MORE NEW YORK REPUBLICANS PROVIDING MATERIAL SUPPORT TO TERRORISTS

Speaking of material support for terrorism, David Cole uses the recent trip by Rudy Giuliani and others to suck up to the Mujaheddin-e Khalq (MEK) as an opportunity to explain the idiocy of the Holder versus Humanitarian Law Project SCOTUS verdict.

> DID former Attorney General Michael Mukasey, former New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, Tom Ridge, a former homeland security secretary, and Frances Townsend, a former national security adviser, all commit a federal crime last month in Paris when they spoke in support of the Mujahedeen Khalq at a conference organized by the Iranian opposition group's advocates? Free speech, right? Not necessarily.
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> The problem is that the United States government has labeled the Mujahedeen Khalq a "foreign terrorist organization," making it a crime to provide it, directly or indirectly, with any material support. And, according to the Justice Department under Mr. Mukasey himself, as well as under the current attorney general, Eric Holder, material support includes not only cash and other tangible aid, but also speech coordinated with a "foreign terrorist organization" for its benefit. It is therefore a felony, the government has argued, to file an amicus brief on behalf of a "terrorist" group, to engage in public advocacy to challenge a group's "terrorist" designation or even

> to encourage peaceful avenues for redress of grievances.
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> [snip]
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> But in June, the Supreme Court ruled against us, stating that all such speech could be prohibited, because it might indirectly support the group's terrorist activity. Chief Justice John Roberts reasoned that a terrorist group might use human rights advocacy training to file harassing claims, that it might use peacemaking assistance as a cover while re-arming itself, and that such speech could contribute to the group's "legitimacy," and thus increase its ability to obtain support elsewhere that could be turned to terrorist ends.

Cole goes on to note the hypocrisy of the government, which has given exceptions for humanitarian purposes to corporations seeking to sell cigarettes, even while arguing NGOs cannot provide food and water.

Mind you, I'm actually with Cole: Rudy and Mukasey and Fran Fragos Townsend and Tom Ridge ought to be able to go make speeches sucking up to Iran's version of Ahmad Chalabi (oops! I forgot that Chalabi was Iran's!), a bunch of liars who have invented intelligence to try to justify war with Iran. That's what Republicans do, after all: promote hucksters who can justify the next war.

But it's really time for either some consistency in the way the government pursues its war on ~~terror~~ violent extremism, or an admission that the war on terror has disintegrated into a war on those who oppose US empire. The government is still investigating a bunch of peace activists for material support. And yet four prominent Republicans can offer the same kind of material support as the peace activists—but this time in service of war or US hegemony or oil—with no similar consequences?