

News
From _____

CONGRESSMAN

Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

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CONTACT: Jerry Burkot
202-225-3452

RAHALL SEEKS CLOSING OF J.D.L. HEADQUARTERS, CITES RECENT CONVICTIONS

Washington, D.C. -- U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV) has urged Secretary of State George Shultz to close down the U.S. offices of the Jewish Defense League in light of the recent convictions of J.D.L. members for their role in terrorist bombings in the New York area.

Rahall cited the State Department's unilateral closing of the Palestine Information Office as a precedent for his request. In a letter to Secretary Shultz, Rep. Rahall said, "Since the precedent has been established, I think it ought to be put to practical use to rid ourselves of convicted terrorists like the Jewish Defense League, if we are going to shut down merely an informational center, like the Palestine Information Center."

According to published reports, the Federal Bureau of Investigation says that from 1981 through 1986, 17 terrorist incidents in the United States have been attributed to the J.D.L. Rahall also noted that the J.D.L. is under investigation for its role in the Los Angeles murder of Alex Odeh, the West Coast director of the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee.

Rahall called on Shultz to begin proceedings to shut down the J.D.L. offices due to their "proven involvement in terrorist activities right here on American soil." Rahall added, "Should your department be unwilling to do so, I feel it is the responsibility of Congress to take these steps legislatively...I am fully prepared to introduce such legislation, and I feel the Administration should be fully supportive." Rahall said that the Administration's efforts to close the Palestine Information Office offered a precedent for them to support his legislation.

In his letter, Rahall referred to the recent convictions in New York City of two J.D.L. members for their participation in a spate of attacks in the New York area, including a tear gas attack at Lincoln Center that injured 20 people during a performance by a Soviet dance company.

"I feel that there is no place in this country for terrorism, and we need to take immediate steps to stop it wherever we can," Rep. Rahall said. "The conviction of these terrorists, and the suspicion surrounding their headquarters, offers more than enough evidence to immediately close down that haven for terrorism, right here in our own backyard."

Rahall opposed the recent closing of the Palestine Information Office and reiterated that opposition in his letter to Secretary Shultz. "To close an office whose function was simply the dissemination of information is absurd," Rahall wrote. "The policy which the Administration has unilaterally pursued is a dangerous one, yet the yielding to political pressure has established this very dangerous precedent."

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