



# Center for Immigration Studies

## Growing "Hall of Shame" of Resident Aliens and Naturalized Citizens Involved in Terrorism

By Dan Cadman on November 14, 2014

This is a good news/bad news kind of blog. We'll get to both in a moment, but first the news, and just the news. Two recent, but completely separate, stories reported on terrorists who have gamed the immigration system in order to reside in the United States.



One involves the conviction of a woman of Palestinian origin, Rasmieh Yousef Odeh, who was granted shelter in the United States, became a permanent resident, and ultimately naturalized. The conviction was for naturalization fraud because she concealed her involvement in several terrorist bombings in Israel dating back to the 1960s. Readers who follow the link provided will note that the Associated Press lede refers to her simply as an "activist".

The pernicious nature of the bombings Odeh participated in, which resulted in death — and her involvement in the implementation of Obamacare in Illinois as part of a state contract — are curiously missing. See this CIS blog for those details.

The second story involves the deportation of an Afghan national, Hayatullah Dawari, following his conviction for immigration fraud. Like the Palestinian Odeh, Dawari was given safe haven in the United States, and "a path to citizenship", to use the term of art favored by immigration activists today — albeit under existing laws, and not some made-up program created by the Obama administration. Dawari applied for and received permanent resident status after the requisite period of time and had, in fact, applied for his naturalization papers when things started to go south for him. Like Odeh, he concealed his ties to terrorism on his naturalization application, as well as on his prior application for resident alien status; the terrorism involvement was his ongoing affiliation with the Islamist group Hezb-e-Islami Gulbuddin, according to the government.

The good news here is that the government ultimately caught up with each of these individuals and prosecuted them for their material misrepresentations in hiding their terrorist ties and past.

The bad news is that, in both cases, it took entirely too long, and well after each had been in the country for many years, having been given significant immigration benefits — first as refugees/asylees, and then as permanent residents. And, of course, in Odeh's case, she had already successfully achieved naturalization (now, of course, revoked as a result of the conviction) before her past caught up with her.

The government's immigration and naturalization vetting system failed in both of these cases, despite the fact that each had been convicted of crimes before entering the United States: Odeh in Israel and Dawari in Russia — something the government would have us believe is routinely picked up as a part of its background checks. Clearly that's not so.

There is something significantly wrong with the way benefits are granted, as evidenced by the substantial list of resident aliens and naturalized citizens who are national security threats, but have walked right through the vetting process and obtained the right to live permanently in the United States with no muss, no fuss, no bother. They form a part of the rapidly growing "Hall of Shame," as my friend and colleague Jessica Vaughan rightly calls it. Yet there is no indication whatever that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) or its subordinate agencies has taken steps to examine its processes and see where they need to be tightened up, modified, or even completely reworked. Until this happens, we can invest no trust whatever in the purported strategy of "risk management" used by DHS.

Now, ask yourself, what will happen when the administration "goes big" as the *New York Times* editorial board would have it, and unilaterally (and in my view unconstitutionally) undertakes a massive executive action to grant hundreds of thousands of aliens the right to live and work in the United States? Consider those background checks and vetting systems for people who will, without a shred of doubt, engage in massive identity fraud to get what they want. Think the government will get that right? Don't bet the kids' inheritance on it.

Topics: National Security