of Palestine using the government of Israel as an instrument has no parallel in recent history. It is the great crime of the 21st century. Free Palestine, free Palestine, free Palestine, free Palestine!" He dabbled in U.S. politics barely a month before the election, adding "a better world is possible, but vote to achieve it." He also pleaded on behalf of the communist dictatorship whose foreign policy he is in charge of. "Imperialism does not cease to attack Cuba as our friends, and many in this country understand quite well. The United States government is implementing the economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba. With unparallel strength and effectiveness. The impact is destructive." Then, speaking without a hint of irony, told his Harlem

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<sup>50</sup> Natalia Marquez, Cuba and Venezuela's foreign ministers visit Harlem to speak out against imperialist war, The Peoples Dispatch, September 30, 2024. <https://peoplesdispatch.org/2024/09/30/cuba-and-venezuelas-foreign-ministers-visit-harlem-to-speak-out-against-imperialist-war/>

<sup>51</sup> Abigail Anthony, California Nonprofit That Produces K-12 Teaching Materials Has Ties to Foreign Terrorists, Researchers Find, The National Review, April 7, 2025. <https://www.nationalreview.com/news/california-nonprofit-that-produces-k-12-teaching-materials-has-ties-to-foreign-terrorists-researchers-find/>

audience the same lies he is used to telling the Cuban people: “Cuba does not practice, support, or sponsor terrorism.”<sup>52</sup>

So, to summarize, in this single event, the foreign minister of Cuba came to Harlem to raise funds for a terrorist-linked Islamist group that publishes K-12 textbooks for American children and for groups that derail traffic in our cities, while calling for even more chaos, and pumping out Russian and Chinese propaganda in the process. And in the case of Cuba, the examples of this type of malign foreign influence campaigns in our own politics, on U.S. soil, are numerous.

In May this year, David Ramírez Álvarez, a senior Cuban diplomat at Cuba’s Embassy in Washington, addressed U.S. activists by first name via Zoom at a strategy session in a California union hall. As Fox News described it, he briefed them “on congressional legislation, lobbying targets and nationwide organizing efforts to pressure lawmakers on behalf of communist-controlled Havana.”<sup>53</sup> And in June, just three months ago, before American Leftists such as Rep. Ilhan Omar’s daughter, Isra Hirsi, the influencer Hasan Piker and activists from CodePink went to Havana for a Progressive International tour of ICAP headquarters, Stu Smith of the Manhattan Institute reported on yet another gathering where Cuban officials gave American leftists their marching orders. Officials from the Instituto Cubano de Amistad con los Pueblos (ICAP), or the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples, identified by the State Department as the regime’s main foreign influence and intelligence planner, were seen coordinating activities with American activists, often dictating to them what to do.

The American activists are only too happy to follow Havana’s instructions. “We get requests for material aid ... directly from ICAP. We comply with those requests when we’re gathering material aid,” one activist is seen saying. Another adds, “These working groups that we’re part of are directly a request from ICAP.” Yet another then says, “I would follow the lead of the Cubans, because they have the biggest experience. ... They have a really highly advanced intelligence apparatus.” A Cuban official then says he wants a road map of street and legislative action. “From this Call to Action Conference we expect that a concrete action plan will emerge, a roadmap that allows us to mobilize more strongly than ever and that feeds and articulates each of the initiatives. Let’s imagine and materialize together a torrent of actions to give continuity to the solidarity Action Week. Let us continue to denounce the blockade and hostility against Cuba in the streets, in parliaments and on digital networks,” he says.<sup>54</sup>

Rodriguez, Álvarez and the ICAP officials are but the latest in a long line of Cuban apparatchiks interfering in domestic U.S. affairs. The record of the regime’s attempts to destabilize the United States and disrupt the American way of life is as long as the Cuban regime is old, so 67 years. This may shock those who have been taught that the revolution began with the best of intentions. College professors and other intellectuals have spent those seven long decades telling young students that Fidel Castro, Cuba’s communist dictator for half a century, was inadvisedly pushed away by the U.S. government. “The image of the patriotic, almost pacifistic, young democratic leader would linger long in the American imagination,” wrote the Catholic author Edwin Benson. “Seeing him this way makes it much easier to understand the mistaken point of view of so many American

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<sup>52</sup> Bruno Rodriguez, “A Better World Is Possible,” September 28, 2024, video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H1CGmK1fRLU> (accessed January 6, 2026).

<sup>53</sup> Fox News Politics, X post. May 26, 2026. <https://x.com/foxnewspolitics/status/2059214797418410239>

<sup>54</sup> Stu Smith, The Stu Studio. X post. June 4, 2026. <https://x.com/thestustustudio/status/2062719759372709916>

academics of the sixties, seventies and eighties who believed that Castro had started out as ‘a freedom-loving small-d-democrat’ who had been forced to turn toward the Soviets because of American intransigence.”<sup>55</sup>

Castro himself supported this image early on by, for example, coming to the U.S. and appearing on NBC’s Meet the Press on April 19, 1959, barely three months after taking power, and declaring in broken English, “Democracy is my ideal, really... I am not a Communist. I am not agreed with Communists,” and insisting that he wanted “free press for everybody, free ideas, free religious beliefs, and all those rights, those human rights.”<sup>56</sup>

That canard is easily dispelled by a letter which Benson also quotes in which Castro wrote to his close confidante Celia Sánchez Manduley while they were both in the Sierra Maestra mountains in 1958, “I swore to myself that the Americans were going to pay dearly for what they were doing. When this war is over, a much wider and bigger war will begin for me: the war that I’m going to launch against them. I am saying to myself that this is my true destiny.” In fact, already in 1948, when Castro was just a 22-year-old law student, he had traveled to Bogota, Colombia to participate in the Congreso Latinoamericano de Estudiantes (Latin American Student Conference), which he had created an planned “as a leftist alternative to thwart the Panamerican Conference, the precursor to the Organization of American States (OAS), which President Harry Truman was in the midst of founding to rally the hemisphere against the global threat of communism,” as I wrote in report earlier this year.<sup>57</sup> As for Fidel’s brother Raúl, who at 95 retains real power, he had already joined the Soviet-oriented Cuban Communist Party in 1953, when as a 21-year-old member of the party-affiliated Socialist Youth he travelled to Eastern Europe to attend a communist conference.<sup>58</sup>

The State Department had it exactly right, thus, when it wrote in a very good report published this year, “For nearly seven decades, the Cuban regime has waged a sustained campaign of subversion against the United States. It is a campaign that has infiltrated the highest reaches of the U.S. government, recruited and cultivated generations of American activists, backed an unprecedented wave of left-wing terrorism on American soil, and carried out one of the most durable and damaging foreign intelligence penetrations in American history.”<sup>59</sup>

Cuba has successfully placed spies in the highest reaches of the U.S. government. One of these was Ana Belén Montes, the daughter of Puerto Rican parents who was recruited by Cuban intelligence while she was conducting her studies at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) in Washington, DC. The Cubans then instructed her to accept a job at the Pentagon’s Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), where as a Cuban analyst she helped write a Clinton era report

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<sup>55</sup> Edwin Benson, “Fidel Castro’s Great Deception Enabled Cuba to Outlast the Fall of the Soviet Union,” The American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property.” August 17, 2026. <https://www.tfp.org/fidel-castros-great-deception-enabled-cuba-to-outlast-the-fall-of-the-soviet-union/>

<sup>56</sup> Fidel Castro, “I am not a communist.” NBC News, Meet the Press, <https://www.nbcnews.com/meet-the-press/video/fidel-castro-i-am-not-a-communist-149353029768>

<sup>57</sup> Mike Gonzalez, The House of Terror: How Cuba Has Exported Death and Chaos for Six Decades, The Heritage Foundation, Jan. 9, 2026. <https://www.heritage.org/sites/default/files/2026-01/BG3946.pdf>

<sup>58</sup> Sam Knight, Who is Raúl Castro? The Times. August 1, 2006, <https://www.thetimes.com/travel/destinations/europe-travel/who-is-raul-castro-jzs2jgx5qs5>

<sup>59</sup> Cuba, The Capital of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Communism, Prepared by the State Department. [https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/Cuba-Report.pdf?utm\\_source=substack&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/Cuba-Report.pdf?utm_source=substack&utm_medium=email)

that concluded that Cuba “does not pose a significant military threat to the United States or to other countries in the region.” She was finally arrested a few days after the 9/11 attacks. Another highly placed Cuban spy was Kendall Myers, the privileged great-grandson of Alexander Graham Bell, who also attended Johns Hopkins. He was recruited along with his wife Gwendolyn in 1978 and was told to go work for the State Department. They were arrested in 2009 and he died in prison earlier this year. Another spy was Victor Manuel Rocha, a Colombian-born naturalized American who grew up in Harlem and was educated at Yale. Rocha served as ambassador to Bolivia and as an advisor to the Commander of U.S. Southern Command before being arrested in 2023.<sup>60</sup> And these are the ones who were caught.

All three spies served Cuba not for money, but out of ideological devotion to Cuba’s aims. This is an important point. As the State Department report says, Cuba’s regime has differed from other Marxist adversaries in its approach to the United States. “From its earliest years in power, the Cuban regime has believed that its own survival and strategic interests were inextricably linked to the advance of the revolutionary left inside the United States,” says the report. “This conviction has been one of the animating principles of Cuban foreign policy through to the present day. But unlike most other hostile states, Cuba’s efforts to shape American politics are not solely driven by material geopolitical interests. The Cubans have always seen revolution in America as an end unto itself. It is impossible to understand modern Cuba without first understanding this unique and distinctive character. Since its founding in 1959, the *raison d’être* of the regime in Havana has been the violent export of communism abroad. But its true target – above any other momentary enemy – has always been the United States.”

Prior to the Maduro arrest and the establishment of a new dispensation in Venezuela, Cuba tried to use its close relationship with its client state in Caracas to achieve this much-desired U.S. demise. In December 2025, two Venezuelan generals in prison in the U.S. after pleading guilty to participating in “narco-terrorist activities,” Hugo “El Pollo” Carvajal, Venezuela’s spy mastermind, and Cliver Alcala Cordones, the highest Venezuelan military officer behind bars in the U.S, both separately wrote letters to President Donald Trump airing bales of dirty laundry on narco-trafficking to the United States. Cuba’s regime had hatched a plot to flood U.S. streets with drugs, to undermine America’s moral fiber from within, they both wrote.<sup>61</sup> The conspiracy, wrote Carvajal, “was suggested by the Cuban regime to Chávez in the mid-2000s.” It was “successfully executed with help from FARC, ELN [both Colombian guerilla groups], Cuban operatives, and Hezbollah,” he wrote.

But Cuba may have found a more insidious way to undermine America fiber from within. The American Left, which today is explicit about being in open revolt against the United States, has responded with equal zeal to Cuba’s entreaties. The Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), a parasitic entity at present eating away one of America’s two political parties, illustrates Cuba’s ability to position itself as the Mecca toward which all American Marxists must genuflect. It was not founded by Cuban intelligence, yet today the DSA “maintains a fierce, almost religious commitment to the cause of the Cuban regime – not because the group is controlled by Cuban agents, per se, but because that commitment is now simply the *de facto* policy orthodoxy on the American far left,” as

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> “Former Maduro Spy Chief’s Letter to Trump Seeks to Expose Narco-Terrorist War Against U.S.,” The Dallas Express, and Petit, “Urgente: Cliver Alcala Cordones Envía Carta a Donald Trump” (Urgent: Cliver Alcala Cordones Sends a Letter to Donald Trump).

the State Department report says. “The DSA testifies to the extent to which the native and organic ideological commitments of the American far left now mirror the interests of the Cuban regime.”<sup>62</sup>

In other words, Cuba’s regime, decrepit and powerless in its own garbage-strewn island, has found new shock troops. It’s not Venezuelan and Colombian drug lords, it’s people who live here among us, American or otherwise. “What happened in 2020 during the George Floyd uprising? Twenty, thirty million people were on the streets all across the country. The country was ungovernable,” De Los Santos told an audience earlier this year.<sup>63</sup> “It’s important for us to say this because when we make the formulation that we have to make a revolution, to change things, that we have to smash the state.” As the State Department wisely prophesied before De Los Santos spoke those words, “Cuba’s assault on the United States was never, at root, a quarrel over economic policy or sovereignty or even ownership of a particular territory. It was a revolution against Western civilization itself – waged, in part, via the novel and insidious method of persuading the children of the West to turn against their own inheritance. That is the campaign Castro launched in 1959, and it is the campaign his heirs are waging still.”<sup>64</sup>

## **What To Do**

We like to believe in America that we are safe tucked between two oceans and with neighbors to the north and south with whom we haven’t had an open military conflict in longer than a century. But as this testimony makes clear, the nature of our open system leaves us vulnerable to malign actors from as close as Cuba and as far as China and the Middle East. Our enemies hide between the protections the Constitution affords Americans, as if they too were covered by them.

As the Heritage suggestions with regard to China make clear, there are many steps you can take. Asra Nomani of Fox News Digital reported on Fox News that U.S. officials are investigating Ramírez Álvarez for coordinating a malign foreign influence campaign on U.S. soil. The probe would examine activist organizations, nonprofit funding pipelines, foreign coordination networks and potential sanctions violations.<sup>65</sup>

This hearing today should be a start, an opening salvo, and should be followed by real actions to protect Americans from those who hate our way of life.

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<sup>62</sup> State Dept. report. Pg 85.

<sup>63</sup> Video of his speech can be seen in this X posting by the Manhattan Institute’s Stu Smith.  
<https://x.com/thestustustudio/status/2082502716182433834>

<sup>64</sup> State Department report. Pg 99.

<sup>65</sup> Fox News Politics, X post. May 26, 2026. <https://x.com/foxnewspolitics/status/2059214797418410239>

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