

COMPILATION OF HEARINGS ON ISLAMIST
RADICALIZATION—VOLUME III

HEARINGS
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS
SECOND SESSION

MARCH 21 and JUNE 20, 2012

Serial No. 112-78

Printed for the use of the Committee on Homeland Security



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IRAN, HEZBOLLAH, AND THE THREAT TO THE HOMELAND

Wednesday, March 21, 2012

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 9:39 a.m., in Room 311, Canon House Office Building, Hon. Peter T. King [Chairman of the committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives King, Lungren, Rogers, McCaul, Bilirakis, Miller, Cravaack, Meehan, Quayle, Long, Duncan, Turner, Thompson, Jackson Lee, Cuellar, Richardson, Higgins, Richmond, Clarke of Michigan, Hochul, and Hahn.

Also present: Representative Green.

Chairman KING. Morning. The Committee on Homeland Security will come to order. The committee is meeting this morning to examine the threat to the U.S. homeland posed by Iran and the foreign terrorist organization, Hezbollah.

The Chair wishes to remind our guests today that demonstrations in the audience, including the use of signs, placards and T-shirts, as well as verbal outbursts, are a violation of the rules of the House. The Chair wishes to thank our guests for their cooperation in maintaining order, proper decorum. I now recognize myself for an opening statement.

We meet today at a perilous time. Since 9/11, America's counter-terror officials have focused on finding al-Qaeda operatives inside America, as well as homegrown radicalized Islamist extremists ready to perpetrate violence against our people.

Now, as Iran moves closer to nuclear weapons, and there is increasing concern over war between Iran and Israel, we must also focus on Iran's secret operatives, and their No. 1 terrorist proxy force, Hezbollah, which we know is in America. That is right. We know Hezbollah operatives are here. The question is whether these Hezbollah operatives have the capacity to carry out attacks on the homeland, and how quickly they can become fully operational.

More than 20 Federal investigations since 9/11, identified by the Majority's investigative staff, offer a chilling view of Iranian and Hezbollah operations here inside the United States. In fact, just this week in New York City, in the Southern District of New York, another trial has begun of a building superintendent who was charged with attempting to provide weapons, and support, and supplies to Hezbollah.

Today, our National interests, namely standing with our major ally, Israel, increasingly puts us in the crosshairs of the extremist

regime in Tehran as it moves dangerously closer to making a nuclear bomb. Iran is feeling the heat, and already has responded with its trademark terrorist brutality overseas.

We have seen this before in Beirut, 1983; in Buenos Aires, 1992 and 1994; Khobar Towers in 1996, when a constituent of mine, Captain Adams, was killed; and if Iran had its way, Washington, DC also would have witnessed terrible carnage amid the smoking rooms of a popular local restaurant only a few months ago.

Many counterterrorism insiders were stunned last October by Tehran's brazen plot by its intelligence service dogs to assassinate Saudi Arabia's ambassador by bombing this city, Washington, DC, our Nation's capital. I congratulate and commend the DEA and the FBI for thwarting this attack on our capital.

So will Iran launch terror strikes inside our homeland if it feels threatened? In light of last year's bomb plot, in light of the 20 Hezbollah cases prosecuted since 9/11, and in light of Hezbollah attacks overseas, we have a duty to prepare for the worst. Today's investigative hearing is the beginning of this committee's effort to size up the serious threat by one of international terrorism's most violent murder gangs.

Now, how many Iranian and Hezbollah terrorists are here already? The highly-disciplined soldiers of Hezbollah are trained to lie low for years, or for decades. Those who have gone up against this enemy for our Government estimate the number to be, at a minimum, in the hundreds. Also, there are 55 Iranian diplomats at its U.N. mission in New York and another 29 Iranian officials here at its intersection in the District of Columbia, according to the Obama administration; many of whom, it must be presumed, are intelligence officers.

Several of their comrades—of these U.N. mission types in New York—were removed from the U.N. mission and sent back to Iran after the NYPD caught them photographing the city's rail systems in the years since 9/11. Additionally, as the NYPD's Mitch Silber will point out today, there have been five other events, involving the Iranian diplomatic personnel, which almost certainly constituted hostile reconnaissance operations against New York.

Now, many have mistakenly assumed that Hezbollah operatives here were only capable of fund-raising for the Lebanon-based group through criminal fraud, such as counterfeiting and cigarette smuggling. But top intelligence officials and leaders have told us that Hezbollah is the group most capable of flipping its nation-wide network of criminal fund-raising cells into an operational terror force capable of great violence on orders from its leaders in Iran or Lebanon.

In 2009, the Obama administration said that Hezbollah is, "the most technically capable terrorist group in the world."

Now, our witnesses, specifically Chris Swecker, former FBI agent, will explain that many arrested on criminal charges since 9/11, such as Mahmoud Kourani, were Hezbollah militants—I believe we have photos here—Hezbollah militants trained in weapons, explosives, and spycraft in Lebanon and Iran, where the Revolutionary Guards Corps works hand-in-hand with Hezbollah. These were people who were prosecuted in the United States as

Hezbollah operatives several years ago. Chris will go into that in much more detail.

Now, some of the defendants in cases have been known or suspected of having combat experience with Hezbollah in Lebanon. Now, the numbers also are greater than they may seem from looking at the Federal docket, since other suspected Hezbollah operatives were quietly deported as criminal aliens without their militant backgrounds being publicly disclosed.

As the Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, General Clapper recently said Iran's leaders are under great pressure, and appear to be, "more willing to conduct an attack inside the United States in response to real or perceived U.S. actions that threaten the regime."

So these threats are real. They could be sooner, rather than later. As a committee, as a Congress, and as a Government, we simply cannot afford to ignore this threat.

[The information follows:]





Chairman KING. I now recognize the gentleman from Mississippi, Mr. Thompson, for his opening statement.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and for calling this hearing today.

As a Homeland Security Committee, we are charged with the responsibility of ensuring this Nation's security. In carrying out that mission, we must ask unpopular questions, and seek answers which may make people uncomfortable.

Today's hearing does not pose a question. It makes a statement; Iran, Hezbollah, and the threat to the homeland. I hope that today's hearing can provide support for this statement. However, given that no current Federal officials have been asked here to tes-

tify today, I am concerned about whether the testimony we receive will be based on current information.

As the Homeland Security Committee, it is unusual for us to have a hearing about a perceived threat by a proposed foreign country. Our jurisdiction involves the security and safety of this country within our shores.

So before we begin to venture into this new territory, a word of caution is in order. When we examine our relationship with another country, we cannot look at any particular moment in time and pretend that it tells the whole story. We cannot view the politics, history, and culture of any country clearly by seeing a snapshot version.

Our Nation's relationship with Iran cannot be understood by simply looking at this moment in time. Our major break with Iran came in 1979, when employees of the American embassy in Tehran were taken captive and held as hostages for 444 days. This action presented a direct threat to United States citizens and the United States interests. We did not go to war with Iran.

In 1988, Iran, allegedly operating through Hezbollah, kidnapped and murdered a U.S. Marine in Lebanon. We did not go to war with Iran.

1996, Iran allegedly supported a terrorist group that bombed Khobar Towers, a U.S. military residence in Saudi Arabia that attacked and killed 19 U.S. servicemen. We did not go to war with Iran.

In these situations, we seemed to follow the advice of Pope John Paul II who said, "War is not always inevitable." Instead of going to war, Republicans and Democratic administrations, Presidents Carter, Reagan, Bush, and Clinton imposed sanctions on Iran.

In recent years, the United States has expanded those sanctions. In 2012, the European Union joined the efforts to sanction Iran. The European Union has pledged to halt new imports of Iranian oil in July.

In addition, the European Union has imposed new banking restrictions on Iran. These restrictions, known as SWIFT code sanctions will reach into the global banking system and short-circuit Iran's money transfer mechanism. Without the ability to use the international banking system, it is unlikely that Iran's current 25 percent inflation rate will rise and wreak economic havoc.

Yet, some of my friends on the other side say that sanctions are no longer good enough. They say that the possibility that Iran will have a nuclear weapons create a new urgency. I agree that if Iran were on the path of creating a nuclear weapon, we would have cause for concern, but Iran is not close to having a nuclear weapon.

James Clapper, Director of the National Intelligence, has testified before the Senate that while Iran is expanding its uranium enrichment program, he doesn't believe that they have made the decision to develop a nuclear weapon.

I think the Director of National Intelligence deserves our trust. If we have any questions about Director Clapper's estimation of Iran's capabilities or intentions, we should call him before this committee in a classified setting to hear his comments. But we should not engage in a public discussion that creates fear and delivers misinformation. Further, Mr. Chairman, I think, by now, we would

have learned that potential threats from weapons that do not exist should not determine our foreign policy.

Potential threats from weapons that do not exist can never again be the reason to consider sacrificing the lives of thousands of Americans in the deserts of a foreign land.

Securing this Nation demands that we calmly assess the threats we face and face down the threats that we know are real. Securing this Nation requires both focus and vigilance; neither can be achieved where there is fear and misinformation.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman KING. Thank you. I would just like to assure the Ranking Member if he was listening to my opening statement, we are not focusing on foreign policy here today at all. What we are talking about is an internal threat to this country which General Clapper has said is now the No. 1 domestic concern as far as international terrorism; the threat of Iran to carry out its hacks within this country and all of the policies you are talking about, many of which I support including the increased sanctions.

The question is will that drive Iran to launch Hezbollah attacks in this country and General Clapper, the director of National Intelligence, is extremely concerned about that.

I would think as the Committee on Homeland Security, if we don't believe it is within our jurisdiction to determine whether or not a foreign entity is going to carry out terrorist attacks within our country, then we are not doing our job.

To me this is clearly—and to me it is not even a question. This is clearly within our jurisdiction and that is why I intend to proceed with the hearing and subsequent hearings if we have to.

Mr. THOMPSON. Well, if the gentleman will yield, I look forward to the testimony to see whether or not the witnesses stick to just what you said.

Chairman KING. We may, in view of your suggestion, ask General Clapper to come in and follow up a subsequent hearing on his statement that Iran and Hezbollah are the No. 1 domestic threat to the United States today.

So, with that, let me thank all the witnesses for being here today. I will give more extensive introductions as they go along, but Mitchell Silber is the director of intelligence analysis with the Intelligence Division of the NYPD.

Mr. Chris Swecker is the former assistant director for the criminal investigative division and acting executive assistant director for law enforcement services of the FBI, which I believe, as I understand the hierarchy, was the No. 3 position in the FBI at that time.

Mr. Michael Braun is a managing partner with Spectre Group International and an expert in this field.

Dr. Matthew Levitt is a senior fellow and director of the Washington Institute's Stein Program on Counterterrorism and Intelligence.

Dr. Colin Kahl is an associate professor in the Security Studies Program at Georgetown University. He was called as your witness, Mr. Ranking Member, and we are really delighted to have him here today and I spoke to him earlier.

Our first witness is Mitchell Silber who is the director of intelligence analysis for the New York Police Department's Intelligence

Division. Mr. Silber is an expert in the field of counterterrorism. He has done absolutely outstanding work with the NYPD in putting together their extensive counterterrorism program.

Mr. Silber, let me just thank you and Commissioner Kelly and the NYPD, as a New Yorker, for the truly outstanding work you have done and say, in spite of the irrational and indefensible attacks against you and Commissioner Kelly by the New York Times, by the Associated Press, and other unknowing and misguided politicians, I want to thank you for the job you have done and continue to do, especially, yes, for the 14 plots against New York that you have stopped and for not yielding at all in the face of all the misguided cheap attacks made against you over the last several months.

With that, Mr. Silber is recognized.

STATEMENT OF MITCHELL D. SILBER, DIRECTOR, INTELLIGENCE ANALYSIS, NYPD INTELLIGENCE DIVISION, NEW YORK CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mr. SILBER. Good morning. Thank you for this opportunity to testify. Mr. Chairman, Members of the committee, as you know, over the past decade, the mission of the New York City Police Department has expanded to address the evolving threat of international and homegrown terrorism.

Grounded in existing law and fully in accordance with the U.S. Constitution, we have built and intelligence and counterterrorism program that has served as a deterrent and helped to protect the city from 14 terrorist plots since September 11, 2001.

As the director for the intelligence analysis at the NYPD, my responsibility is to dispassionately assess the impact of geo-political trends and tensions including the increasing threat of war on the security of New York City.

Data back to at least 2005, we have considered the possibility that efforts to halt the development of Iran's suspected nuclear weapons program could trigger a full-blown conflict in the Persian Gulf involving Iran, Israel, and potentially the United States.

In light of New York's symbolic importance as a terrorist target, its large Jewish population, locations of Israeli interest and status as one of the two outposts of Iranian diplomatic presence in the United States via its United Nations mission, the city remains the most likely venue for global tensions with Iran to spill over onto American soil.

A terrorist act by Iran or Hezbollah in New York City could serve as retaliation for real or perceived U.S. support or involvement in military action against Iran's nuclear facilities or against its regime.

While it is not my role to weigh in on potential U.S. diplomatic and military strategy, the NYPD is responsible for considering all of the possibilities and taking all the precautions necessary to keep New York City safe.

Previous conduct by Iranians present in New York City with official diplomatic cover suggests that, on several occasions, going back nearly a decade, Iran may have conducted hostile reconnaissance of the city's landmarks and infrastructure.

Three occasions, in June 2002, November 2003, and May 2004 involved Iranian mission guards videotaping infrastructure and public transportation and New York City landmarks.

The last of these resulted in the expulsion of two guards by the United States for engaging in activities that were not consistent with their duties, in other words, spying.

Three similar instances, which have not been previously discussed publicly, occurred in May 2005 and in September 2008 during the United Nations General Assembly; and, also, in September 2010, again, during the United Nations General Assembly when Federal air marshals observed four individuals taking photos and videotaping the water line and structural area of the heliport landing pad near Wall Street which they deemed suspicious.

In a field interview, all four of the individuals stated they were employed at the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting Company and produced U.N. press cards as identification.

Hezbollah and its supporters also have a presence in New York and surrounding area. Based on the NYPD's investigative findings, the majority of these individuals hail from Hezbollah strongholds in southern Lebanon, including towns as Bint Jbeil, Aytaroun and Yater, which in 2006 was a battlefield for Israeli forces and Hezbollah fighters.

Some of these individuals in New York are family members of Hezbollah political leaders or Hezbollah fighters who have been killed or associates of known ranking members of Hezbollah, or in some rare cases have received military training from Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Based on the nature of these close and continuing relationships with members of Hezbollah in Lebanon, the notion that Hezbollah agents from abroad might seek to leverage the local community in New York, whether wittingly or not, as facilitators is a credible threat.

The NYPD has spent significant time and effort studying the past modus operandi of Iranian and Hezbollah terrorist attacks worldwide in order to develop strategies to thwart any attack in the city. Most notable are the 1992 and 1994 bombings of Israeli and Jewish targets in Argentina which killed 29 and 85 people, respectively.

In these cases, Iran used its diplomatic presence in Buenos Aires to target, design, coordinate, and order the execution of the attacks which were then carried out by Hezbollah operatives from aboard who leveraged the local Lebanese community, as in many cases, unwitting facilitators.

We have also studied closely a recent series of attacks plausibly linked to Iran in countries as diverse as Georgia, India, and Thailand. These attacks have heightened the NYPD's concern regarding the threat posed by Iran or Hezbollah to New York City.

This is because the plots clearly demonstrate that Iran and/or Hezbollah remain deeply committed to striking against Israeli and Western targets and they are willing to deploy a variety of methods in order to do so further complicating our job of detecting and preventing such an attack.

Our study of these plots leaves us two notable conclusions.

First, the conspirators gave high priority to hitting Jewish and Israeli targets in a third country; and second that these attacks are part of a political calculus aimed at advancing Iranian strategic goals in the geopolitical sphere. It is therefore possible that as the pressure on Iran continues to mount or if war breaks out, Iran may choose to strike in the United States or for the reasons already mentioned, New York City may present the ideal target.

Given the recent alleged Iranian directed plot against a foreign diplomat here in Washington, Iran's increasingly bellicose rhetoric and its recent as well as long history of sponsoring terrorist attacks abroad, the NYPD must remain vigilant in attempting to detect and disrupt any attack by Iran or its proxies. Anything less would be abdicating our duty to protect New Your City and its residents.

Thank you.

[The statement of Mr. Silber follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MITCHELL D. SILBER

MARCH 21, 2012

Over the past decade, the mission of the New York City Police Department has expanded greatly to address the evolving threat of international and homegrown terrorism. Grounded in existing law and fully in accordance with the U.S. Constitution, we have built an intelligence and counterterrorism program that has served as a deterrent and has helped to protect the city from fourteen terrorist plots since September 11, 2001.

As the director of intelligence analysis for the New York City Police Department, my responsibility is to dispassionately assess the impact of geopolitical trends and tensions, including the increasing threat of war—on the security of New York City. Dating back to at least 2005, we have considered the possibility that efforts to halt the development of Iran's suspected nuclear weapons program could trigger a full-blown conflict in the Persian Gulf involving Iran, Israel, and potentially the United States.

In light of New York's symbolic importance as a terrorist target, its large Jewish population, locations of Israeli interest, and status as one of two outposts of Iranian diplomatic presence in the United States via its United Nations mission, the city remains the most likely venue for global tensions with Iran to spill over onto American soil. A terrorist attack by Iran or Hezbollah in New York City could serve as retaliation for real or perceived U.S. support or involvement in military action against Iran's nuclear facilities or against its regime.

While it is not my role to weigh in on potential U.S. diplomatic and military strategy, the NYPD is responsible for considering all of the possibilities and taking all the precautions necessary to keep New York City safe.

Over the last 6 months, our analysts have studied terrorist plots with a plausible nexus to Iran that have been attempted or carried out in Azerbaijan, India, Georgia, Thailand, as well as here in Washington. What we have learned has heightened our concerns. Disconcertingly, these plots demonstrate that Iran and/or Hezbollah remain committed to striking against Israeli and Western targets. Further complicating the task of law enforcement is the diversity of methods evinced by these plots, including differences in the profile of perpetrators, types of explosives used, delivery method, and tradecraft.

For example, in Baku, Azerbaijan in mid-January 2012, Azerbaijani authorities detained three men on charges of planning to attack two Israelis employed by a Jewish school in Baku. According to Azerbaijani authorities, the men received smuggled arms and equipment from Iranian agents—including a sniper rifle with silencer, pistols, sixteen pieces of plastic explosives and detonators which were smuggled into Azerbaijan from Iran via the Caspian Sea, overseen by Iranian intelligence services. Just last Wednesday, March 14, Azeri officials announced the arrest of 22 Azeri citizens for cooperating with the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). The Azeri National Security Ministry alleged that the individuals, some of whom were recruited by Iran as far back as 1999, received weapons and spying training at Iranian military facilities. The suspects were reportedly directed by the IRGC to stage attacks against Western embassies and their employees, including those of the U.S. and Israel.

In Bangkok, Thailand, on January 12, 2012, Thai police arrested Hussein Atris, a Lebanese man carrying a Swedish passport, at the Bangkok airport and raided a three-story commercial building to which he was linked, recovering bomb-making materials including 4,380 kg of urea-based fertilizer and 290 liters of ammonium nitrate. These materials were believed to be intended for use in an attack in Thailand or to be shipped abroad for use elsewhere. According to Swedish media reports, one of his relatives, Germany resident Muhammad Atris, was involved in the Iranian assassination of four Kurdish opposition figures in 1992.

In Tblisi, Georgia, on February 13, 2012, a “sticky bomb” was affixed to a vehicle carrying an Israeli diplomat; the bomb was detected and diffused without causing harm.

In a rare coordinated attack, at approximately the same time as the failed bombing in Tblisi, a motorcyclist attached an almost identical “sticky bomb” to a minivan belonging to the Israeli Embassy in New Delhi. The explosion injured four people, including the wife of an Israeli Ministry of Defense representative. Reports indicate that the embassy may have been targeted and surveyed by an Indian national who used his press credentials to obtain access and escape scrutiny.

The next day, in Bangkok, Thailand, a cache of explosives kept in a rented house in downtown Bangkok by a group of Iranian nationals was detonated in an accidental explosion. An Iranian man, one of the occupants of the house, escaped armed with grenades, which he then threw at a taxi and at police, grievously wounding himself and causing no other casualties. Following the explosion and his attempt to flee, Thai authorities identified three other Iranians wanted in connection with the explosion, including a woman who had already returned to Iran, and arrested one Iranian national attempting to fly to Malaysia. Interestingly, telephonic analysis suggests a direct connection between the Bangkok and the New Delhi plots.

While the timing of some of these foiled plots around the world suggest a linkage to and retribution for the fourth anniversary of the assassination of Imad Mughniyeh, Hezbollah’s infamously effective operational leader, they also seem to be calibrated to provide direct retaliation for the assassination of several Iranian nuclear scientists in Iran in recent months.

While these incidents all occurred overseas, another plot uncovered in the past 6 months has forced a recalculation of the odds that Iran and its surrogate, Hezbollah, might seek to strike out against targets on American soil if hostilities commenced in the Persian Gulf or even as the Iranian regime feels itself increasingly under pressure. This was the plot foiled last October—obviously absent overt hostilities—in which a naturalized U.S. citizen of Iranian descent, directed by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, hired an individual whom he thought was a member of a Mexican drug cartel to assassinate the Saudi ambassador to the United States. The plan involved blowing up a Washington, DC, restaurant—potentially killing hundreds of Americans in the process.

In the wake of this plot, the Director of National Intelligence James Clapper testified in January to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that Iranian officials “are now more willing to conduct an attack in the United States in response to real or perceived U.S. actions that threaten the regime.”

The NYPD has long been concerned about the possibility of asymmetrical attacks by Iran and/or Hezbollah occurring in New York City. Thus we also have spent significant time and effort studying the modus operandi of Iranian and Hezbollah terrorist attacks worldwide that occurred prior to the ones discussed above.

Most notable are the 1992 and 1994 bombings of Israeli and Jewish targets in Argentina, which killed 29 and 85 people, respectively. With this in mind, we sent a team to Argentina to study the modus operandi of those attacks and to meet with Argentine security officials who worked the investigations. Coupled with open source information, this is what the NYPD learned:

Iran has a proven record of using its official presence in a foreign city to coordinate attacks, which are then carried out by Hezbollah agents from abroad, often leveraging the local community—whether wittingly or not—as facilitators. In the Argentinian cases, Iranian agents were sent to Argentina years before the attacks, where they integrated into society and became Argentine nationals. For example, Mohsen Rabbani is believed to have been in charge of coordinating the 1994 attack and is subject to an Interpol arrest warrant for his involvement. He first came to Argentina, 11 years earlier, in 1983, where he subsequently became the main imam at At-Tauhid, an Iranian-funded mosque in Buenos Aires.

After traveling to Iran in August 1993 to participate in a meeting that allegedly gave the planned attack the green light, Mr. Rabbani returned to Argentina as a cultural attaché to the Iranian Embassy, conveniently providing him diplomatic immunity. Then, Hezbollah agents from abroad received logistical support from mem-

bers of the local Lebanese-Shiite community and the Iranian Embassy to carry out the attack.

Besides a better understanding of the operational and logistical relationship between Iranian and Hezbollah personnel on the ground for these two attacks, our team returned from Buenos Aires with two other important takeaways: First, the high priority that the conspirators gave to hitting specifically Jewish and Israeli targets in a third country; and second, the strong belief that both of these attacks did not happen in Argentina by accident—rather they were designed to pressure Buenos Aires to resume nuclear cooperation with Iran—something Argentina had backed out from, under American pressure.

So now in 2012, with pressure from the United States and the West over Iran's nuclear program increasingly escalating, the NYPD must assume that New York City and its plethora of Jewish and Israeli targets could be targeted by Iran or Hezbollah in the event that hostilities break out in the Persian Gulf. Moreover, like Buenos Aires, the presence of Iran's U.N. mission in New York City allows officials from Iran's Ministry of Intelligence to live and operate in New York with official diplomatic cover.

We believe this is neither an idle nor a new threat. Between 2002 and 2010, the NYPD and Federal authorities detected at least 6 events involving Iranian diplomatic personnel that we struggle to categorize as anything other than hostile reconnaissance of New York City.

The first event occurred in June of 2002 and involved Iranian Mission security guards. The second event occurred at 2AM on November 16, 2003 when uniformed NYPD officers riding a southbound 7 train observed two males filming the subway train tracks. The men, who initially claimed diplomatic immunity, turned out to be security guards at the Iranian Mission who had recently arrived in New York. Despite two warnings from the State Department about this inappropriate behavior, in May 2004, two more Iranian Mission security guards were observed videotaping infrastructure, public transportation and New York City landmarks. One month later, the guards were expelled by the United States for “engaging in activities that were not consistent with their duties”—in other words, spying.

However, this official reprimand was not sufficient and suspicious activities by Iranian diplomatic personnel have continued. In May 2005, 6 individuals associated with the Government of Iran were interviewed by the NYPD in response to a lead called into the NYC safe hotline. The individuals were on a local sight-seeing cruise, and the captain of the ship deemed their behavior suspicious. The individuals had divided into groups of two, each with a map, while photographing and videotaping NYC landmarks such as the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges. They were also reportedly speaking on their cell phones in an unusual manner. Responding to the lead, the NYPD learned that one of the individuals was employed at the Permanent Mission of Iran to the United Nations, and the other five had diplomatic immunity based on their individual positions within the Iranian government. After sharing the information with Federal authorities and conferring with the United Nations Law Enforcement division, the individuals were released without incident.

In September 2008, during the United Nations General Assembly, several members of the Iranian Delegation were observed taking photographs of the MTA railroad tracks inside of Grand Central Station. The NYPD was able to interview three of the individuals, who confirmed that they had been inside the station, but claimed that no photos were taken. One individual produced a camera that contained photos of the Brooklyn Bridge, a location the three had also visited. Again, the information was shared with Federal authorities and the individuals were released without incident.

Finally, in September 2010, again during the United Nations General Assembly, Federal Air Marshals observed suspicious behavior at the Wall Street Heliport. Four individuals were taking still photos and videotaping the waterline and structural area of the heliport landing pad from the vehicle parking lot area. According to the Air Marshals, the individuals were not behaving like other tourists at the location. For example, one individual held his camera at waist level while filming, and the footage was focused on the structure of the heliport instead of the actual helicopters coming in and out of the location. In a field interview, all four of the individuals stated they were employed at the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting Company (IRIB), and produced UN Press access cards as identification. Information on the subjects was shared with the JTTF/NYC, NYPD Counter Terrorism Bureau and Intelligence Division, and the individuals were released without incident.

Moreover, the Iranian government also has an unofficial presence in New York via the Alavi Foundation, a non-profit ostensibly devoted to charity works and promoting Islamic culture. In December 2009, Preet Bharara, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York, described Alavi as having “effectively been a front

for the government of Iran.” A contemporaneous complaint filed by Mr. Bharara’s office led to the seizure of Alavi’s assets—including the Islamic Institute of New York, the largest Shiite mosque in the city and the location most closely affiliated with Iran’s U.N. mission.

Hezbollah and its supporters have a presence in New York and the surrounding area as well. Their provision of aid to Hezbollah manifests in a variety of ways for this community of supporters. For example, in 2008, two Staten Island men pleaded guilty to providing material support to Hezbollah for hosting Hezbollah’s satellite television channel, al Manar. In another notable case, 26 people—including a former Brooklyn resident—were indicted in Federal court in Philadelphia in 2009 for conspiring to provide material support to the terrorist group by procuring weapons and using proceeds from the sale of fraudulent passports, counterfeit money, and stolen money.

In addition, there have been some cases of Lebanese-linked businesses in the tri-State area and elsewhere being implicated in a variety of illegitimate and semi-legitimate business activities, including trademark counterfeiting, car exports, and money-laundering—all believed to be benefiting Hezbollah. The details of a massive money-laundering scheme were revealed in a civil suit filed against several Lebanese financial institutions, including the Lebanese Canadian Bank, last December by the Drug Enforcement Administration and the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York.

In light of what we have learned about events in Argentina and elsewhere, we must assume that familial, political, and military links between Hezbollah supporters in New York City and the Hezbollah organization in their towns of origin in Lebanon are robust and dynamic. For example, individuals of concern hail from Hezbollah strongholds in southern Lebanon, including towns like Bint Jbeil, Yaroun, and Yatar, which were the battlefields for Israeli forces and Hezbollah fighters in their 2006 war. Some individuals in New York are family members of Hezbollah political leaders or Hezbollah fighters who have been killed, are associates of known ranking members of Hezbollah, or have received military training from Hezbollah in Lebanon. Simply put, the risk that Hezbollah agents from abroad would seek to leverage the local community in New York as facilitators—whether wittingly or not—must be considered.

Given a spate of recent Iranian-linked attacks abroad, the alleged IRGC plot against a foreign diplomat in Washington, Iran’s increasingly bellicose rhetoric, and its long history of sponsoring terror attacks, the NYPD must remain vigilant in attempting to detect and disrupt any attack by Iran or its proxies. Anything less would be abdicating our duty to protect New York City and its residents.

Chairman KING. Thank you, Mr. Silber.

Our next witness, Christopher Swecker, was the former Assistant Director for the Criminal Investigative Division and the acting Executive Assistant Director for Law Enforcement Services at the FBI, a position he retired from in 2006. As I mentioned before, this is my understanding it was the No. 3 position in the FBI.

In his 24-year career with the FBI, Mr. Swecker served a number of capacities including a supervisor in the Legal Counsel Division and assistant special agent in charge in Miami and Houston and he served as a special agent in charge in Charlotte, North Carolina until 2004 and in that capacity he led the investigation of a large Hezbollah funding raising and smuggling case.

Mr. Swecker, you are recognized for 5 minutes and thank you for being here today.

STATEMENT OF CHRISTOPHER E. SWECKER, FORMER ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Mr. SWECKER. Good morning Mr. Chairman and Members of the committee. Thank you for inviting me to speak to the committee today on a topic that is so vital to our National security.

I should preface my remarks today by saying and emphasizing that I am appearing as a concerned U.S. citizen, not an official

spokesperson for the FBI. Any opinions that I give you this morning will be those of my own and not necessarily those of the FBI.

As assistant director of the FBI's criminal division from 2004 to 2006 and acting executive assistance director, I saw first-hand how terrorist organizations use criminal activities to support terrorism around the globe. I also spent the fall of 2003 as the FBI's on-scene commander in Iraq on a mission that was focused primarily on counterterrorism matters. In that capacity, I saw terrorism first-hand in attacks against U.S. citizens—over a dozen of them, including the U.N. bombing—and I saw the total commitment displayed by these foreign fighters and jihadists that were operating in that theater.

I am here today to talk to you about a specific case involving Hezbollah. As you know, it is an Iranian-sponsored paramilitary group that in 1997 was formally designated by the State Department as a terrorist organization.

While al-Qaeda has gained attention and notoriety with a series of sensational attacks, Hezbollah has quietly and strategically operated below the radar screen by avoiding overt terrorist attacks in the United States. But nevertheless, Hezbollah is responsible for the death of hundreds of U.S. citizens and including 241 U.S. Marines in the bombing of the Beirut barracks. During a U.N. peace-keeping mission, they killed 17 Americans.

They also are responsible for the TWA Flight 847 hijacking that resulted in the brutal murder of our courageous Navy diver, Robert Stethem at the hands of Imad Mughniyah. Mughniyah was a fugitive with a \$25 million on his head when he was reportedly killed in 2008.

Hezbollah operatives were also responsible for the murder of CIA Station Chief William Buckley in 1985 and responsible for, as was just mentioned, the bombings of Jewish targets in Argentina, demonstrating their global reach. Other more current plots are well known.

Hezbollah has been referred to as the A-Team because of their superior organization, paramilitary set-up and the state sponsorship of their overseers in the Iranian government.

I am here to talk to you today about one of the best examples of how Hezbollah operates in the United States. This case that I am going to talk about serves as a warning that while Hezbollah terrorist organization has been focused primarily on fundraising activities in the United States, their sophistication, presence, and deep entrenchment in American society and business has a potential to provide a platform to supporting more lethal capability that should be of concern to all Americans.

This case, Operation Smoke Screen, was initiated in 1998 and involved a wide-ranging multi-agency investigation of what was believed to be Hezbollah consisting of a core group of eight members from Lebanon, who along with a network of over a dozen associates were determined to be involved in a series of criminal and terrorist-related activities.

The investigation was able to prove that proceeds from their criminal activities were funneled to Hezbollah operatives to form a procurement chain that originated in Charlotte, North Carolina,

stretched though to Detroit, Michigan, into Canada and ultimately Lebanon.

The case involved the direct participation with the highest-ranking Hezbollah procurement officials at the time, Hassan Lakkis, who is now an international fugitive from the Charlotte indictment.

Another significant Hezbollah figure, Sheik Abbas Harake was indicted in a second superseding indictment in 2002. Harake was a prominent Hezbollah military leader who was in direct contact with Charlotte cell leader Mohamad Hammoud over 50 times just prior to a cell member, Said Harb, traveling to Lebanon to deliver an envelope of money to Harake by way of Hammoud's mother.

This case set precedent for many future terrorism prosecutions and was essentially—it was noteworthy because it used criminal violations in conjunction with counterterrorism statutes to preempt and neutralize a terrorist group operating on U.S. soil.

The initial indictment charged 25 defendants in a 77-count indictment. There were charges of cigarette smuggling, interstate transportation of stolen property, immigration fraud, credit card fraud, bank fraud, fraud by wire, mail fraud, conspiracy to provide material support to a terrorist organization, RICO, and money laundering.

A total of six of the defendants were charged with providing material support through a terrorist organization. This was the first time we ever used RICO in a terrorist prosecution.

This case is significant because of the breathtaking sophistication, scope, and organizational depth of this group, their military training and ease in which they manipulated the U.S. financial system.

During the investigation, and the indictment lays this out, in one count of that indictment, over 71 overt acts were alleging a conspiracy by three key members to provide material support including financial services, false documentation, communications equipment, explosives and physical assets to facilitate violent attacks by Hezbollah. Over 500 bank accounts were examined. Over \$8 million in criminal proceeds were identified.

They used business fronts such as gas stations purchased with a fraudulent SBA loan, a restaurant, two tobacco shops and a painting business to disguise their activities.

A U.S. Embassy employee in Cyprus and corrupt immigration officials in Venezuela were bribed to obtain VISAs for cell members to enter the United States.

Seven individuals were indicted for engaging in fraudulent marriages with cell members in attempts to obtain legal status. Several of the members were subjected to multiple deportation orders, but were able to avoid deportation by making false claims of asylum or through their fictitious marriages.

Cell members manufactured false documents, driver's licenses, Social Security cards, and passports to support their multiple identities.

Scores of credit cards were obtained, run up to their credit limits and ultimately busted out. Some of the proceeds were utilized—

Chairman KING. Mr. Swecker, if you could try to conclude your testimony in a few seconds. Thank you.

Mr. SWECKER. Well let me wrap this up. There were many other activities that were alleged in the indictment and the indictment is a public document that can be read by just about anyone. I would encourage anyone who wants to understand how Hezbollah operates in the United States to read that March 2001 indictment.

You will see some photos today that we found of them in their training in Beirut; some were militia members in Beirut—card-carrying militia members. They were in direct contact with some of the highest-level figures in Hezbollah.

So with that, Mr. Chairman, I will rest on the rest of my statement which will be a part of the record, I am sure. Out of respect for the committee's time, I just want to note that this was a multi-agency investigation and it involved many other agencies—ATF, Diplomatic Security, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, the RCMP and the Canadian Intelligence Service.

Thank you.

[The statement of Mr. Swecker follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHRISTOPHER E. SWECKER

Good morning Mr. Chairman and Members of the committee. Thank you for inviting me to speak to this committee on a topic that is so vital to our National security. I should preface my remarks today by emphasizing that I am appearing as a concerned U.S. Citizen and not an official spokesman for the FBI.

I retired from my position of assistant director in charge of the of the FBI's Criminal Investigative Division in July, 2006 with over 24 years of service. As assistant director of the FBI's Criminal Division from 2004 to 2006 and acting executive assistant director of the FBI's Law Enforcement Services Branch for my last 6 months of service I saw first-hand how Terrorist organizations use criminal activities to support terrorism around the globe. During the course of my career I was also the special agent in charge of the North Carolina Office from July 1999 through April 2004 when we worked several significant terrorism cases including the capture of the Olympic Bomber, Eric Rudolph, and the neutralization of an active Hezbollah cell which I will describe further. I also spent the fall of 2003 as the FBI's on-scene commander in Iraq on a mission that was focused primarily on Counterterrorism matters. In that capacity I saw first-hand the impact of terrorist attacks on U.S. civilians and the total commitment displayed by foreign jihadists as we analyzed and conducted forensic examinations of over a dozen suicide bombings, including the tragic attack on the U.N. Headquarters.

I am here today to talk to you about a specific case involving Hezbollah, an Iranian sponsored paramilitary group that in 1997 was formally designated by the U.S. State Department as a Terrorist Organization and subject to U.S. sanctions. While al-Qaeda has gained attention and notoriety with a series sensational attacks Hezbollah has quietly and strategically operated below the radar screen by avoiding overt terrorist actions in the United States. Nevertheless Hezbollah is responsible for the death of hundreds of U.S. Citizens including 241 U.S. marines in the bombing of the Beirut barracks during a U.N. peace keeping mission and the bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut that killed 17 Americans in 1983 and other heinous attacks. One notorious Hezbollah leader, Imad Mugniyah, led the hijacking of TWA flight 847 in 1985 that resulted in the brutal shooting of the brave U.S. Navy Diver Robert Stethem. Mugniyah was a fugitive with a \$25 million bounty on his head when he was reportedly killed in 2008. Hezbollah operatives were also responsible for the murder of CIA Station Chief William Buckley in 1985 and lethal bombings of Jewish targets in Argentina demonstrating their global reach. Other more current alleged plots involving Iran are well known. Hezbollah has been referred to as the "A Team" because of their superior organization, paramilitary setup and the state sponsorship of their overseers in the Iranian government.

The case I am here to talk to you about today is one of the best examples of how Hezbollah operates in the United States. This case serves as a warning that while the Hezbollah Terrorist Organization has been focused primarily on fund-raising activities in the United States their sophistication, presence, and deep entrenchment in American society and business has the potential to provide a platform to support a more lethal capability that should be of concern to all Americans.

In my capacity as head of the FBI's North Carolina Field Office I had overall responsibility for an investigation of one of the most significant terrorism prosecutions in the country.

This case, dubbed "Operation Smokescreen", was initiated in 1998 and involved an wide-ranging multi-agency investigation of what was believed to be a Hezbollah cell consisting of a core group of eight individuals from Lebanon who, along with a network of over a dozen associates were determined to be involved in a series of criminal and terrorist related activities. The investigation was able to prove that some proceeds of their criminal activities were funneled to Hezbollah operatives who formed a procurement chain that originated in Charlotte, NC stretched through Detroit, MI, Canada and ultimately Lebanon.

The case involved the direct participation one of the highest-ranking Hezbollah procurement officials at the time, Hassan Hilu Laqis, who is now an international fugitive from the Charlotte indictment. Another significant Hezbollah figure Sheikh Abbas Harake was indicted in second superseding indictment in March 2002. Harake was a prominent Hezbollah military leader who was in direct phone contact with Charlotte cell leader Mohammed Hammoud over 50 times immediately before cell member Said Harb travelled to Lebanon to deliver an envelope of money to Harake by way of Hammoud's mother. This case set precedent for many future terrorism prosecutions and was especially noteworthy because it used criminal violations in conjunction with counterterrorism statutes to preempt and neutralize a terrorist group operating on United States soil. The case involved three waves of indictments. The core charges contained in a superseding indictment dated March 28, 2001 captioned *United States v Mohammad Yousef Hammoud, et. al.* named 25 defendants in a 77-count Federal bill of indictment. Included in these 77 counts were charges of cigarette smuggling; interstate transportation of stolen property; immigration fraud; credit card fraud; bank fraud; fraud by wire; mail fraud; conspiracy to provide material support to a terrorist organization; providing material support to a terrorist organization, RICO and money laundering. Ultimately six defendants were charged with providing material support to a terrorist organization. The case involved the first trial ever under this statute. The case also involved the first time the RICO statute was used in a terrorist related indictment. The cell leader, Mohammed Hammoud, was sentenced to 155 months in prison after a 6-week trial in Charlotte, NC in 2002. The balance of the defendants were sentenced to prison terms, probation, or subjected to deportation. Several high-ranking Hezbollah figures remain fugitives and are believed to be residing in Lebanon.

This case is significant because of the breathtaking sophistication, scope, and organizational depth of this group, their military training and the ease of which they manipulated the U.S. financial system. The investigation revealed that the Hezbollah members and their associates were involved in the following activities:

- Seventy-one overt acts were alleged in one count of the indictment alleging a conspiracy by three key members of the organization to provide material support to Hezbollah including currency, financial services, training, false documentation and identification, communications equipment, explosives, and other physical assets to facilitate violent attacks by Hezbollah. Over 500 bank accounts were examined and over \$8 million in criminal proceeds identified.
- The defendants used business fronts such as a gas station purchased with a fraudulent SBA loan, a restaurant, two tobacco shop shops, and a painting business to disguise their activities.
- A U.S. Embassy employee in Cyprus and corrupt Immigration officials in Venezuela were bribed to obtain Visas for cell members to enter the United States.
- Seven individuals were indicted for engaging in fraudulent marriages with cell members or associates in attempts to obtain legal immigration status.
- Several of the members were subjected to multiple deportation orders but were able to avoid deportation by making false claims of asylum or hiring corrupt individuals to engage in sham marriages.
- Some were involved in multiple marriages simultaneously.
- Cell members manufactured false documentation such as Driver's Licenses, Social Security cards, and Passports to support multiple identities for cell members and their associates.
- Scores of credit cards were obtained, run up to or past their credit limits, and ultimately "busted out."
- Some of the proceeds were utilized to leverage the purchase of truckloads of cigarettes at North Carolina outlets which were smuggled to Detroit and other low tax cities where they were sold without valid tax stamps garnering millions of dollars in illicit profits.
- One member made over \$500,000 in various credit card "bust out" schemes.

- Fictitious identities were utilized to obtain phony credit cards and set up bank accounts.
- Criminal Proceeds were laundered through bank accounts and businesses.
- One cell member bribed a bank employee in the amount of \$1,500 to permit a closed bank account to be reactivated and permitting the member to commit check fraud on the reopened account.
- At least 30 bank accounts at least ten banks and investment companies were utilized to support the cell's illegal operations and were seized by the U.S. Government.
- Members built up an arsenal of weapons and trained to keep up their skills.
- Some of the members were active Hezbollah militia with extensive military training.
- Several cell members smuggled stolen dual use military electronics equipment to Canada for shipment to Hezbollah members in Lebanon.
- Numerous acts of purchasing or financing the purchase of dual-use military equipment for shipment to Hezbollah operatives in Lebanon were alleged.

I encourage anyone who is interested understanding how a Hezbollah cell operates in the United States to read the March 28, 2002 superseding indictment. It describes the above activities and much more. Most importantly it describes a strategy of violating U.S. laws in various and diverse ways to support terrorist activities. The irony of committing crimes in the United States that undermine our financial systems while utilizing the proceeds to finance terrorism should not go unnoticed.

One insidious aspect of the cell was its potential lethal nature. During the course of the trial, Charlotte Hezbollah cell ring leader Mohammed Hammoud wrote a letter from jail to an associate soliciting assistance in assassinating the lead Prosecutor and using explosives to blow up the Federal courthouse and destroy the evidence against the cell. In the letter, which was introduced at his sentencing hearing, Hammoud wrote "His assignment is to put bullets in the head of the arrogant (expletive deleted) prosecutor or to annihilate with explosives the evidence against us."

Photos were located during the searches of cell members showing Hammoud and another cell member with assault weapons training at an apparently remote outdoor location near Charlotte, NC. Other photos of another cell member, Mohamed Darwiche, in full militia gear armed with a rocket launcher and mounted machine gun were located and introduced at trial. One photo showed a teenage Hammoud posing with an assault rifle in front of a photo of Iranian Ayatollah Khomeini titled "Mohammed at the Hezbollah Center." One chilling video showed a room full of over 40 men outfitted in suicide vests passing in review labeled "Matyr's squad" (sic). Hezbollah propaganda video tapes were found where Hezbollah members could be heard chanting "death to America, death to Israel." Another photo of concern depicted Hammoud and Darwiche posing in front of the White House.

Finally there was a communication between cell member and the Lebanon based Hezbollah procurement official Hassan Laquis that mentioned a willingness to do "anything you or the father want me to do, and I mean anything." Mr. Chairman, I think that statement sums up the threat. The Charlotte cell had the infrastructure, discipline, financing, motivation, and inspiration to be more than a cell involved in criminal activities and terrorist financing. The case illustrates the formidable capabilities of such cells and it would not strain credibility to think that Charlotte, NC cell was typical. They were in direct contact with the highest leadership of Hezbollah including leaders such as Hassan Nasrallah, Secretary General of the organization. Evidence was introduced at trial that Charlotte members followed the teachings of Sheik Mohammed Fadlallah the mastermind behind the U.S. Embassy Hostage crisis in 1980 and whose last act before he died in 2010 was to issue a fatwa authorizing the use of suicide bomb attacks.

Mr. Chairman out of respect for the committee's time I have not reviewed every aspect of this case but would like it to be noted that this investigation and prosecution involved the FBI, ATF, Diplomatic Security, Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department, Iredell County Sherriff's Office and unprecedented participation of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS). Most importantly the United States Attorney's Office in the Western District of North Carolina did an extraordinary job of a very complex and difficult series of indictments and two cliff hanging trials. At the time the "wall" between intelligence investigations and criminal investigations made it extremely difficult to "connect the dots" between the criminal acts and the cell's terrorist activities. It is only through the skill and perseverance of the investigators and prosecutors that this case was successful.

This concludes my opening remarks and I would be happy to answer any questions.

Chairman KING. Thank you Mr. Swecker.

I would ask the witnesses to try to keep their remarks as close to 5 minutes. Your full statement will be made part of the record.

Next witness, Dr. Michael Braun, is a Managing Partner at Spectre Group International. Prior to that, Mr. Braun had a 33-year career in law enforcement. In 2008, he retired from the U.S. DEA as assistant administrator and chief of operations.

There was time at DEA Mr. Braun had oversight responsibility for all of DEA's operational programs and projects in Afghanistan in 2004 through 2008, and was the architect of the DEA's recent significant expansion in Afghanistan. He also serves as the Department of Defense's chief of staff for the Inter-Ministry of Interior Coalition, Divisional Authority in Iraq.

Mr. Braun, thank you for your service and you are recognized for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF MICHAEL A. BRAUN, MANAGING PARTNER,
SPECTRE GROUP INTERNATIONAL, LLC**

Mr. BRAUN. Thank you Chairman King, Ranking Member Thompson, and other distinguished Members of this committee for the opportunity to speak with you today about the growing threat that Iran, Hezbollah, and other related terrorist groups pose to our homeland.

I applaud your initiative for calling this very important hearing. Quite candidly, I would rather be talking about this threat today than at some future date before a Congressional oversight committee that is trying to get to the bottom of the next wave of attacks across our country, where we could potentially lose hundreds or even thousands.

You are going to get the perspective of a career Federal narcotics agent who served on both coasts, both our Northern and Southern borders in the Midwest, throughout Latin America and as you said, Congressman King, in Iraq.

Iran, Hezbollah and the Quds Force, the revolutionary guard core, special forces unit, that is responsible—or special forces division that is responsible for foreign clandestine operations including assignments, pose a real threat to our country, as I said.

Both these groups are now heavily involved in the global cocaine trade and as a result of that activity, they have come much closer into our neighborhood and even closer onto our doorstep. They are now operating and working in close proximity and collaborating with Mexican and Colombian drug-trafficking cartels, not only in the Western Hemisphere, but other locations such as Guinea Bissau in West Africa.

Thanks to Venezuela and Hugo Chavez, these operatives from both of these very threatening terrorist groups are pouring into our neighborhood, into the Western Hemisphere.

The Hezbollah Quds Force are masters at identifying existing illicit infrastructures around the world and leveraging and exploiting them for all they are worth. This has been their modus operandi for decades.

If anyone thinks for a moment these groups don't recognize the strategic importance of the illicit infrastructures that the Mexican and Colombian cartels have built over the last 60 to 70 years, in-

frastructures to support the weekly movement of tons of drugs by jet and turboprop aircraft, by fully submersible submarines capable of moving eight or more tons of cocaine from the North Coast of Columbia all the way into Northern Mexico, then they are simply ignorant or naive. That is all there is to it.

There are many nasty by-products that stem from this growing confluence of drugs and terror. Let me tell you about one. Congressman King, you already mentioned it.

Last month, General Clapper, our Director of National Intelligence, testified before the Senate Committee on Intelligence about the intel community's growing concern that Iran may be capable, and may be poised at hitting us here at home as things heat up between our two countries.

The key example he used to drive home that concern was the Iranian Quds Force plot to assassinate the Saudi Arabian ambassador to the United States that the DEA and FBI thankfully foiled.

That DEA informant was being recruited by a Quds Force operative. The Quds Force operative believed that the informant was a member of the ultraviolent Los Zetas Mexican drug-trafficking organization. Fortunately, he wasn't.

That event has been assessed by every three-letter agency in our Government's security apparatus, and was proven to be credible. That is why the DNI used that example. Can Iran hit us here at home? You bet they can. How would they most likely do it? Most assuredly, they would use Hezbollah, and they would use the Quds Force.

What really worries me is that the Quds Force controls Iran's strategic missile program. So the big question is, "Will they be the holder of the keys to Iran's future nuclear weapons arsenal?" That is the same terrorist organization that made a concerted attempt to assassinate the Saudi Arabian ambassador right here in the United States, with a car bomb of all things; not a weapons system that would be used in a surgical strike.

We really need to get focused and get down to some tough business, but get focused about addressing this very powerful threat posed to our Nation.

Finally, you have done a great job since 9/11, all of you on this committee, and your predecessors, at keeping America safe. Our military has done a great job at keeping us safe. Our law enforcement and public safety personnel have done a tremendous job of keeping us safe.

But I happen to believe, like many experts in this town, that we are involved in a war unlike any that we have ever seen before. It is a long war. Like any other war, there comes a time when you need to make some midcourse adjustments. I think that that is what we are facing right now. There are some things that we need to do to shore up some gaps. I look forward to addressing those during this hearing. Thank you.

[The statement of Mr. Braun follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL A. BRAUN

INTRODUCTION

Chairman King, Ranking Member Thompson, and distinguished Members of the committee, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the

threat posed by Iran and Hezbollah on our Homeland. Last month our Nation's Director of National Intelligence testified before the Senate Intelligence Committee regarding our intelligence community's growing concern about Iran's ability to attack America's homeland. He used a recently foiled Iranian Quds Force plot to assassinate the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States here in Washington, DC, as a key example to support his concern. The Quds Force, the special forces branch of the Iran Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) responsible for clandestine foreign operations, including assassinations, attempted to recruit one or more members of the ultra-violent Los Zetas Mexican drug trafficking cartel to carry out the attack. Based on the Director's revelations, today's hearing takes on an even greater level of significance.

My comments will focus on the threat posed to our homeland by Iran's most menacing proxy, the Hezbollah, as well as the Quds Force. It is important to realize that where you find one—you find the other. The Quds Force was responsible for standing-up Hezbollah, and has leveraged and exploited the intimate relationship those groups share on countless occasions over the years. Both of these groups are now heavily involved in the global drug trade, and their participation in that effort presents them with myriad opportunities with which to build their terrorist and criminal capacity in the Western Hemisphere and elsewhere. The Hezbollah has been designated by our Department of State as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO), and our Department of Treasury has declared the Quds Force as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist Organization.

We have heard about the Hezbollah for many years, while the Quds Force has lurked in the shadows for most of its existence. In the context of this hearing, it is important that we remember the Quds Force is also responsible for Iran's strategic missile program and many experts believe they will be holding the keys to the country's nuclear weapons program if it makes it off the ground. The security challenges posed by these terrorist organizations' expanding involvement in the global cocaine and heroin trade are enormous and I believe it will be abundantly clear by the end of this hearing that most of the security challenges facing our Nation by this threat are not being appropriately and adequately addressed. What is even more threatening are the broader strategic implications, the by-product if you will, this activity has, and will continue to produce.

Before entering the private sector on November 1, 2008, I served for almost 4 years as the Assistant Administrator and Chief of Operations of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and for 1 year as the Agency's Acting Chief of Intelligence. I was also assigned to a number of DEA offices throughout the United States, including service on both our Southern and Northern borders, on both our East and West Coasts, in the Midwest, and three years engaged in paramilitary operations targeting the logistical infrastructure of major Latin American drug trafficking cartels in remote and austere locations in several South and Central American countries. It is through my 34 years in law enforcement that I sit before you today, deeply concerned about Iran's growing presence in the Western Hemisphere and beyond.

You will receive a career, Federal narcotic agent's perspective on how groups like the Hezbollah and Quds Force operate and work hard to build relations with organized crime, terrorist, insurgent, and smuggling organizations in permissive (undergoverned or ungoverned) environments in the Western Hemisphere and around the world, and the related dangers posed by this growing phenomenon. We must understand that the Hezbollah and Quds Force are absolute masters at building these nefarious relations in order to leverage and exploit them for what they are most worth: To help them advance their agendas far from home. If anyone thinks for one moment that these terrorist organizations do not understand that the Mexican drug trafficking cartels now dominate drug trafficking in our country, reportedly in more than 250 cities, then they are ignorant or very naive. And these groups most assuredly recognize the strategic value of exploiting that activity, and all that has been built to support it over several decades, for moving their vision forward in our part of the world.

I have made several recommendations in my Statement for the Record and have others I would be happy to share with the members of your staffs, but one stands out more than all of the others. Well over half of the groups our government has designated as Foreign Terrorist Organizations are now involved in one or more aspects of the global drug trade. The confluence of drugs and terror is happening at speeds far faster than most in Washington, DC choose to admit, while our Government's strategies for dealing with terrorism and drugs continue to drift farther apart. If we don't change that quickly, I believe we could pay a terrible price down the road.

Much of the Statement for the Record I delivered to you today reflects information contained in my Statement for the Record submitted on October 12, 2011 to the House Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade at a hearing focused on the growing confluence of drugs and terror, as well as in my Statement for the Record I delivered to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs at their February 2, 2012 hearing concerning Iran's expanding agenda in the Western Hemisphere.

Mr. Chairman I would like to thank you, Ranking Member Thompson and the other Members of this important committee and many of your colleagues in Congress for all you have done to support the counterterrorism and counter-narcotics efforts of our Nation and many other countries. I appreciate the fact that it is in that spirit you called us here today, to discuss the threat posed by Iran on our homeland. I look forward to contributing to this important hearing in a most positive way and to working with the outstanding professionals on your respective staffs to help you in anyway possible on this important subject.

ATTACHMENT.—THE THREAT POSED TO OUR HOMELAND BY IRAN, HEZBOLLAH AND OTHER GROUPS AND THE GROWING CONFLUENCE OF DRUGS AND TERROR

By Michael A. Braun

THE LIST OF "USUAL SUSPECTS" HAS GROWN SIGNIFICANTLY

The nexus between drugs and terrorism is growing at a rate far faster than most policy makers in Washington, DC choose to admit, and far fewer will even talk about. In many ways this is not an entirely new threat; various U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) leaders have testified before Congress on many occasions over the past 35 years regarding the illicit global drug trade funding terrorist organizations and insurgencies around the world.

Prior to the 9/11 attacks on our Nation, experts usually found themselves talking about the terrorist organizations based in the Western Hemisphere when making the connection between drugs and terrorism, with an occasional mention of insurgent groups such as the Burma (now Myanmar) based Shan United Army, led by the notorious heroin trafficker Khun Sa, who dominated the sourcing of heroin to the United States for the better part of a decade in the 1980's and 1990's. However, after 9/11 the number of U.S. designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs) that are involved in one or more aspects of the global drug trade began to increase dramatically.

Today the Western Hemisphere's "usual suspects," the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the remnants of the United Self Defense Forces (AUC) in Colombia, and the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) of Peru, all designated as FTOs by the U.S., European Union and many other countries, certainly remain involved in the drug trade, but the list has grown to include FTOs such as Hezbollah, Hamas and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), to name just a few.

The DEA has conservatively linked at least half of the FTOs with involvement in one or more aspects of the global drug trade, but I believe that number to be far greater, especially when considering that there are so many ways to make hundreds of millions, if not billions of dollars in the industry. Generating contraband revenue from involvement in the industry can include the taxing of farmers, taxing finished drugs and the movement of drugs and precursor chemicals across borders, providing security to traditional cartels at clandestine laboratories, cache sites and airstrips, the manufacture of drugs, the transportation of drugs, and the distribution of drugs.

The real threat posed by this activity are the countless opportunities groups like the Quds Force and Hezbollah are presented with to develop and nurture relationships with organized crime and terrorist groups here in the Western Hemisphere, in Africa, Europe and many other countries. They are provided with many opportunities to learn from the most sophisticated organized crime syndicates in the world: The Colombian and Mexican drug trafficking cartels, which include the FARC. And these relationships most likely provide the Quds Force and Hezbollah with opportunities to leverage the transportation, money laundering, arms trafficking, corruption, human trafficking and smuggling infrastructures of the Colombian and Mexican drug trafficking cartels, as well as other organized crime and terrorist groups around the world.

Two recent examples come to mind that drive home these points. The plot to assassinate the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States that was recently foiled by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) qualifies as the perfect example of the threat posed by the ability of Iran's proxies to operate freely in the Western Hemisphere, and their abil-

ity to collaborate with organized crime. A member of the Quds Force and an American of Iranian ancestry hired a DEA informant, believing the source to be a member of the ultra-violent Los Zetas drug trafficking organization, to carry out the assassination of the Saudi Ambassador—on U.S. soil. Many experts in our intelligence community rushed to judgment and initially declared the plot to be far-fetched and lacking credibility, because they believed the Quds Force to be far more sophisticated in their tradecraft than that conspiracy revealed. However, let me remind you that the Director of National Intelligence, Mr. James Clapper, used this plot as an example of Iran’s willingness to attack the homeland and our interests abroad just this past January when he testified before the Senate Intelligence Committee. Rest assured he used this conspiracy as his principal example during testimony because it has been assessed and heavily scrutinized from every angle and has been determined credible.

Couple that incident with the recent Department of Treasury Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) findings against the Hezbollah, and the Lebanese Canadian Bank based in Beirut, as well as several of the bank’s affiliates for money laundering hundreds of millions of dollars of Hezbollah’s cocaine dollars, and you are left with undisputable evidence that the Hezbollah and Quds Force are heavily involved in the global drug trade. The FinCEN findings are based on a long-term complex international conspiracy investigation by the DEA that is still playing out, which has also identified over 70 used-automobile dealerships here in the United States that are strongly suspected of supporting the conspiracy. Let me add that few, if any of those businesses existed before the 9/11 attacks on our country. That alone should send shockwaves through our intelligence and Federal law enforcement communities. Sadly, I don’t think its happening.

I believe the DEA finds itself in much the same situation as its predecessor agency, the Federal Bureau of Narcotics (FBN), found itself in the 1950s when FBN Director Harry Anslinger was working hard to alert Congress, the Department of Justice and the Nation on the pervasiveness of Italian organized crime in the United States, while the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s (FBI) J. Edgar Hoover was vehemently denying its existence. Many in our Government, at all levels, simply do not understand the potential consequences posed by the confluence of drugs and terror; therefore, they ignore it.

WHY DRUGS?

More and more FTOs, just like the Hezbollah and Quds Force, are turning to the global drug trade, and to a lesser degree, other transnational criminal activity, to fund their operations, because our country and our partners have been enormously successful in prosecuting the Global War on Terror (GWOT). There are two principal reasons for this growing phenomenon: state sponsorship for terrorist organizations continues to decline, and our Government and coalition partners have succeeded in significantly disrupting the funding stream to terrorist organizations from very powerful, private donors.

There is a third motivation that appears to be unique to al-Qaeda (AQ). Our Government has so disrupted AQ’s ability to direct and manage (command and control) its cells and nodes around the globe, that the organization has been forced to shift from a “corporate” leadership model to a “franchise” mode of operation. In other words AQ’s cells and nodes, in many ways, have been left up to their own devices to function, including self-sufficiency when it comes to funding their operations. Some of these cells and nodes are resorting to drug trafficking to do just that. The AQ cell, or affiliated cell, depending upon with whom you speak, that was responsible for the Madrid train bombings, funded that operation almost in its entirety through the sale of MDMA (3,4-methylene-dioxymethamphetamine), also known as ecstasy, and hashish.

There are myriad transnational criminal endeavors in which terrorist organizations can and do engage; however, nothing comes close to producing the kind of revenue that the global drug trade generates. The United Nations (UN) estimates that the global drug trade generates about \$322 billion dollars annually, and estimates that the revenue generated by the drug trade flowing between Mexico, the United States and Canada is \$147 billion dollars annually. The Office of National Drug Control Policy (the U.S. Drug Czar’s office) estimates that our fellow citizens generate about \$65 billion dollars a year attempting to satisfy their insatiable appetite for drugs. By comparison, the United Nations estimates that the next closest illicit global market, alien trafficking, generates approximately \$32 billion dollars and that the illicit global arms trade generates about \$10 billion dollars annually. Significantly, these statistics have been hotly debated and disputed by many experts, but it is difficult to find any others that have been compiled by qualified organiza-

tions. Suffice it to say, most all of the same experts agree the illicit profits made from the global drug trade by traditional trafficking cartels and terrorist organizations alike are massive, and dwarf all additional revenue generated by other black markets.

THE IMPACT AND IMPORTANCE OF PERMISSIVE ENVIRONMENTS

FTOs and drug trafficking organizations (DTO) both work hard to create permissive environments in which to operate, relying heavily on the hallmarks of organized crime, corruption, intimidation and ruthless violence, to carve out territory in certain regions of the world so that they can operate with impunity. Our military and intelligence community commonly refer to these areas as ungoverned or undergoverned space.

FTOs and DTOs thrive in permissive environments, and invest hundreds of millions of dollars a year to disrupt good governance in many areas of the world by relentlessly undermining the rule of law. They often accomplish this through calculated corruption campaigns targeting the entire judicial spectrum including law enforcement, prosecutors, judges and prison officials, and security institutions consisting of military and intelligence forces, not to mention politicians at all levels. A few examples of permissive environments include the Tri-Border Area (TBA) of South America, the no-man's land where the borders of Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil come together; vast regions of West and North Africa; Afghanistan and the country's remote borders with Pakistan and Iran; Bolivia; Venezuela; and perhaps certain areas of Mexico.

When I was serving as the Chief of Operations for the DEA, I asked the Agency's Intelligence Division to plot on a world map the locations where the 43 (now 50) designated FTOs were based. I then asked them to highlight the source countries for illicit drugs, as well as the major transit routes for the flow of drugs, precursor chemicals and cash associated with the global drug trade. I wasn't at all surprised when the end product clearly showed the FTOs and DTOs operating in the same permissive environments.

Hezbollah got their start a few years ago acquiring and shipping small 10–15 kilogram quantities of pure cocaine to Europe, Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and other locations where they could sell the small drug shipments for up to \$1 million dollars in profit. Hezbollah operatives and supporters working in the TBA and other areas of Latin America are now routinely acquiring and shipping multi-tons of cocaine to West and North Africa for onward movement to markets in Europe, the Middle East and elsewhere. And where you find Hezbollah, you most assuredly find Quds Force operatives working with them. Remember that it was the Quds Force that helped stand-up the Hezbollah in Lebanon, and they have been inseparable ever since.

The TBA, with a large Middle Eastern immigrant population, has long been of strategic importance to al-Qaeda, Hezbollah and Hamas, and has been a very important recruiting ground targeting disenfranchised young men who live in abject poverty. The recent Department of Treasury Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) findings against the Beirut-based Lebanese Canadian Bank, and the Prime Bank of Gambia, centered on a long term and still active complex international conspiracy investigation by the DEA. The investigation paints a troubling picture of the Hezbollah's growing involvement in cocaine trafficking and reveals that as much as \$200 million dollars per month in drug proceeds was being laundered by the terrorist group through the financial institutions. It paints an even more troubling picture of the strong ties between Hezbollah and the Quds Force when it comes to this activity.

DEA Special Agents and the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan, supported by U.S. military and Department of State assets, raided a notorious heroin trafficker's compound in 2007 in remote Eastern Afghanistan near the Pakistan border. The trafficker was also reportedly one of the five founding fathers of the Taliban Ruling Shura in Kabul. Seized during the raid were his drug ledgers, which revealed that he had sold over \$170 million dollars worth of heroin in less than 1 year; 81 metric tons of the poison. That trafficker was recently convicted right here in Washington, DC on counterterrorism and counter-narcotics charges stemming from the DEA investigation. The bottom line—no other transnational criminal activity trumps the global drug trade for generating cold hard cash, and permissive environments make it all possible.

However, these areas of the world occupied simultaneously by FTOs and DTOs create even more dangerous threats that are more strategic in nature than the two more traditional examples mentioned above. This milieu has created opportunities for operatives from FTOs and DTOs to come together—dangerously close together.

For example, the Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), a designated FTO, has established a solid foothold in places like the West African nation of Guinea Bissau, along with other Colombian drug cartels, as well as powerful Mexican drug syndicates. These groups are all vying for the same lucrative turf offered by this extremely valuable piece of global drug trafficking real estate, which serves as an important transit point for the billions of dollars of cocaine now destined for the ever-expanding cocaine markets in Western Europe, Russia, and other countries.

Remarkably, very few terrorism “experts” seem to be troubled by the fact that places like Guinea Bissau and the TBA are also occupied by the likes of al-Qaeda, Quds Force, Hezbollah and Hamas. If terrorism experts believe for 1 minute that the operatives from these FTOs and DTOs, who are occupying the same space at the same time, are not developing relations, forming alliances, and sharing lessons learned, then they are naive at best, or more likely, absolutely working in the dark when it comes to understanding how the real underworld operates.

Let me put it more candidly: If you want to visualize ungoverned space or a permissive environment, I tell people to simply think of the bar scene in the first “Star Wars” movie. Operatives from FTOs and DTOs are frequenting the same shady bars, the same seedy hotels and the same sweaty brothels in a growing number of areas around the world. And what else are they doing? Based on over 37 years in the law enforcement and security sectors, you can mark my word that they are most assuredly talking business and sharing lessons learned.

They are developing close interpersonal relationships that are tempered and honed in the harshest and most dangerous environments. These close interpersonal relationships developing today will most assuredly evolve into strategically important inter-organizational relationships tomorrow, because many of the brutally tough young operatives that have been dispatched to places like Guinea Bissau and the TBA by their FTO and DTO leaders will undoubtedly ascend into key leadership positions within their respective organizations in the not-too-distant future.

We have long known that groups like the Hezbollah and Quds Force have the ability to work with some other Middle Eastern FTOs, but what will we do when they have the ability to collaborate with a Mexican DTO that already dominates drug trafficking in scores of cities throughout our country? What do we do when they have the ability to collaboratively work with the FARC, an FTO hybrid that is already moving hundreds of tons of cocaine from the north coast of Colombia into Mexico aboard fully submersible submarines capable of operating at a depth of 60 or more feet while loaded with up to 10 tons of cocaine? What else could those submarines transport?

It is not in the best interest of our National security to allow these threats to congregate and cohabit anywhere on the globe, because the FTOs will only become stronger by developing alliances and sharing lessons learned with groups that are far more sophisticated organizationally and operationally than they are. The United States should be doing all in our Government’s power, working closely with willing partners, to disrupt and ultimately dismantle these powerful threats in places like Guinea Bissau, and the TBA, but we are not. We could pay dearly for this failure to act in the future.

Instead, most U.S. Federal law enforcement agencies, intelligence, and military institutions have established separate counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics directorates, each having separate goals, objectives, policies, and most troublesome, separate funding streams. In other words, these directorates remain stove piped 10 years after 9/11, as the confluence of drugs and terror continues to grow exponentially.

I should add that there are a few instances where this is not the case. As an example, the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of New York consistently prosecutes our Nation’s most important terrorism and international drug cases. Consequently, not long ago this district merged its international drug section with its foreign terrorism section, because U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara and Deputy U.S. Attorney Boyd Johnson (now retired) recognized first-hand the unequivocal connection between the two.

I wish the threat posed by permissive environments ended there, but it certainly does not. It is compounded even further by other nefarious relationships that typically emerge in these types of atmospheres. In Guinea Bissau for example, the Colombian and Mexican cartels have also teamed with indigenous organized crime groups, and groups like the infamous Tuareg nomads further to the north, that has controlled smuggling routes through the Sahara for centuries. The Latin American cartels needed to forge these relationships as they built their African cocaine smuggling infrastructure. As in this case, indigenous organized crime syndicates and smuggling groups are typically very unsophisticated, but they are now learning from the most sophisticated global organized crime cartels that have ever existed, the Colombian and Mexican DTOs and a hybrid FTO, the FARC.

The Colombian and Mexican cartels are paying these indigenous groups “in kind” (with cocaine product) for their services with helping to smuggle multi-ton shipments of cocaine through West and North Africa and into the soft underbelly of Europe. This phenomenon has resulted in the creation of new markets for cocaine and crack cocaine (base) in West Africa, where these homegrown groups can set and control retail market prices with the cocaine they have received as payment for their services, expand into surrounding countries, and further corrupt already weak governments.

We begin to see what I refer to as a “symbiotic destabilization of government,” much as we witnessed in Colombia several years ago, in Afghanistan today, and in other parts of the world where FTOs and DTOs occupy the same space at the same time. When the FTOs attack government forces with brutal violence, the DTOs benefit equally; when the DTOs destabilize government through physical attacks or through well planned corruption campaigns, the FTOs benefit just as much as organized crime. It is a never-ending, vicious circle that continues to degrade already weak governance. Yet our response is to invest in counter-terrorism projects to build host nation institutional capacity, or to invest in counter-narcotics programs to build competence in that realm. However, the strategies and objectives of these disparate, yet well-meaning endeavors remain unconnected or disjointed. We could accomplish so much more with a unified approach to fighting terrorism and the global drug trade that supports it. The two are inextricably connected, yet our strategy for fighting them remains disjointed.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE HYBRID TERRORIST ORGANIZATION; IT’S ALL ABOUT THE MONEY

The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), which has been active since 1964, was absolutely opposed to becoming involved in the cocaine trade until the early 1990s. When the Soviet Union fell and the funding stream from Cuba dried up, the FARC executive secretariat, realizing they were perfectly poised at the center of gravity for the global cocaine trade, made a corporate decision after no more than 10 minutes of debate: They were in. They really had no choice; the FARC would have to become involved in the cocaine trade if they wanted to keep their movement alive. The FARC got its start by taxing poor farmers, one of the earliest and most renowned organized crime schemes and forms of extortion. They then formed alliances with traditional drug traffickers and began providing security at clandestine drug laboratories and cache sites and the FARC also provided critical security at clandestine airstrips and on river transit routes.

They taxed the movement of drugs through their own country, as well as across clandestine smuggling routes with bordering nations. They next became involved in the full-scale production, transportation, and distribution of cocaine, and are now recognized as the world’s largest manufacturer and distributor of cocaine, while simultaneously recognized by our Department of State as the Western Hemisphere-based FTO that poses the greatest threat to our part of the world. They are always evolving. They emerged into what I call a “hybrid terrorist organization.” One part designated FTO, and one part global DTO. And groups like the Hezbollah and Taliban are following the same exact evolutionary path as the FARC.

In the context of funding a terrorist organization, it is important to understand that the cost of an actual terrorist attack is minimal. The Madrid train bombings, which were funded through drug trafficking by the al-Qaeda-affiliated cell, only cost about \$70 thousand dollars to pull off. Although there is no evidence to indicate that any part of the 9/11 terrorist attack on the United States was paid for by drug trafficking activity, most experts agree that the 9/11 attacks only cost al-Qaeda about \$500,000.

On the other hand, it costs hundreds of millions of dollars annually for the care and nurturing of a truly global terrorist network. Operatives must first be recruited and indoctrinated; they must be trained in all manner of clandestine activity, usually in very remote, secretive locations; they must be armed by global arms traffickers; safe-houses must be acquired and operated around the world; counterfeit documents must be acquired; alien traffickers must be paid to transport operatives across borders; terrorists cannot operate effectively without the latest in costly telecommunications and other communications and navigation equipment; and finally, they must be paid and provided with large amounts of operational funding, including huge quantities of money to corrupt government, military, and intelligence officials.

The only area where FTOs and DTOs really differ is in what motivates them. DTOs have always been motivated by greed, while religious, cultural, or some other ideology has traditionally motivated FTOs. Yet when FTO leaders get a taste for

the enormous amounts of revenue generated by their involvement in the drug trade, ideology quickly goes out the window. Rest assured that the hierarchy of these hybrid terrorist organizations continues to leverage ideology for what its most worth—recruiting and indoctrinating the young warriors to do the dirty work required to keep their criminal enterprises alive and healthy.

A TRANSITION MADE EASIER BY A NEARLY-IDENTICAL MODUS OPERANDI

The ability of FTOs to carve out a lucrative piece of the global drug trade is made all that much easier when you consider that FTOs and DTOs operate almost identically. They are both broken down into highly compartmentalized cells to thwart the effectiveness of law enforcement, military and intelligence services. If one or only a few cells are taken down, the chance of inflicting collateral damage to the greater organization is virtually impossible; all by calculated design.

Cell heads only manage the activities of their cell members, and the cell head usually receives management and direction, most often by way of telecommunications devices that are changed out every few days, from someone at a higher level who he or she knows only by a code name. And both FTOs and DTOs have the ability to quickly rejuvenate. When government experiences success in taking down a number of cells simultaneously, the threat quickly morphs into something that does not look like or act like what government security forces were focused on just a few months earlier.

As mentioned before, they both rely heavily on the hallmarks of organized crime, corruption, intimidation, and brutal violence. A survey by the DEA just a few short years ago of its top performing confidential informants (human intelligence sources) revealed that the single most important enabler to the successful operations of DTOs was their ability to corrupt. More simply put, if they cannot successfully corrupt then they cannot successfully operate, and they invest hundreds of millions of dollars annually to corrupt all levels of government.

FTOs and DTOs rely on the latest in technology to communicate and to navigate with pinpoint accuracy to anywhere on the globe. They are masters at exploiting the technological changes taking place at light-speed in the telecommunications and communications industries. These changes help FTOs and DTOs foil the best efforts of law enforcement, military, and intelligence services, all of which are hindered by antiquated legislative and policy barriers, including right here at home.

THE SHADOW FACILITATORS

FTOs and DTOs rely heavily on what I call “shadow facilitators” to operate effectively: The same arms traffickers, money launderers, human traffickers, document forgers, etc.; similar to “outsourcing” in the private sector. It is efficient, and it saves money. The shadow facilitators, wittingly or unwittingly, often serve to bridge the divide between FTOs and DTOs operating in the same permissive environments around the globe. In ungoverned space, the shadow facilitators have the ability to move freely within both circles, where they often promote meetings, the formation of alliances, and the sharing of lessons learned. They are masters at creating demand for their goods and services, concurrently cashing in on the needs and requirements of the FTOs, DTOs and other organized crime threats.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We need to break down the barriers separating counternarcotics and counterterrorism in our Government, which are usually stifled by the distinct operational authorities and sources of funding that each agency possesses and more importantly that are prohibited from being intermingled. We need a whole-of-Government approach to building security capacity in troubled areas around the world, and the best way to do that is through the development of strategies that require interlocking CN/CT principles, goals and objectives.

Our Government needs to utilize its powerful, corruption-free criminal justice process to render more indictments against terrorist organizations and shadow facilitators, similar to those rendered in the Southern District of New York over the past few years. Working with the DEA, these Federal prosecutors indicted the top 50 members of the FARC executive secretariat; have convicted the two most significant global arms traffickers, Victor Bout and Monzer al-Kasar; and convicted the two largest heroin traffickers in the world, Haji Bashir Noorzai and Haji Baghko, both of whom were also founding fathers of the Taliban Ruling Shura in Kabul. They have exposed these terrorist leaders and shadow facilitators for what they truly are, criminals and thugs, sending a powerful message to the world community, including vast numbers of misinformed people who view them as freedom fighters or modern-day Robin Hood figures.

Monzer al-Kasar and Victor Bout, both mentioned above as the two most prolific arms traffickers in modern times, are perfect examples of shadow facilitators. Our Government needs to focus more heavily on the arms, human and counterfeit document traffickers, and money launderers of the world. They often service and support both FTOs and DTOs, and can lead us in myriad directions. I believe that our Government's failure to focus more heavily on the world's shadow facilitators is a significant shortfall in our GWOT strategy.

We seem to be obsessed with developing security strategies designed to "defend the 1-yard line," specifically on our border with Mexico. We should have a greater emphasis on developing "defense-in-depth" strategies when it comes to protecting our homeland. Our Government does not have the resources deployed in Latin America we had prior to 9/11. We need to be identifying threats originating deep in Central and South America, as well as the Western Caribbean and Eastern Pacific, before they emerge on our doorstep. The DEA has the largest U.S. law enforcement presence abroad, including in Latin America, but the agency is struggling to keep domestic and foreign offices open, and agents and analysts on the payroll.

After 9/11 a large percentage of our Department of Defense detection and monitoring (D&M) assets assigned to countries covered by Southern Command's area of responsibility were deployed to other parts of the world, and I have been told they have not returned. Yet Hezbollah and Quds Force operatives are pouring into Latin America, thanks in large part to Hugo Chavez in Venezuela, the undisputed gatekeeper for Middle Eastern terrorist groups seeking to enter Latin America. Most of this activity appears to be taking place south of Mexico, but there are persistent signs that Hezbollah has a strong interest in our Southwest Border and has already successfully exploited it.

Many in Government fail to recognize that the most successful way of protecting our homeland from terrorists is by maintaining a relentless focus on the traditional threats at and beyond our borders: Drug trafficking, human trafficking, weapons trafficking, and money laundering, including the movement of bulk cash and other proceeds. As law enforcement confronts these threats, they are far more likely to come in direct or indirect contact with terrorist operatives seeking to enter, or who have already entered our country to do us harm.

We must do a better job of following the money. No doubt, success can be experienced by a talented analyst sitting in a pod tracing the tens of millions of financial transactions that take place around the globe on a daily basis. However, a more productive way to accomplish our goals and objectives, especially when considering that most terrorist financing takes place clandestinely, is by doing business the old fashioned way: Exploiting law enforcement confidential informants, judicially approved telecommunications intercepts, and complex international, multi-agency conspiracy investigations.

More leaders in our Government need to understand that when we follow the money, we can go in any direction we choose. However, they must also understand that drugs are routinely traded for the most sophisticated weapons systems in the world, and they are traded for money, counterfeit documents, the services of human traffickers and other smuggling groups; I call this "the currency of contraband." There is ample evidence that the Quds Force routinely attempts to trade heroin for sanctioned equipment of military value. The numbers of times they succeed in their attempts are anyone's guess. Many in our Government have lost site of the importance of seizing drugs and precursor chemicals, thus removing them as a source of funding, and in bringing those who are responsible for trafficking them to justice.

I know this committee most often deals with the outstanding law enforcement component agencies of the Department of Homeland Security, but I am far more familiar with the Department of Justice component agencies that also make significant contributions to the defense of our homeland and one in particular, the DEA. Many of the following suggestions would help to ensure a robust defense-in-depth homeland security strategy by simply building on existing, proven programs within the DEA. I am told these programs are currently facing major obstacles due to budgetary and other challenges, and may in fact be in jeopardy. I strongly recommend that you and your staffs meet with DEA executive leadership for the most accurate account of the agency's needs and requirements.

Our Government broke the back of traditional Italian organized crime in the United States by bringing the heads of the Italian crime families, who lived in our country, to justice in Federal court. It is important for Congress to understand that the DEA needs additional extra-territorial teams and resources to work with foreign counterparts to bring the heads of the world's most powerful drug trafficking cartels and narco-terrorists to justice in the United States, or in other competent jurisdictions. I happen to believe that the DEA needs additional extra-territorial teams working as part of the agency's Special Operations Division (SOD) (only two cur-

rently exist), Foreign-Deployed Advisory and Support Teams (FAST), and International Training Teams, and the logistical and support resources required to field them in the most remote and dangerous areas of the world.

That's where our Nation's most threatening terrorists and organized crime adversaries now live and operate and the DEA should be there as well building cases with trusted counterparts against powerful threats that want to do us harm. It was the DEA extra-territorial teams that brought some of the world's most notorious criminals to justice over the past few years, the likes of which included Haji Bashir Noorzai, Monzer al-Kasar, Haji Juma Khan, and Victor Bout, just to name a few. You can only imagine what they could do if they had more than two such teams, especially when considering that each team consists of only about 10 agents.

The DEA requires the funding and human resources necessary to open additional offices in Africa, and other austere locations where our adversaries have unsurprisingly migrated beyond the rule of law. The DEA, widely recognized as having the most robust and accurate human intelligence program in our Government, requires the funding necessary to keep this critically important program in pace with growing demands.

Let me remind you that our success at foiling the plot to assassinate the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States hinged on a DEA confidential informant who had been hired to carry out the attack—on U.S. soil. I cannot think of a better example to use in stressing the importance of additional funding for the DEA's confidential informant program than this case, and this program contributes immensely to the development of a defense-in-depth homeland security strategy.

The DEA has a model program developed several decades ago wherein the agency helps to select and fully vet handpicked teams of foreign law enforcement counterparts. Members of these teams undergo background investigations, polygraph and urinalysis examinations and extensive training as part of their selection process. Most important, they work shoulder-to-shoulder with DEA Special Agents on bi-lateral investigations for several years after they are selected for these prestigious assignments, and it is under these conditions that the real vetting naturally takes place during tough and dangerous work; all of which is tempered by mutual respect, and honed by genuine, everlasting friendships. Most of these vetted officers ascend through the ranks of their respective agencies to senior leadership positions, which can only spell future success for our Government in the many countries where these officers live, work, and lead.

These Sensitive Investigative Unit and Vetted Unit programs allow the DEA to take highly sensitive information and intelligence, sanitize it, and share it with their foreign counterparts in a timely manner so enforcement operations can be executed safely and effectively without compromising the source(s) of information from which it originated. Sadly, I have heard this program, which is the best example that I know of for the force-multiplier concept in U.S. Federal law enforcement abroad, is suffering from insufficient funding. The additional teams that are needed in various parts of the world cannot be constituted, and in some cases existing teams may have to be disbanded.

Finally, we as a Government have changed directions far too many times in our battle against drug trafficking and abuse over the years, and those in harms way who are working hard to attack the problem are the ones who usually experience most of the pain stemming from Washington's well-meaning ideas. There has been a recent movement to focus Government resources on "Transnational Organized Crime" (TOC). The notion is that DTOs are involved in more than just drug trafficking, and I am not disputing that fact. They always have been and always will be. However, DTOs receive the vast majority of their contraband revenue from the global drug trade, and the DEA and other U.S. law enforcement agencies have all the jurisdictional authorities required to investigate other crimes the DTOs engage in, so I do not understand the reasoning behind this trend.

The DEA is engaged in far more than liaison work abroad, has trained and vetted thousands of their counterparts around the world, and has worked hard over the last 40 years to build the infrastructure needed to attack the DTOs on their own soil. The only thing that has been accomplished with the recent movement to target transnational organized crime instead of DTOs is confusion on the part of most of our foreign counterparts, and even more confusion on the part of law enforcement right here at home. As one DEA Regional Director recently said to me, "If a DTO is making over 90 percent of its revenue from the cocaine trade, why would we refer to it as transnational organized crime when they're receiving only a pittance from the low level activity they're involved in?" DTOs have always been involved with human and arms trafficking, money laundering, cartage theft, and shakedown schemes, but it is the stiff penalties they face from Title 21, United States Code convictions that break their backs. Why are we confusing the issue, yet again?

SUMMARY

So what's the bottom line? Global DTOs and FTOs live, multiply, and operate in exactly the same ungoverned space, at exactly the same time, in exactly the same manner. More and more they contend for exactly the same money, generated by the same illicit enterprise, drug trafficking. They rely on the same shadow facilitators to operate: The arms traffickers, alien smugglers, money launderers, and document counterfeiters to name just a few. When you compress two or more of these well-trained and well-armed threats (FTOs/DTOs) into this space/time continuum, they are usually left with only two options: They can build alliances, or they can fight it out for supremacy, both of which undermine peace, security, and stability. And providing peace, security, and stability in challenged environments is the single-most important thing our country can do in its global war on terrorism. Terrorist organizations do not thrive in areas of the world where capable security institutions exist, and the rule of law is strong. Sadly, as the confluence of terror and drugs continues to grow, our counterterrorism and counter-narcotics strategies continue to drift further apart. We had better address this matter aggressively and fix it quickly with interlocking counterterrorism and counter-narcotics strategies and funding streams, or we could pay dearly for it in the future.

Professor James Fearon of Stanford University's Political Science Department conducted an exhaustive study entitled, "Why Do Some Wars Last Longer than Others," that was published in 2002. I do not want to oversimplify the study, but in summation I recall the Professor identified 128 civil wars that played out, and in some cases continued to play out, from 1945 through 2000. On average 111 of the conflicts lasted about 8 years, but Professor Fearon identified 17 of the 128 that lasted on average over five times longer, or about 40+ years. The most significant difference between the two sets was the insurgent and anti-government groups involved in the 17 much-lengthier conflicts generated their own contraband revenue, often through the sale of drugs. Drugs provide a never-ending funding stream straight into the war chests of terrorist and insurgent organizations that are hell-bent on destroying our way of life. If we continue our war against terrorism with far greater enthusiasm and vigor than we battle drugs, we are most likely in for a very long and costly fight.

Finally, the Quds Force is responsible for Iran's Strategic Missile Program. When you couple that with the fact the Quds Force plot to assassinate the Saudi Arabian Ambassador with a car bomb right here in Washington, DC was deemed credible, it leaves me with just one troubling question: "Will the Quds Force also be holding the keys to Iran's future nuclear weapons arsenal?" If the answer is yes, then we had better get focused on doing something about it.

Chairman KING. Mr. Braun, thank you very much for your testimony.

Our next witness, Dr. Matthew Levitt, is a senior fellow and director of the Washington Institute Stein Program on Counterterrorism and Intelligence, where he was the founding director in 2001.

Between 2005 and 2007, Dr. Levitt served as deputy assistant secretary for Intelligence and Analysis at the Department of Treasury, and then as a State Department counterterrorism adviser to the special envoy for Middle East Regional Security.

Prior to that, he provided tactile and strategic analytical support for counterterrorism operations of the FBI, focusing on fundraising and logistical support networks for Middle Eastern terrorist groups. Dr. Levitt, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF MATTHEW LEVITT, DIRECTOR, STEIN PROGRAM ON COUNTERTERRORISM AND INTELLIGENCE, THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY

Mr. LEVITT. Thank you, Chairman King, Ranking Member Thompson, Members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.

Just a few months ago, I had the privilege of testifying before to this committee's subcommittees on the subject of Iranian terrorist

operations on American soil. Therefore, I will focus my testimony today on the issue of Hezbollah and refer Members on the issue of Iran, that previous testimony.

Hezbollah has long leveraged its global networks for all kinds of support activities. The vast majority of these sometimes formal, often informal networks are not called upon to carry out operations, but to raise funds, procure documents, dual-use items, military equipment, et cetera.

The United States has long seen—Hezbollah has long seen the United States as a cash cow. Nonetheless, according to U.S. authorities, concern over the threat posed by Hezbollah is well placed. While Hezbollah has never carried out an attack in the United States, the FBI has reported, and I quote, “Hezbollah subjects have reportedly been tasked with the surveillance of potential targets in the United States.” The FBI has found, and I quote “that such tasking today appears to have been intended as a vetting tool to establish individuals’ loyalty to Hezbollah and Iran.”

Whatever the purpose, this means Hezbollah surveillance enabled the group to have off-the-shelf operational planning it can dust off at a future date, if it so desires. The FBI has concluded that many subjects based in the United States do have the capability to attempt to carry out terrorist attacks, should this become this desired objective of the group.

Now, the Arbabsiar plot, as we have heard, clearly indicates, as DNI Clapper has testified, that at least some Iranian leaders have decided it is no longer crossing some red lines to carry out an attack in the United States. Hezbollah, however, makes its own decision making—has its own decision-making process, and may not automatically jump to carry out an attack here in the United States, even if it is asked to do so.

Recently, several intelligence officials abroad have told me that in recent attacks—Hezbollah and Iranian attacks abroad—there has been actually little Iranian and Hezbollah cooperation, and actually some element of competition between the two.

But to the extent that Hezbollah believes the United States is involved in directly targeting or undermining the group, the potential for Hezbollah attack against U.S. interests abroad, or even on the homeland, becomes more likely.

It is possible that if there is a confrontation with Iran, Hezbollah would be called upon, likely, and could very well carry out an attack, but there are reasons to suspect that its own decision-making processes, independent of whether or not there is a confrontation with Iran, could lead it to do so as well.

There have been many U.S.-led law enforcement exposures of Hezbollah’s criminal activity. Hezbollah believes that the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, which has indicted four Hezbollah operatives—one of them, Imad Mughniyah’s brother-in-law—a very senior individual—they said that this is an American plot.

Hezbollah also believes the United States is behind the unrest in Syria, and recently accused the U.S. embassy in Lebanon of overseeing operations against Syria.

So as I look at the Hezbollah threat to the homeland, I break it down to four possible threat scenarios. Hezbollah does have networks here that it could leverage to carry out a foreign-directed at-

tack here. It does have the ability to use people here to support individuals sent from abroad to carry out an attack, which is its traditional modus operandi for spectacular attacks.

It could call upon its relationships with criminal elements, to use those criminal elements to facilitate an attack. Finally, we could see some type of homegrown violent extremist attack with Iran or Hezbollah, simply called upon its sympathizers and supporters to carry out some type of “active resistance,” as they would call it, in the event of confrontation with Iran or Hezbollah.

According to a 1994 report, should the decision be made to strike within the U.S. borders, Hezbollah has the infrastructure present to carry out such an attack.

Consider, for example, the case of Mahmoud Kourani, who was smuggled across the border from Mexico in the trunk of a car. This is a guy who had training from Lebanon from Hezbollah; specialized training in weaponry, spycraft, counterintelligence. This was someone who was here raising money, but could have done violent things if that was something that he was told to do.

The North Carolina example is just another example. In fact, as that case was being tried—and I had the privilege of serving as an expert witness in that case—a notional plot was discovered where some individuals involved were talking about potentially assassinating the prosecutor, or blowing up the courthouse.

Another of the individuals indicted in the Charlotte case was Mohammed Dbouk. According to the U.S. Government, he is an Iranian-trained Hezbollah operative and an intelligence specialist. We later found out after that course, from senior U.S. Government official testimony before Congress, that Dbouk was such a major player in the Hezbollah organization, that when he asked on five separate occasions to be allowed to be a suicide bomber, they turned him down because he was too important. But he was an individual who was here in Canada working with the guys in Charlotte.

You could also have Hezbollah deploying people who don't fit the traditional look of a Hezbollah cell. FBI has reported that at one point, a senior Hezbollah person in the United States was an Iraqi Shiite cleric in Texas; that Hezbollah's looking particularly to recruit people who don't fit the traditional Hezbollah profile.

They could also import professional operatives. Consider the fact that Fauzi Ayub had a Canadian passport, lived at one point in Dearborn, Michigan. Before he came to North America, he was involved in an attempt to hijack an airplane. After that, he was involved in an attempt to carry out a terrorist attack in Israel. When he was asked by the Israeli judge, “Did you ever tell the Canadians about your involvement in terrorism?” he simply said, “They never asked.”

The fact of the matter is that since 9/11, all of us in the world, especially in the West, have done a lot to make it much more difficult to carry out terrorist attack within our borders. This applies not only to al-Qaeda, it applies to Hezbollah.

One of the ways Hezbollah has tried to break out of that problem set is to leverage its relationships with criminal elements to carry out attacks as well.

Finally, you could have a situation of homegrown violent extremism. When we deported Hani al-Sayegh, who was one of the peo-

ple involved in the bombing of Khobar Towers back in Saudi Arabia, U.S. Government put out a warning that we believe that this could lead unknown individuals to carry out some type of loner attack.

So in conclusion, I just want to stress, it is by no means a foregone conclusion that Hezbollah carries out an attack in the United States. But to the extent it believes that its interests are threatened, the likelihood grows. It has, in fact, carried out significant number of attacks abroad, including some we believe targeting U.S. interests abroad.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify before you, and look forward to your questions.

[The statement of Mr. Levitt follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MATTHEW LEVITT

MARCH 21, 2012

Chairman King, Ranking Member Thompson, Members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today about such a critical and timely issue. Just a few months ago, shortly after the disruption and exposure of an Iranian plot to assassinate the Saudi ambassador here in Washington, DC, I had the privilege of testifying before two of this committee's subcommittees on the subject of "Iranian Terror Operations on American Soil."¹ Since that time, more has come to light regarding Iran's willingness to target the United States and its allies both abroad and here in the United States.

On January 31, 2012, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper expressed the intelligence community's concern about "Iranian plotting against U.S. or allied interests overseas." Since then, Iran and its primary proxy, Lebanese Hezbollah, have carried out a string of terrorist plots abroad. Some were thwarted, including two plots each in Thailand and Azerbaijan. Others were not, including bombings in India and Georgia. In Thailand and Azerbaijan, U.S. interests were reportedly among the intended targets, while the others focused on Israeli targets. Most recently, Azerbaijan's National Security Ministry detained 22 Azeris earlier this month for cooperating with Iran's Revolutionary Guards, receiving training in the use of weapons and spy techniques and plotting attacks on the U.S. and Israeli embassies in Baku.²

Clearly, America and its allies are already involved in a shadow war with Iran, which makes the second development since my last appearance before this committee all the more significant: It is no longer clear that Iran sees carrying out an attack in the United States as crossing some sort of red line.

The U.S. intelligence community has assessed that Iranian leaders appear to be more willing than they may have been in the past to approve attacks in the United States. DNI James Clapper not only testified about Iranian plotting abroad, he also stated that the unprecedented assassination plot targeting the Saudi ambassador reflects the reality "that some Iranian officials—probably including Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei—have changed their calculus and are now more willing to conduct an attack in the United States in response to real or perceived U.S. actions that threaten the regime."³ Iranian intelligence agents have long been active in the United States through diplomatic stations in New York and through cultural and religious centers throughout the country. I discussed Iran's history of operational activity in the United States in my prior testimony, and I will refer Members there for a discussion of that phenomenon. Today, I would like to leverage the research I have conducted around the world over the past few years for my forthcoming book *Hezbollah*:

¹Matthew Levitt, "Iranian Terror Operations on American Soil," testimony before a Joint Hearing of the Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence and the Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations, and Management, Committee on Homeland Security, U.S. House of Representatives, October 26, 2011, <http://washingtoninstitute.org/templateC07.php?CID=606>.

²"Azerbaijan Arrests 22 over Terror Plot Against US, Israel Embassy," *YNet News*, March 14, 2012.

³James Clapper, "Unclassified Statement for the Record on the Worldwide Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence," January 31, 2012, p. 5, http://www.dni.gov/testimonies/20120131_testimony_ata.pdf.

The Global Footprint of Lebanon's Party of God (Georgetown University Press) to discuss the potential threat of Hizballah attacks targeting the homeland.

HIZBALLAH'S GLOBAL FOOTPRINT

Hizballah has targeted U.S. interests abroad in the past, including airline hijackings, the Beirut bombings, and the bombing of the Khobar Towers barracks in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia. Its operatives have also conducted surveillance of U.S. interests abroad and at home.

Hizballah has long leveraged its worldwide network of members, supporters, and sympathizers to provide the group financial, logistical, military, and other types of support. Some members of this world-wide support network serve as agents in operations, but the vast majority of these sometimes formal, often informal networks are called upon not to execute operations, but to raise funds and procure dual-use items, false documents, and weapons for Hizballah.

Hizballah has long seen the United States as a cash cow, where it has run charities and engaged in a vast array of criminal activities to raise money and procure material for the organization. Nonetheless, according to U.S. authorities, concern over the threat posed by Hizballah is well placed. Speaking of the rejuvenation of groups such as Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, then-director of the Central Intelligence Agency George Tenet warned in 2002 that "if these groups feel that U.S. actions are threatening their existence, they may begin targeting Americans directly—as *Hizballah's terrorist wing already does*" [emphasis added].⁴ Moreover, in February 2003, Tenet referred to Hizballah as "an organization with capability and worldwide presence, that is [al-Qaeda's] equal, if not a far more capable organization . . . they are a notch above in terms of the relationship with the Iranians. The training they received puts them in a state-sponsor supported category with a potential for lethality that is quite great."⁵

According to FBI testimony, also in 2002, Hizballah operatives have conducted surveillance in the United States. While Hizballah has never conducted a terrorist attack on U.S. soil, the FBI reported, "Hizballah subjects have reportedly been tasked with surveillance of potential targets in the United States." The FBI found that "such tasking to date appears to have been intended as a vetting tool to establish the individual's loyalty to Hizballah and Iran."⁶ Whatever the purpose, this Hizballah surveillance enables the group to develop off-the-shelf operational planning that it can dust off and use at a future date, if it so desires. The FBI concluded: "FBI investigations to date continue to indicate that many Hizballah subjects based in the United States have the capability to attempt terrorist attacks here should this be the desired objective of the group."⁷

Hizballah has long had a substantial base of supporters in North America. This includes some operatives with military and operational training and a much larger pool of sympathizers and supporters who provide funding and some logistical support to the group but could be called upon to support operational activity should the group decide to carry out an attack here. Consider, for example, the substantial logistical and operational roles played by local Hizballah operatives in the 1992 and 1994 Hizballah attacks in Buenos Aires that targeted the Israeli embassy and the AMIA Jewish community center, respectively.

HIZBALLAH'S PERCEPTION OF U.S. ACTIONS AGAINST IT

While the Arbabsiar plot against the Saudi ambassador suggests at least some Iranian leaders have decided to approve attacks in the United States, Hizballah makes decisions of its own and may not automatically jump to carry out an attack against the United States even if Iran asks it to do so. Recently, several intelligence officials have told me that there has been little cooperation between Iranian and Hizballah cells carrying out attacks abroad; there has even been some element of

⁴ George Tenet, "Worldwide Threat-Converging Dangers in a Post-9/11 World," Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, February 6, 2002, as published in "Current and Projected National Security Threats to the United States," Hearing before the Select Committee on Intelligence of the United States Senate, February 6, 2002, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002), p. 8.

⁵ George Tenet, "Threats to National Security," Hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee of the United States Senate, February 12, 2003, p. 60, <http://www.gpo.gov/jdsys/pkg/CHRG-108shrg91721/pdf/CHRG-108shrg91721.pdf>.

⁶ "Current and Projected National Security Threats to the United States," Hearing before the Select Committee on Intelligence of the United States Senate, February 6, 2002 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002), pg. 339.

⁷ Ibid.

competition between the two. That said, there is reason for concern that Hizballah may decide to carry out attacks against U.S. interests as a result of its own decision-making calculus.

To the extent that Hizballah believes the United States has been involved in directly targeting or undermining the group, the potential for a Hizballah attack against U.S. interests abroad or even in the homeland becomes more likely. Over the past few years, the United States has exposed Hizballah activities in Africa, South America, Asia, and here at home. The Treasury Department designated the Lebanese-Canadian Bank as a primary money laundering entity for laundering Hizballah drug money and facilitating other trade-based money laundering schemes benefiting Hizballah. But none of this compares to the stress which the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL) has caused Hizballah. Hizballah's acute anxiety over the indictments can be seen most prominently in its public denunciations of the tribunal as an American project based on false communications data fabricated by Israeli spies embedded in Lebanon's telecommunications industry. Many factors undermine Hizballah's self-promoted image as the incorruptible defender of the oppressed, but none as powerfully as the Hariri investigation. Charges of engaging in terrorism against fellow Lebanese (particularly a Sunni leader such as the late Hariri) are completely at odds with the group's longstanding position that it is first and foremost part of the fabric of Lebanese society, and only secondarily a pan-Shiite or pro-Iranian movement. Hizballah was widely criticized for occupying downtown Beirut in March 2008, when the government tried to rein in the group's airport surveillance activities and its maintenance of a private telecommunications system. At the time, many Lebanese viewed Hizballah as putting its own interests ahead of those of the country. Yet that incident pales in comparison to the implications of the charges brought by the tribunal against four Hizballah members, including Imad Mughniyah's brother-in-law, Mustafa Badreddine. Hizballah blames this turn of events on Israel and the United States: "This American-Israeli tribunal is unconstitutional, illegal, and politically motivated."⁸ Later, Hizballah chief Hassan Nasrallah said the STL was part of a new U.S. plot to smear the image of the popular resistance movement.⁹

Hizballah also believes the United States is behind the unrest in Syria, which threatens to topple one of its most important benefactors and the conduit through which Iranian funding and material is transported to Hizballah in Lebanon. Sheikh Naim Qassem, the deputy secretary-general of Hizballah, has said that "the unrest engulfing Syria is a foreign conspiracy fueled by the United States and its allies."¹⁰ According to Qassem, "The U.S. and its allies have openly showed their inclination to change the governing system of Syria, and this is the violation of the Syrian nation's right to determine their own destiny through holding dialogue with the system. Negotiations should lead to the establishment of political stability and security in Syria."¹¹ In the words of Nasrallah, speaking on the fourth anniversary of the death of Imad Mughniyah, "There is an Arab, Western, American, and Israeli insistence that there is no solution in Syria except toppling the Syrian government."¹² In a joint statement issued after a meeting of the Hizballah and Amal commands in the eastern city of Baalbek, the groups stated that the current turmoil in Syria was part of an "international conspiracy" targeting Damascus for its support for Arab and Muslim resistance movements in the region and emphasized their "firm support for the Islamic Republic in the face of American and Israeli threats."¹³ Recently, Hizballah accused the U.S. embassy in Lebanon of overseeing operations against Syria. Former Lebanese Information Minister Michel Samaha declared that the visits to Beirut of U.S. Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence Michael G. Vickers prove that the U.S. embassy is in "a war of espionage" with Syria.¹⁴

⁸"Hizballah Chief Unhappy with Funding Lebanon's 'Politically Motivated' Tribunal," *Al-Arabiya*, December 1, 2010, <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/12/01/180337.html>.

⁹"STL Part of Psywar against Resistance," Press TV, July 2, 2011, <http://www.presstv.ir/detail/187262.html>.

¹⁰"U.S. Bloc behind Syria Unrest: Deputy Hizballah Chief," *Tehran Times*, November 29, 2011, <http://www.tehrantimes.com/politics/92727-us-bloc-behind-syria-unrest-deputy-Hizballah-chief>.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²"Hizballah Accuses US, Israel of Fuelling Unrest in Syria," Press TV, February 16, 2012, <http://www.presstv.ir/detail/227085.html>.

¹³Hussein Dabrouk, "Hizballah, Amal Stand By Iran, Syria against U.S., Israeli Threats," *Daily Star*, November 22, 2011, <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Politics/2011/Nov-22/154847-Hizballah-amal-stand-by-iran-syria-against-us-israeli-threats.ashx#axzz1p1YIRDAL>.

¹⁴"Hizballah Accuses US Embassy in Beirut of Espionage against Syria," Press TV, March 13, 2012, <http://www.presstv.ir/detail/231402.html>.

Finally, the odds are very strong that in the event of an attack on Iran's nuclear program, Hizballah would retaliate. Whether it would launch rockets at Israel is an open question, since that would bring a massive Israeli response. But its worldwide networks would almost certainly be called upon to execute the kind of asymmetric terror attacks that can be carried out with reasonable deniability and therefore make a targeted response more difficult. Muhammad Hejazi, the deputy head of Iran's armed forces, hinted that Tehran could order proxy militant groups in Gaza and Lebanon to fire rockets into Israel. He even implied such a strike could be used preemptively, before an attack on Iran. "We are no longer willing to wait for enemy action to be launched against us," he told Iran's Fars news agency. "Our strategy now is that we will make use of all means to protect our national interests."¹⁵ Hizballah leaders have also stated they would stand by Iran and any other person that has stood up to the Zionist regime.¹⁶

A 1994 FBI report summarizes the concern about the threat of Hizballah attacks in the event the group believes the United States threatens its interests: "The Hizballah leadership, based in Beirut, Lebanon, would be reluctant to jeopardize the relatively safe environment its members enjoy in the United States by committing a terrorist act within the U.S. borders. However, such a decision could be initiated in reaction to a perceived threat from the United States or its allies against Hizballah interests."¹⁷

FOUR THREAT SCENARIOS

In light of Hizballah's perception that the United States is actively targeting it and its allies, it is worth considering how the group might pursue an attack in the United States should it decide to do so. There are four ways the group could leverage its passive sympathizers and active networks to support such an operation. First, Hizballah could leverage local networks to carry out a foreign-directed attack. Second, Hizballah could call on individuals or networks to provide support to undercover operatives sent in from abroad to carry out an attack. Third, Hizballah could call upon its working relationships with criminal elements to either provide support for an attack or possibly even to carry one out (the Qods Force appears to have done just this when it reached out to an assassin tied to Mexican drug cartels through Mansour Arbabsiar). Finally, in the event of an attack on Iran or Hizballah, they could simply issue a public call for sympathizers and supporters to carry out acts of "resistance" in solidarity with them in the hope of inspiring acts of homegrown violent extremism on the part of radicalized Shiite supporters of Hizballah and Iran.

I. Leverage local networks.—Historically, within the larger community of people sympathetic to Hizballah here in the United States, there have been Hizballah militants with terrorist and military training. According to a 1994 FBI report, "Should the decision be made to strike within the U.S. borders, Hizballah has the infrastructure present to support or carry out a terrorist act. Certain Hizballah members in the United States have received paramilitary training, including explosives and firearms training."¹⁸ Consider just a couple of examples:

On Feb. 4, 2001, Mahmoud Youssef Kourani was smuggled across the U.S.-Mexican border in the hidden compartment of a smuggler's car. After paying a Beirut consular official \$3,000 for a Mexican visa, the Lebanese carpenter paid another \$4,000 to be smuggled into the United States. Settling in Dearborn, Michigan, Kourani reportedly raised at least \$40,000 for Hizballah.¹⁹ But he was no mere fundraiser. Court documents indicate that he was not only a "member, fighter, recruiter, and fund raiser," for Hizballah, but also the brother of Hizballah's chief of military security for southern Lebanon. Moreover, before coming to the United

¹⁵ Adrian Blomfield, "Iran Threatens to Use 'All Means' in Pre-emptive Strike on Israel," *Independent*, February 22, 2012, <http://features.rr.com/article/06tXfWiaof64W?q=Hamas>.

¹⁶ "U.S. Bloc behind Syria Unrest: Deputy Hizballah Chief," *Tehran Times*, November 29, 2011, <http://www.tehrantimes.com/politics/92727-us-bloc-behind-syria-unrest-deputy-Hizballah-chief>.

¹⁷ "International Radical Fundamentalism: An Analytical Overview of Groups and Trends," Terrorist Research and Analytical Center, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice, November 1994, declassified on November 20, 2008, <http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/misc/469.pdf>.

¹⁸ "International Radical Fundamentalism: An Analytical Overview of Groups and Trends," Terrorist Research and Analytical Center, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice, November 1994, declassified on November 20, 2008, <http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/misc/469.pdf>.

¹⁹ Pauline Arrillaga and Olga R. Rodriguez, "The Terror-Immigration Connection," MSNBC, July 3, 2005, http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/8408009/ns/us_news-security/t/terror-immigration-connection/; "Hizballah Fundraiser Sentenced to Prison," *Los Angeles Times*, June 15, 2005, <http://articles.latimes.com/2005/jun/15/nation/na-Hizballah15>.

States, Kourani not only received “specialized training in radical Shiite fundamentalism, weaponry, spy craft, and counterintelligence in Lebanon and Iran,” he was also a Hizballah recruiter and fundraising solicitor in southern Lebanon.²⁰ In 2005, Kourani pled guilty to conspiring to support a terrorist organization in exchange for a 4½ year prison sentence.²¹

In the summer of 2000, while investigating an interstate cigarette smuggling case, investigators stumbled upon a Hizballah cell based in Charlotte, North Carolina. Mohamad Hammoud, the cell’s leader, was convicted of racketeering and providing material support to Hizballah.²² During the trial, evidence was presented that members of the cell worked closely with Sheikh Abbas Harake, a Hizballah military commander in southern Lebanon. In a letter seized by the FBI, Harake called Hammoud “a dear brother who has not forgotten his field of work,” and in an intercepted phone call with Harake, Hammoud repeatedly declares “we’re at your service.”²³ Personal photographs of his militancy—Hammoud at the Hizballah Center in Beirut, Hammoud and other co-conspirators posing with weapons, and Hammoud proudly standing in front of portraits of Ayatollah Khomeini and Hassan Nasrallah—were presented at trial, along with evidence of immigration fraud by him and members of his extended family, some of whom entered the United States illegally via Venezuela and Cyprus by way of false visas and fraudulent marriages.²⁴ In an undated letter to Hammoud, Sheikh Abbas makes clear how the group feels about the United States:

“Peace be on the pleasant blood that was shed and irrigated the tree of Islam in the east and west, to include the blood of the noblest of the Islamic Resistance’s martyrs Mr. Abbas Al-Mousawy. As I greeted the virtuous ones, I must damn the evil ones. Damn America the criminal, and the arrogant Israel that commits injustice and hostility; and Allah, you are the everlasting over the enemies of Islam.”²⁵

While Hammoud awaited trial, Federal authorities discovered a notional plot to murder the prosecutor, First Assistant U.S. Attorney Kenneth Bell, and bomb Charlotte’s Federal courthouse.²⁶ An intercepted letter from Hammoud to a government informant referred to someone whose “assignment is to put bullets into the skull of the arrogant, bastard prosecutor.”²⁷ Alternatively, the unknown operative who would carry out this assignment should “annihilate with massive explosives the evidence against us—There is no room for error. Too much depends on this operation.” Hammoud wrote, “I am filled with hope and anticipation.”²⁸

One of the other people indicted in the Charlotte case was Mohammed Dbouk. According to U.S. investigators, Dbouk is an Iranian-trained Hizballah operative and “an intelligence specialist and propagandist [who] was dispatched to Canada by Hizballah for the express purpose of obtaining surveillance equipment (video cameras and handheld radios and receivers) and military equipment (night-vision devices, laser range-finders, mine and metal detectors, and advanced aircraft analysis tools).”²⁹ Several indicators suggest that he ranks as a significant Hizballah opera-

²⁰ *United States of America v. Mahmoud Youssef Kourani*, “Indictment,” U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division, Criminal No. 03–81030, November 19, 2003, <http://f11.findlaw.com/news.findlaw.com/cnn/docs/terrorism/uskourani111903ind.pdf>.

²¹ “Hizballah Fundraiser Sentenced to Prison,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 15, 2005, <http://articles.latimes.com/2005/jun/15/nation/na-Hizballah15>.

²² David E. Kaplan, “Homegrown Terrorists,” *U.S. News & World Report*, March 2, 2003, <http://www.usnews.com/usnews/news/articles/030310/10hez.htm>.

²⁴ *United States of America v. Mahmoud Youssef Hammoud et al.*, United States District Court for the Western District of North Carolina, Charlotte Division, Docket No. 3:00–cr–147.

²⁵ *United States of America v. Mahmoud Youssef Hammoud et al.*, United States District Court for the Western District of North Carolina, Charlotte Division, Docket No. 3:00–cr–147.

²⁶ Letter from Sheikh Abbas Alaa to Mohamad Hammoud, Federal Bureau of Investigation, transcribed January 29, 2001, case number 265B–CE–82188, ID number S04055011.

²⁷ U.S. Attorney Anne M. Tompkins, Western District of North Carolina, Department of Justice press release, January 27, 2011, <http://www.justice.gov/usao/ncw/press/hammoudsentence.html>.

²⁸ “Smuggler May Have Plotted to Kill Prosecutor,” *Star News*, November 11, 2002, <http://news.google.com/news?nid=1454&dat=20021111&id=GrTOAAAIAIBAJ&sjid=aR8EAAAIAIBAJ&pg=2429,3123944>;

²⁹ David E. Kaplan, “Homegrown Terrorists,” *U.S. News & World Report*, March 2, 2003, http://www.usnews.com/usnews/news/articles/030310/10hez_4.htm.

²⁸ “Smuggler May Have Plotted to Kill Prosecutor,” *Star News*, November 11, 2002, <http://news.google.com/news?nid=1454&dat=20021111&id=GrTOAAAIAIBAJ&sjid=aR8EAAAIAIBAJ&pg=2429,3123944>.

²⁹ Robert Fromme and Rick Schwein, “Operation Smokescreen: A Successful Interagency Collaboration,” *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin* 76, no. 12 (December 2007), <http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/law-enforcement-bulletin/2007-pdfs/dec07leb.pdf>.

tive. For example, U.S. Attorney Robert Conrad, whose office successfully prosecuted the Hizballah case in Charlotte, testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee that according to human source intelligence, “Dbouk is such a major player in the Hizballah organization that on five separate occasions his application to be a martyr was rejected.” Asked to explain why his application to be sent on a martyrdom mission (that is, a suicide or other mission from which he would not, or would be unlikely to, return) was rejected, Conrad replied, “He was rejected five times because of his significance to the organization.”³⁰ With his intelligence, military training, and expertise in information operations, Hizballah officials apparently saw Dbouk as too valuable a commodity and too significant a player to expend on a martyrdom mission. According to the CSIS intercepts, in a conversation with someone named Said (last name unknown), Dbouk tried to discuss politics, and Said said he wanted to be careful about what they discussed on the telephone. Ignoring this kind of operational security protocol for which Hizballah is well known, Dbouk responded that “he did not care about anything and was committed to securing all the items for the brothers at any cost; he was attempting to avoid going to hell and secure a place in heaven by so doing.”³¹

But Hizballah could also deploy operatives who might not fit a typical profile for Lebanese Hizballah, the FBI has warned. In the first instance, they may not be Lebanese. At one point, the FBI informed, an Iraqi Shiite cleric in Texas who had ties to Iran positioned himself in a leadership role for Hizballah in the United States. Hizballah members could come from several countries, the FBI noted, especially Iraq and Iran. In general, the FBI reported, “Hizballah is particularly interested in recruiting non-Lebanese Shiites, since they do not fit the normal Hizballah profile and are less prone to surveillance and detection.” Hizballah also had made initial contacts with African American Muslims to discuss mutual cooperation, the FBI reported. In addition, Hizballah members in the United States reached out to overseas members of other terrorist groups, including Sunni Hamas and the Lebanese Islamic Group (not the Egyptian group by the same name), for the purpose of cementing agreements promising to carry out joint attacks against the United States or Israel should Islamic interests be threatened.³²

Hizballah operatives in the United States have also demonstrated security consciousness, suggesting they could bring a level of operational security into play in the event they were instructed to carry out an operation here in the United States. According to the FBI, “members of one West Coast cell reportedly initiated a ‘neighborhood watch program’ in order to alert cell members of an FBI presence.” In another case, a Hizballah cell in New York was instructed to divide into teams as a security precaution. “Teams were not to discuss Hizballah matters outside of their team,” the FBI reported. “Secret communications could no longer be carried by courier, and letters could not contain details such as the names of members.”³³

2. *Import professional operatives.*—Another option available to Hizballah would be to bring in outsiders to carry out an attack, using local sympathizers and operatives only for support functions. This is Hizballah’s more traditional *modus operandi*, which it employed in Argentina in 1992 and 1994, in Thailand in 1994, and more recently in Azerbaijan, Turkey, Thailand, and elsewhere over the past few years.

Take the 1994 bombing of the AMIA Jewish community center in Buenos Aires. Within weeks of the attacks, Argentinean federal police released a composite sketch of the suicide bomber to the local press that was based on the testimony of several witnesses, including a door-to-door survey of neighborhood residents shortly after the bombing. Other sketches were publicized of the person who parked the van used in the bombing in a nearby garage 3 days before the attack.³⁴ But as quickly as

³⁰U.S. Attorney Robert J. Conrad Jr., Western District of North Carolina, testimony before Senate Committee on the Judiciary, “An Assessment of the Tools Needed to Fight the Financing of Terrorism,” November 20, 2002.

³¹“CSIS Summaries, Redacted Copy, Trial Testimony,” *United States of America v. Mohamad Youssef Hammoud, et al.*, U.S. District Court, Western District of North Carolina, Charlotte Division, Docket No. 3:00-cr-147, p. 11.

³²“International Radical Fundamentalism: An Analytical Overview of Groups and Trends,” Terrorist Research and Analytical Center, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice, November 1994, declassified on November 20, 2008, <http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/misc/469.pdf>.

³³“International Radical Fundamentalism: An Analytical Overview of Groups and Trends,” Terrorist Research and Analytical Center, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice, November 1994, declassified on November 20, 2008, <http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/misc/469.pdf>.

³⁴The sketches were published in the Buenos Aires newspaper Clarin on August 1 and 6, 1994, and again on September 28, 1995; see copies of the paper and details in written answers

authorities produced these sketches, and as useful as they would later be in definitively identifying the perpetrators as members of a Hizballah hit team, they were too late to help apprehend them before they escaped the country. The Iranian diplomatic support network left the county in waves in the weeks leading up to the attack. The exception was Mohsen Rabbani, an Iranian who had lived in Argentina for eleven years and was the primary architect of the plot. Just 4 months before the attack, Rabbani suddenly became an official Iranian diplomat, complete with Iranian diplomatic credentials and immunity. As for the Hizballah operatives brought in to execute the bombing, Argentinean law enforcement and intelligence officials would later determine they left the country about 2 hours prior to the actual explosion.³⁵

While some of the operatives, including the suicide bomber, entered the country at Argentina's highly unregulated border crossings in the Tri-Border Area where Argentina meets Brazil and Paraguay, others arrived—presumably with false documents—at Ezeiza International Airport on July 1, 1994, and left the morning of the attack through Jorge Newbery Metropolitan Airport, some on flights to the Tri-Border Area.³⁶ Investigators would later trace phone calls placed from pay phones at these airports, as well as calls from pay phones near the AMIA building during their stay, to a cellular phone in Foz de Iguazu, on the Brazilian side of the Friendship Bridge spanning the Parana River in the Tri-Border Area. From Foz, as it is locally known, a network of Hizballah supporters coordinated the activities of the terrorist cell members operating in Buenos Aires. Frequent calls were made between phones in Argentina and the cell phone in Foz as preparations for the bombing progressed. Then, the day of the attack, the flow of calls suddenly stopped.³⁷

In terms of infiltrating operatives into the United States, Hizballah's ability to procure high-quality false passports is of particular concern. According to the FBI, "In an on-going effort to bring more members into the United States, Hizballah also alters or steals travel documents, passports and visas. In one such operation, Hizballah members presented photo-substituted passports and fraudulent visa applications at a U.S. Embassy. Eighteen individuals successfully obtained passports in this manner."³⁸

Sometimes, Iran helps Hizballah operatives obtain high-quality forged travel documents. In March 1996, Hussein Mikdad walked into the Iranian embassy in Beirut to have his photograph taken for a forged passport. Iranian experts apparently doctored the passport, a legitimate passport that was stolen in France and then acquired by Hizballah operatives in Europe on the black market. Mikdad successfully entered Israel on his false passport and in April 1996 was severely injured when the explosive device he was preparing in his east Jerusalem hotel room exploded prematurely. According to Israeli intelligence, "Hizballah members operating in Europe invest many resources in this activity and succeeded in acquiring many passports that are used by the organization's activists in their travels all over the world."³⁹

Mahmoud Kourani and Mohammed Dbouk are hardly the only examples of hardened Hizballah operatives who made their way to the United States or Canada. Consider the case of Fawzi Ayub, who lived in Canada but also maintained an address in Michigan. In mid-2002, Israeli authorities conducting a search in Hebron arrested him; he had entered the territories by sea using a forged American passport in the name of Frank Mariano Boschi. In Ayub, Hizballah planners secured a Canadian passport and a Hizballah veteran who had taken part in sensitive operations abroad in the past. In the mid-1980s, he was convicted by a Romanian court

to Question for the Record for Ambassador Philip Wilcox, testimony at a hearing on "Terrorism in Latin America/AMIA Bombing in Argentina" before the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, September 28, 1995, pp. 111–117.

³⁵ Report by the Investigations Unit of the Office of the Attorney General, "AMIA Case," signed by District Attorney Marcelo Martinez Burgos, Attorney General Alberto Nisman, and Secretary of the Office of the Attorney General Hernan Longo, October 25, 2006.

³⁶ Nisman and Burgos's 2006 report states the suicide bomber likely came in through the Tri-Border Area. And in an August 16, 2009, interview with the author, a senior Argentinean law enforcement officer confirmed the investigation had "definitively" determined that the suicide bomber, Ibrahim Berro entered through the Tri-Border Area.

³⁷ Report by the Investigations Unit of the Office of the Attorney General, "AMIA Case," signed by District Attorney Marcelo Martinez Burgos, Attorney General Alberto Nisman, and Secretary of the Office of the Attorney General Hernan Longo, October 25 2006, pp. 14–15.

³⁸ "International Radical Fundamentalism: An Analytical Overview of Groups and Trends," Terrorist Research and Analytical Center, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice, November 1994, declassified on November 20, 2008, <http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/misc/469.pdf>.

³⁹ "Hizballah's International Terrorism and the Penetration of Hizballah Activists into Israel," undated Israeli intelligence report received by the author August 5, 2003.

for his role in a Hizballah plot to hijack an Iraqi airliner set to depart from Bucharest and negotiate the release of Shiite clerics detained in Iraq in exchange for the Iraqi passengers.⁴⁰ Ayub immigrated to Canada in 1988, where he was welcomed by family members already there, and he became a Canadian citizen in 1992. At first glance, Ayub led a normal life in the Toronto area. He married a woman from the Detroit area, just across the Ambassador Bridge linking Detroit to Windsor, Ontario. At some point he lived in the Dearborn area just outside of Detroit, according to U.S. prosecutors.⁴¹ He studied in the evenings and worked at a grocery during the day. But all the while, Ayub remained an active Hizballah agent, according to Israeli officials. In the words of one such official, "It's very easy for a guy like Fawzi to live inside Europe, to live inside Canada, and do things that are not exactly legal."⁴² While in Canada, Israeli officials maintain, Ayub "maintained contact with senior Hizballah officials and carried out operations."⁴³ Asked by an Israeli judge if he told Canadian authorities about previous charges of attempting to carry out an act of terrorism, Ayub replied, "They never asked."⁴⁴ A sealed indictment was issued for him in Michigan on August 5, 2009, which was unsealed 2 years later in July 2011.⁴⁵

3. *Leverage criminal ties.*—In light of the counterterrorism measures Western security and intelligence agencies have implemented in the years since September 11, it is now much harder than it was before to carry out attacks in general, and in Western, developed countries in particular. This affects the operational capabilities not only of al-Qaeda but Hizballah and all other groups. One way Hizballah has tried to counter this new operational reality has been to reach out to local criminal networks with whom its operatives have established connections for the purpose of raising funds and procuring dual-use or military material, and to leverage those relationships for operational purposes as well. By some accounts, Hizballah started to make this shift even before 9/11 and simply accelerated it afterward. The group reportedly used criminal elements as operatives for some of its activities in Europe when it kidnapped retired Israeli military officer Elchanan Tannenbaum in the fall 2000. Whenever the trend first started, it is now in full swing. And Hizballah has developed a robust network of criminal associates in the United States, Canada, and now Mexico.

Consider, for example, the November 2009 indictment of 10 individuals, including a member of Hizballah's Political Bureau back in Beirut, Hassan Hodroj. The network's criminal schemes were varied, including selling counterfeit money, stolen money, and fraudulent passports; weapons procurement; and selling stolen goods such as cell phones, laptops, Sony PlayStation 2 game consoles, and cars. The stolen goods were shipped from Pennsylvania to places where Hizballah is known to have a foothold, including Lebanon, Venezuela's Margarita Island, and Benin.⁴⁶ But the network was also involved in weapons procurement, including Colt M4 Carbine machine guns, pistols, and rifles. When the government's cooperating witness (CW), who was the network's source for weapons, insisted on being assured by high-level Hizballah officials that the weapons were bound for Hizballah and would be intercepted, one of the indicted conspirators, Dib Hani Harb, immediately picked up the phone and got a senior Hizballah official on the line to give the necessary assurances. Later, the CW met with Dib Hani Harb's father-in-law, Hassan Hodroj, who is identified in court documents as "publically recognized and acknowledged as a member of Hizballah's Political Council." Hodroj explained to the CW that even though he was a senior Hizballah political official, he was "involved in weapons and technology procurement for Hizballah." He demurred when the CW offered to procure Glock pistols for Hizballah, stating instead that Hizballah needed "heavy machinery," which would be used "in their fight against Jews and to protect Lebanon."

⁴⁰ Stewart Bell, *Cold Terror: How Canada Nurtures and Exports Terrorism to the World* (Wiley, 2004), p. 81.

⁴¹ *USA v. Faouzi Ayoub*, indictment, case 2:09-cr-20367, filed under seal August 5, 2009, unsealed July 2011; see also Robert Snell, "Dearborn Man Accused of Bomb Mission on FBI's Most Wanted List," *Detroit News*, July 6, 2011.

⁴² Bell, *Cold Terror*, pp. 81–82.

⁴³ "Intensive Intelligence Operation by the ISA Arrested in June 2002 Senior Hizballah Militant," press release communicated by the prime minister's advisor, October 30, 2002, <http://www.pmo.gov.il/PMOEng/Archive/Press+Releases/2002/10/Spokesman6728.htm>.

⁴⁴ Bell, *Cold Terror*, p. 81.

⁴⁵ *United States of America v. Faouzi Ayoub a/k/a Frank Mariano Boschi*, indictment, U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division, August 5, 2009, http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/case_docs/1599.pdf; Corey Williams, "Mich. Man Accused of Seeking to Set Bomb in Israel," ABC News, July 7, 2011, <http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory?id=14013301>.

⁴⁶ *United States of America v. Sadek Mohamad Koumaiha et al.*, U.S. District Court, Eastern District, Pennsylvania, 09, November 23, 2009.

Hodroj said Hizballah also needed “communications system equipment and spy systems from the United States.”⁴⁷ Further to the discussion above about Hizballah’s procurement of false passports, three of the defendants reportedly also generated additional funds for Hizballah by selling fraudulent passports. “The CW and the defendants participated in the purchase of two fake passports—one from the United Kingdom and one from Canada—for the benefit of Hizballah.”⁴⁸

Also in November 2009, Dani Nemr Tarraf—a Lebanese-born German citizen and businessman—was arrested for paying a \$20,000 cash deposit to an undercover officer in an effort to purchase and ship anti-aircraft missiles, 10,000 machine guns, night-vision equipment, and shoulder-fired Stinger missiles to Hizballah.⁴⁹ Further, from January 2007 to November 2009, Tarraf obtained and conspired to obtain FIM-92 Stinger Missiles, Colt M-4 Carbines machine guns, Glock pistols, sniper-detection technology, night-vision and thermal-imaging equipment, wireless network equipment, lensatic compasses, and two-way radios.⁵⁰ According to U.S. officials, the weapons Tarraf sought to procure were to be shipped to either Iran or Syria for use by the “resistance.” At one point, Tarraf insisted he wanted to purchase guided missiles that could “take down an F-16.”⁵¹ Tarraf ultimately gave a full confession to the charged offenses and admitted to being a member of Hizballah and to receiving military training from the group.⁵²

Further, consider the case of Jamal Yousef, a former member of the Syrian military and international arms dealer, who was charged in 2009 with participating in a narcoterrorism conspiracy. According to U.S. prosecutors, Yousef planned to sell the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) a cache of military-grade weapons in exchange for hundreds of kilograms of cocaine. Yousef and his partners claimed that “the weapons had been stolen from Iraq and were stored in Mexico” at the home of Yousef’s relative, an active member of Hizballah.⁵³

The possibility also exists that Hizballah could press unwilling individuals into operational activity through intimidation and threats of violence. In at least one instance, the FBI reports, “Hizballah members have attempted to wrest control of a mosque through intimidation and threats of violence. Members of the mosque were told that if they did not embrace the beliefs of Hizballah, they would be forcibly prevented from admittance.” In other cases, while most donations to Hizballah are given willingly, the FBI reported, “most Lebanese nationals in the United States have family members still living in Lebanon, thus availing themselves to extortion.”⁵⁴

4. *Homegrown violent extremism.*—Finally, the possibility also exists for Hizballah sympathizers or others without formal ties to Hizballah to carry out acts of lone-wolf terrorism in solidarity with Hizballah and/or Iran. This trend, which to date has been limited to violent Sunni Islamist extremism, could manifest itself in the event of a direct confrontation with Hizballah or Iran.

Consider, for example, the case of Hani al-Sayegh, a member of Saudi Hizballah who was involved in the bombing of Khobar Towers in 1996. Like most of his co-conspirators, al-Sayegh fled Saudi Arabia after the attack. He took a circuitous route to Canada, traveling from Kuwait to Rome to Boston to Ottawa. Confessions from his co-conspirators and intercepted telephone conversations convinced Canadian, American, and Saudi officials that al-Sayegh played a key role in the bombing and had maintained contact with Iranian officials—both in Iran and Canada—since the attack. For example, while in Canada, al-Sayegh spoke with his wife in Saudi Arabia and, speaking in Persian, with Iranian officials in Iran. “In these conversa-

⁴⁷ FBI Supervisory Special Agent Sameul Smemo Jr., Affidavit in Support of Application for Arrest and Seizure Warrants, November 20, 2009, http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/case_docs/1466.pdf.

⁴⁸ “Four Indicted for Conspiring to Support Hizballah; Six Others Charged with Related Crimes,” U.S. Attorney’s Office, Eastern District of Pennsylvania, November 24, 2009, <http://www.fbi.gov/philadelphia/press-releases/2009/ph112409.htm>.

⁴⁹ MaryClaire Dale, “Lebanese Man Accused in Arms Buy to Be Detained,” Associated Press, December 8, 2009; Randy Pennell, “Man Arrested in Anti-Aircraft Missile Plot,” Associated Press, November 24, 2009.

⁵⁰ Superseding Indictment, *United States of America v. Dani Nemr Tarraf et al.*, U.S. District Court, Eastern District, Pennsylvania, 09–743.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Pretrial Detention Order, *United States of America v. Dani Nemr Tarraf*, U.S. District Court, Eastern District, Pennsylvania, 09–743–01, December 3, 2009.

⁵³ Indictment, *United States of America v. Jamal Yousef*, Case No 1:08-cr-01213-UA, U.S. District Court Southern District of New York, July 06, 2009.

⁵⁴ “International Radical Fundamentalism: An Analytical Overview of Groups and Trends,” Terrorist Research and Analytical Center, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice, November 1994, declassified on November 20, 2008 <http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/misc/469.pdf>.

tions he makes oblique references that suggest a possible involvement in the Dhahran bombing, and he intimates that some of his cohorts fled at one time to Iran." In one conversation, he referred to co-conspirators being "in the country of Rafsanjani," a reference to Iran's then-President Hashemi Rafsanjani.⁵⁵

On March 18, 1997, Royal Canadian Mounted Police arrested al-Sayegh at the Queen Mary convenience store on joint orders of the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and the Solicitor General on the grounds that he posed "a security risk to Canada."⁵⁶ In May, al-Sayegh met with American officials and after first insisting he knew nothing about the Khobar bombing, he soon confessed to having once been a member of the Saudi Hizballah cell that carried out the bombing. Al-Sayegh informed that he was recruited by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard and had participated not only in the Khobar bombing but in another unspecified operation directed by IRGC Gen. Ahmad Sharifi.⁵⁷ He agreed to assist U.S. officials investigating the bombing as part of his plea bargain. But once he arrived in the United States, he reneged on his agreement and sought political asylum here. That effort failed, and in October 1999, al-Sayegh was deported to Saudi Arabia. Concerned that Hizballah might retaliate against U.S. interests for deporting him, the State Department issued a worldwide warning advising U.S. citizens "to take appropriate steps to increase their security awareness to lessen their vulnerability." The potential existed, U.S. officials maintained, that "someone might try to take retaliatory action" for returning al-Sayegh to Saudi custody.⁵⁸

CONCLUSION

It is by no means a foregone conclusion that Hizballah would carry out an attack in the homeland in the event of an attack on Iran, or if Hizballah's interests were otherwise threatened by U.S. action. It is still far more likely that Hizballah would attempt to carry out attacks targeting U.S. and allied interests in places where counterterrorism measures are not as robust, as it has over the past few years in Turkey, Azerbaijan, Egypt, and Thailand. Hizballah and Iran both prefer to carry out attacks for which they can claim reasonable deniability, and Hizballah recognizes that executing an attack on American soil would put the group squarely in the crosshairs of America's on-going struggle against international terrorism, something the group has studiously avoided since 9/11. That said, in the event Hizballah leaders decide an attack on American soil is in their interest, they do have the capability to execute terrorist attacks here in the homeland.

I thank you for your attention and look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Chairman KING. Thank you, Dr. Levitt.

Our next witness, Dr. Colin Kahl, who is an associate professor in the Security Studies Program in the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University; from February 2009 to December 2011, Professor Kahl served as deputy assistant secretary of defense for the Middle East.

In that role, he served as a senior policy adviser to the secretary of defense for Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, and Palestinian territories, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Yemen, among other countries. His works have been published in foreign affairs, foreign policy, security, and *The Los Angeles Times*.

Dr. Kahl, you are recognized. In the interest of fairness, if you go a few minutes over, I am not going to bang the gavel unless the Ranking Member insists I do.

Dr. Kahl, you are recognized.

⁵⁵ Thomas Friedman, "Stay Tuned," *New York Times*, March 25, 1997.

⁵⁶ Elaine Sciolino, "U.S. Rebuffed by Syrians over Bombing," *New York Times*, March 26, 1997; Anthony DePalma, "Canada Links Pro-Iranian Group to Saudi Attack on U.S. Barracks," *New York Times*, March 28, 1997.

⁵⁷ Louis J. Freeh, with Howard Means, *My FBI: Bringing Down the Mafia, Investigating Bill Clinton, and Fighting the War on Terror* (New York: St. Martin's, 2005), p. 19.

⁵⁸ "Suspect in Khobar Towers Bombing Fights Deportation to Saudi Arabia," CNN.com, October 5, 1999.

**STATEMENT OF COLIN H. KAHL, SENIOR FELLOW, CENTER
FOR A NEW AMERICAN SECURITY**

Mr. KAHL. Well, thank you. Chairman King, Ranking Member Thompson, distinguished Members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the Iranian threat to the United States, and specifically on the possible consequences of U.S. military action against Iran's nuclear program.

Although until recently, I served, as you mentioned, as the deputy assistant secretary of defense for the Middle East, I need to make clear to everybody today that I am speaking today in my individual personal capacity, not as a representative of the administration.

President Obama has made clear that an Iranian nuclear weapon is unacceptable, and that all options, including military force, remain on the table to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

Yet President Obama has also made clear that he prefers a peaceful solution and that there remains a window of opportunity to take advantage of unprecedented pressure on Iran to reach a lasting diplomatic outcome.

This is precisely the right approach. Force should remain an option. Indeed the credible threat of military action can help enable diplomacy. But we have not yet reached the now-or-never moment for employing the military option against Iran and a diplomatic solution is both preferable and ultimately more sustainable.

I base this conclusion on four arguments, which I go into in much greater detail in the written testimony.

First, the nuclear threat from Iran is growing but it is not yet imminent. According to U.S. and Israeli intelligence officials and independent assessments, it would currently take Iran at least 4 months to produce sufficient weapons-grade uranium for a single nuclear bomb and at least a year total to produce a crude testable nuclear device.

Once Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Houmani decides to do so, it would take several more years to develop a miniaturized nuclear warhead for a missile.

Although Iran is clearly positioning itself to developing nuclear weapons capability, DNI Director Clapper has testified that there is no hard evidence that Houmani has yet made the final decision to translate those capabilities into a bomb.

Moreover, Houmani is unlikely to dash for a weapon anytime soon because doing so would require Iran to divert its low enriched uranium stockpiles and enrich to weapons-grade level at the declared enrichment facilities either at Natanz or at Fordo. Because international atomic energy agency inspectors would detect those moves, the Iranian regime is unlikely to break out until they can dramatically shrink their time line or build the weapons in secret, which could be years away. Therefore, we have not reached a moment of decision for the use of military force.

Second, a military strike could produce significant escalatory and spillover risks. When and if a decision to use force is ultimately made, it must be done in full appreciation of the likely consequences.

To reestablish its deterrent, Iran will likely retaliate with missile strikes against U.S. bases in the Gulf, proxy and terrorist attacks against U.S. diplomatic facilities in Iraq and elsewhere, an escalation of lethal aid to insurgents in Afghanistan and harassment of international shipping in the Strait of Hormuz.

As our other speakers have noted, retaliation against the U.S. homeland is also conceivable. However, even limited retaliation in the region could produce significant American casualties and drive pressure to the United States for further escalation.

Although some believe an Iranian response would be carefully calibrated, mutual fears and miscalculations could lead to escalation on all sides.

A U.S. strike would also produce significant spillover risks including much higher oil prices, the possibility of Iranian and proxy retaliation, including Hezbollah attacks against Israel, and the prospect of American allies in the Gulf being dragged in.

A unilateral strike against another Muslim country would also further destabilize a region already caught up in the turmoil of the Arab Spring.

Third, a strike will only delay, not resolve, Iran's nuclear challenge; short of invasion, occupation, and regime change, there is actually no way to use military action to ensure that Iran abandons its nuclear program.

As American defense officials have repeatedly noted, a near-term attack on Iran's nuclear infrastructure would knock the program back at most a few years.

It should be noted that a possible Israeli strike would produce similar risks of escalation and regional instability but with even more limited effects on the program.

Meanwhile, in the aftermath of a strike, Iran would likely attempt to rebuild its program in a way that is harder to detect and potentially more costly to stop. Almost certainly an attack would motivate Iran's hardliners to kick out IAA inspectors and incentivize the regime to rapidly rebuild a clandestine nuclear infrastructure.

Fourth, we still have time for diplomacy. The Iranian economy is struggling under the weight of unprecedented sanctions and Iranian leaders have signaled their willingness to return to the negotiating table.

Diplomacy won't be easy but an opportunity exists for all sides to chart a new course and step back from confrontation. The immediate goal should be to reach an interim confidence building agreement that stops Iran from enriching at the 19.75 percent level and ships the current 19.75 stockpile out of the country in exchange for fuel for the Tehran research reactor.

The confidence building arrangement should also aim to halt further installation of centrifuges at the deeply buried Fordo enrichment facility near the Holy City of Qom. This would go a long way toward easing Israeli anxieties that drive a potential strike this year.

A final diplomatic settlement that provides sufficient transparency and assurances against weaponization efforts, while respecting Iranian rights to civilian nuclear program under the nu-

clear nonproliferation treaty, will be more difficult to achieve. But unlike military action, it is the only sustainable solution.

As our diplomats work with other members of the P5-plus-one to find a solution to the Iranian nuclear threat, I think Congress needs to avoid taking steps that unnecessarily box them in and limit creative options.

For example, insisting that all Iranian enrichment activities be suspended prior to negotiations or ruling out any possibility for limited future enrichment, even under extraordinary safeguards, will only make a diplomatic outcome more difficult to achieve and therefore make a costly and unpredictable military confrontation more likely.

With that, I will conclude and I look forward to your questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The statement of Mr. Kahl follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF COLIN H. KAHL

MARCH 21, 2012

Chairman King, Ranking Member Thompson, distinguished Members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on the Iranian threat to the United States and the possible consequences of U.S. military action against Iran's nuclear program.¹

Iran's nuclear ambitions represent one of the greatest challenges to the security of the United States and the world. In recent months, as Iran's nuclear progress has continued, there has been growing talk in Washington of using U.S. military force to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

President Obama has made clear that:

- An Iranian nuclear weapon is “unacceptable.”
- All options—including military force—remain on the table to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons.
- The administration does not endorse a policy of containing a nuclear-armed Iran.

Secretary of Defense Panetta has described Iran's development of a nuclear weapon as a “red line,” and General Martin Dempsey, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has said the United States has a viable contingency plan in the event of a conflict with Iran.

Yet President Obama has also made clear that he prefers a peaceful solution and that there remains a window of opportunity to take advantage of unprecedented pressure on Iran to reach a lasting diplomatic settlement.

This is precisely the right approach. Force should remain an option—indeed, the credible threat of military action can help enable diplomacy. But we have not yet reached the now-or-never moment for employing the military option, and a diplomatic solution is both preferable and the most sustainable path to preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. Military action is, and should remain, a last resort—and it should not be used until all non-military avenues have been exhausted.

I base this conclusion on four arguments:

- The threat from Iran's nuclear program is growing, but not yet imminent.
- The costs of military action are potentially very high, both in terms of the escalatory potential of any U.S. strike and the broader regional and global effects.
- Military action is unlikely to result in a permanent solution to Iran's nuclear threat.
- Opportunities for a diplomatic solution have not yet been exhausted.

THE NUCLEAR THREAT FROM IRAN IS GROWING, BUT NOT YET IMMINENT

According to U.S. and Israeli intelligence officials, and independent assessments by the Institute for Science and International Security, it would currently take Iran at least 4 months to produce sufficient weapons-grade uranium (WGU) for a single nuclear bomb, and at least a year total to produce a crude testable nuclear device,

¹Much of this testimony draws on Colin H. Kahl, “Not Time to Attack Iran,” *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2012.

once Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei decides to do so. It would take several more years to develop a miniaturized nuclear warhead for a missile.

Although Iran is clearly positioning itself to develop a nuclear weapons capability, James Clapper, the Director of National Intelligence, has testified that there is no hard evidence that Khamenei has yet made the final decision to translate those capabilities into a bomb. Moreover, Khamenei is unlikely to dash for a weapon anytime soon because doing so would require Iran to divert low-enriched uranium (LEU) stockpiles and enrich to weapons-grade level at the declared enrichment facilities at Natanz or Fordow. Because International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors would detect such moves, the Iranian regime is unlikely to "break out" until they can dramatically reduce the time line to build several bombs or build a weapon at new covert facilities. This could be years away.

Therefore, we have not yet reached a moment of decision for the use of force.

ESCALATION AND SPILLOVER RISKS

Moreover, when and if a decision to use force is made, it must be done in full appreciation of the likely consequences.

Should the United States decide to strike Iran's nuclear program, escalation will be difficult to manage on all sides. To reestablish its deterrent, Iran will likely retaliate with missile strikes against U.S. bases in the Gulf, proxy and terrorist attacks against U.S. diplomatic facilities in Iraq and elsewhere, an escalation of lethal aid to insurgents in Afghanistan, and harassment of international shipping in the Strait of Hormuz. Even such "limited" retaliation could produce significant American casualties and drive pressures in the United States for further escalation. And, because of the threat to the global economy, the United States could not turn the other cheek in the face of even minor Iranian provocations in the Strait of Hormuz.

Moreover, although some believe an Iranian response would be carefully calibrated to avoid further escalation with the United States, there are reasons to believe this might not be the case.

Regardless of U.S. intentions, an American attack on Iran's nuclear program would hit the crown jewel of the Iranian regime. It would therefore be difficult for Washington to communicate limited aims to Tehran. When combined with a decades-long history of mutual distrust, an Iranian predisposition to view all U.S. actions as aimed at regime change, the lack of reliable communication channels, and the inevitable fog of war, the prospects for an Iranian overreaction are high.

Mutual fears and miscalculations could also lead to rapid escalation. In the immediate aftermath of a U.S. strike, the Iranians will fear further de-capitation strikes against their missile and naval forces and their command-and-control systems, encouraging them to use their retaliatory capabilities early in the crisis before they lose them.

At the very least, to protect their military assets, Iran will likely activate its integrated air defense network and begin dispersing its ballistic missiles, anti-ship cruise missiles, fast attack naval craft, submarines, and mines. It will be difficult for the United States to discern whether these steps are purely defensive or a prelude to offensive operations—and the moves themselves will be incredibly threatening to U.S. forces and commercial shipping in the Gulf and Strait of Hormuz. Once a crisis starts, the incentives for pre-emption on both sides, and the prospects for miscalculation and inadvertent escalation, will therefore be very high.

A U.S. strike would likely produce significant spillover risks as well, including: Much higher oil prices at a precarious time for the global economy; the possibility of Iranian and proxy retaliation against Israel leading to a wider war in Gaza, Lebanon, or Syria; and the prospect of American allies in the Gulf entering the fray. A unilateral attack against another Muslim country would also further destabilize a region already caught up in the turmoil of the Arab Spring. And, by allowing Iran to play the victim and demonstrate its "resistance" credentials through retaliation against the United States and Israel, a strike could help resuscitate Iranian "soft power" across the Middle East at the very moment when Tehran is facing historic isolation and its only state ally in Syria is wobbling.

Ultimately, if the United States and Iran go to war, there is no doubt that the United States would win in the narrow operational sense. Indeed, with the impressive array of U.S. naval and air forces already deployed in the Gulf, the United States could probably knock Iran's military capabilities back 20 years in a matter of weeks. But a U.S.-Iranian conflict would not be the clinical, tightly controlled, limited encounter some predict, and the prospects for further destabilizing the region would be high.

A STRIKE WILL ONLY DELAY, NOT RESOLVE, IRAN'S NUCLEAR CHALLENGE

The potential risks associated with a strike are therefore significant. The benefits are also likely to be more limited than some strike advocates assume.

Short of invasion, occupation, and regime change, there is no way to use military action to ensure that Iran abandons its nuclear program. As senior U.S. defense officials have repeatedly noted, a near-term attack on Iran's nuclear infrastructure would knock the program back, at most, a few years. (It should be noted that a possible Israeli strike would produce similar risks of escalation and regional instability with even more limited effects on Iran's program.)

Meanwhile, in the aftermath of a strike, Iran would likely attempt to rebuild its nuclear program in a way that is harder to detect and potentially more costly to stop. Almost certainly, an attack would motivate Iran's hardliners to kick out IAEA inspectors and incentivize the regime to rapidly rebuild a clandestine nuclear infrastructure.

An attack could also rally domestic Iranian opinion around weaponization. Currently, there seems to be consensus among Iranians that the country has a right to a robust civilian nuclear program, but there is no domestic agreement yet on the pursuit of nuclear weapons. An attack could tilt the internal debate over the nature of Iran's nuclear program in favor of those advocating for a nuclear deterrent to prevent future attacks. And, depending on the target set, a strike could also produce significant Iranian casualties, increasing popular support for a regime that is otherwise struggling to maintain its legitimacy. As a result, there is a risk that a strike would doubly backfire by driving Iran to go for the bomb while strengthening the regime.

To prevent Iran from reconstituting its nuclear program after a strike, the United States would have to be prepared to encircle an even more hostile adversary with a costly containment regime—much like the 12-year effort to bottle up Saddam Hussein after the 1991 Gulf War—and be prepared to re-attack at a moment's notice. Moreover, in the absence of clear evidence that Iran was dashing for a bomb, a U.S. strike risks shattering international consensus, making post-war containment more difficult to implement. And, with inspectors gone, it would be much harder to detect and prevent Iran's clandestine rebuilding efforts.

In short, far from being a substitute for containment, a military strike could be the prelude to a decades-long containment commitment against an even more implacable nuclear foe.

TIME FOR DIPLOMACY

Fortunately, we still have time for other options. Through its initial engagement efforts and subsequent success in forging international consensus to pressure the Iranian regime to live up to its obligations, the Obama administration has established the conditions for diplomatic progress. U.S.-backed pressure measures are clearly having an effect. The Iranian economy is struggling under the weight of unprecedented sanctions and Iranian leaders have signaled their willingness to return to the negotiating table. Diplomacy won't be easy, and we should manage our expectations of an immediate breakthrough, but an opportunity exists for all sides to chart a new course and step back from confrontation.

The immediate goal should be to reach an interim confidence-building agreement that stops Iran from enriching at the 19.75 percent level and ships the current 19.75 percent LEU stockpile out of the country in exchange for fuel for the Tehran Research Reactor. This would substantially reduce the near-term risk that Iran will succeed in compressing its dash time to generate WGU. A confidence-building arrangement should also aim to halt further installation of centrifuges at the deeply-buried Fordow enrichment facility near Qom. This would go a long way toward easing the immediate threat driving a potential Israeli military strike this year, and would therefore buy time for further diplomacy.

A final diplomatic settlement that provides sufficient transparency and assurances against weaponization efforts while respecting Iranian rights to a civilian nuclear program under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) will be more difficult to achieve. But, unlike military action, it is the only sustainable solution. The Supreme Leader's repeated insistence that Iran's program is solely for peaceful civilian purposes, as well as his statements that the acquisition or use of nuclear weapons would be a "grave sin" against Islam, may or may not reflect his true beliefs. But they provide a public discourse that would allow the regime to climb down from the current nuclear crisis without losing face, so long as there are clear benefits to any final agreement and Iran's rights under the NPT are respected.

As our diplomats work with the other members of the P5+1 (the permanent U.N. Security Council members, plus Germany) to find a solution to the Iranian nuclear

threat, Congress should avoid taking steps that unnecessarily box them in and limit creative options. For example, insisting that all Iranian enrichment activities be suspended prior to negotiations, or ruling out any possibility for limited future enrichment even under extraordinary safeguards, will only make a diplomatic outcome more difficult to achieve, and therefore make a costly and unpredictable military confrontation more likely.

CONCLUSION

Some argue that highlighting the potential costs of an attack on Iran's nuclear program discredits the military option. The opposite is the case. Those who speak too cavalierly or clinically about "surgical strikes" and call publicly for a rush to war with Iran display an under-appreciation of the way the conflict is likely to unfold—both in terms of its inherent unpredictability and its human costs—and risk conveying to Iran that America is determined to go to war no matter what they do. That is a recipe for accelerating Iran's drive for a nuclear deterrent and creating a self-fulfilling prophecy of military confrontation.

President Obama clearly understands the costs of war. But that has not stopped him from using force abroad—unilaterally or as part of a coalition—in defense of American National interests, even when doing so was politically risky. The President's decision to surge in Afghanistan, his support for the Libya operation, his relentless global counterterrorism campaign, and his authorization of the daring raid that brought bin Laden to justice provide ample demonstration. Moreover, even as the administration completed the drawdown in Iraq, it re-postured U.S. forces elsewhere in the region to clearly communicate to Iran that the United States would defend our partners and interests. So, when President Obama says all options are on the table to prevent the emergence of a nuclear-armed Iran, there is every reason to believe him, and it would be a serious mistake for Iran or anyone else to doubt American resolve. (As he recently told journalist Jeffrey Goldberg, "I don't bluff.")

But the President is also right that we have not yet reached the now-or-never moment. Force is, and should remain, a last resort, not a first choice.

Chairman KING. Thank you, Dr. Kahl.

As I stated, the full testimony of all the witnesses will be made part of the record.

Does that Ranking Member have a unanimous consent request?

Mr. THOMPSON. Yes. I would like to ask unanimous consent that a gentleman from Texas, Mr. Green, be authorized to sit for the purpose of questioning witnesses during the hearing.

Chairman KING. I have no objection but in the interest of fiscal austerity, can we start charging him rent for all the time he spends here with us?

Mr. THOMPSON. Given that he is from Texas, I am sure he can accommodate you.

Mr. GREEN. I am prepared, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman KING. Without objection, so ordered.

Mr. Braun, regarding the Quds Force and as I said the title of the hearing is "Iran and Hezbollah," but of course any offshoots, any variations of that, also are part of the scope of the hearing.

Do you believe that the IRGC will be able to leverage the existing Hezbollah network that operates in this country to potentially conduct a terror operation?

Mr. BRAUN. Well, with their past track record, you know, receives any weight whatsoever, then I would say yes, it is, you know, it is what they do.

The Quds Force helped stand up Hezbollah many years ago. Where you find one, no matter where you go in world, where you find one, you most assuredly find the other.

I am told that DEA agents and other investigators are routinely bumping into both of these threats as they are focused on criminal investigations, working with counterparts in austere places like the

Macaroon Coast in the tri-border of South America, certainly in West Africa and in North Africa.

As I said, both of these groups, their modus operandi is to identify existing illicit infrastructures and to leverage and exploit them for everything that they are worth.

So, you know, Congressman King, I would say, you know, the answer to that is absolutely yes, they would tap into it.

If I could just mention one other thing—listen, I retired from DEA in late 2008, and like Chris and Dr. Kahl, I no longer—you know, I don't speak for DEA; I no longer speak for our Government, but I am a concerned citizen.

What I can tell is what I was saying as I had one foot in the door and one foot out the door in 2008 was there was a growing concern on my part that there was no doubt, Hezbollah, you know, had become heavily involved in the global cocaine trade, moving tons of the stuff out of the Andean region into West Africa onward into Europe and they are obviously making hundreds of millions of dollars a year behind that activity.

But what concerned me most was is there was clear evidence, there were signs, that caused me to believe that Quds Force might actually be directing and managing the Hezbollah's illicit cocaine trafficking and their operations.

Chairman KING. Based on your DEA experience, are you surprised or not surprised in the unraveling of the plot back in October where the Iranians were going to use drug cartels to carry out the assassination?

Mr. BRAUN. No sir, I am not. I mean it is something that I have been preaching for a long time.

I have talked with you and professional members of your staff as well as other Members of this distinguished committee. I have talked with many of you over the years and your professional staff members and I think, you know, you all know that I have been talking about this for a long time; this growing confluence of drugs and terror.

Well over half of the 50 designated terrorist organizations that we have identified or so designated formally are now involved in one or more aspects of the global drug trade. This quite honestly is a by-product of our success in prosecuting the global war on terrorism.

State sponsorship in a large way, generally speaking, has declined, and we have significantly impacted and identified the funding streams to these groups from very powerful private donors. So these groups, if they want to keep their movements alive, are having to do other things to generate revenue. They are turning to contraband revenue.

Chairman KING. Okay.

I am going to ask the staff to put back the photos that we had of the terrorists or the Hezbollah operatives in Charlotte who were actually trained.

Was this unusual? For your work on the case, was it unusual for these operatives to be terror trained or was it your impression that that was not uncommon for Hezbollah operatives? I mean were these the exception?

Mr. SWECKER. I don't think it was anyone that was working the case thought it was unusual. These were things that we found during searches and were later used as trial exhibits. But to see them on the rooftops with, you know, rockets and AK-47s was—we felt like vindication that we were going after a terrorist organization, not just a criminal group.

It was a—it could very quickly morph into something else. We saw that level of commitment, we saw that inspirational material, pictures of suicide bombers marching in review, “Death to America,” “Death to Israel”—all that propaganda was present during the searches and introduced at the trial.

Chairman KING. I had said in my opening statement that in conversations, which a number of you had with our staffs and also with other conversations you have had with people of the intelligence community, they have put the number at at least the hundreds of Hezbollah operatives in this country. Does anyone dispute that, anyone? Is that too high? Is that too low?

Mr. SWECKER. I couldn't put an exact number on it. I do know that the 20 cases that you mentioned are only those cases where there is a direct nexus to Hezbollah mentioned in an indictment.

There are many more cases out there being investigated and many more that have been prosecuted where there is a nexus, but it was much easier just to charge criminal indictment and not go through the whole process of using intelligence information at a criminal trial—

Chairman KING. Right.

Mr. SWECKER [continuing]. Which is a little bit cumbersome.

Chairman KING. Mr. Silber, does that number sound real to you, the hundreds?

Mr. SILBER. Yes.

Obviously our focus is on New York City and we only see a piece of the pie but if you can extrapolate those numbers, it certainly seems like a reasonable count.

Chairman KING. Mr. Braun.

Mr. BRAUN. I would say yes and, you know, let me just mention one thing.

With respect to the LCB, or the Lebanese Canadian Bank investigation, that the DEA lead and worked with the Department of Treasury on, there were over 70 used car dealerships that were identified as part of the money laundering scheme for laundering the hundreds of millions of dollars of cocaine-generated revenue, much of which was tracked back to Hezbollah.

What concerns me, Congressman, of all those used car dealerships that were involved in that thing—I asked a question when the number was much lower at about 35 or 40. I said, “How many of these businesses”—I asked our investigators—“How many of those businesses existed pre-9/11 versus post-9/11?” The answer was, “Absolutely none.”

So if, you know—

Chairman KING. I am going to actually—your time is running over, so I will have to—

Mr. BRAUN. Okay. I agree with you.

Chairman KING. Okay.

Dr. Levitt.

Mr. LEVITT. I think the number changes. It fluctuates. It is a significant number. But I also warn people that counting known Hezbollah operatives, for example, doesn't capture the whole picture. There is a spectrum of sympathy support and then trained operatives.

I was getting on my testimony, Hezbollah could call on any of these individuals. One of the things I get to in my written testimony is Hezbollah's ability to extort people to do things they might not otherwise want to do and we have seen that activity in this country.

As Mitch said, almost all these people have relatives back home and that puts them in a position where they can be extorted to do things, perhaps even violent things, that they may not have otherwise wanted to do. So the numbers are more than maybe just the number of cases.

Chairman KING. Recognize the Ranking Member.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Professor Kahl, we have seen sanctions topple rogue governments in the past, as an effective tool. One country that comes to mind is South Africa. How do you see sanctions playing a role in addressing Iran at this point?

Mr. KAHL. Well, I think it is too soon to tell. I think the issue with sanctions is that they often have a non-linear effect; that is, that they don't appear to be working until they do. I think actually in the initial phases of sanctions against Iran, they weren't sufficient to get Iran to fundamentally alter its nuclear behavior.

But I think they may be approaching a tipping point, a threshold point, whereby the regime is sufficiently concerned about the economic damage, especially to its oil sector and the possibility for domestic unrest that could be associated with that, that they may be willing to strike a deal.

so I have taken some solace from the fact that they are willing to come back to the negotiating table. My understanding is those negotiations could restart in a matter of weeks.

I think we all need to manage our expectations about a breakthrough, but I think that we could start to step away from a confrontation and sanctions have a big part to do with that.

I would say one other thing. You know, the supreme leader and Ahmadinejad and others say a lot of incendiary things, but one of things the supreme leader always says is that the acquisition or use of nuclear weapons would be a great sin of Islam.

I don't know actually whether he believes that, but it is important that he says it because what that allows is the possibility that he could climb down from this crisis and claim that he never wanted to pursue nuclear weapons to begin with. So I think that they are creating a narrative that would allow them to step back and that we should explore that with diplomacy.

Mr. THOMPSON. Well, beyond the sanctions, what are some other options you think that could be on the table, either presently ongoing or potentially in the future?

Mr. KAHL. Well, I can say that, you know, the Obama administration has actually been very successful in framing a whole-of-Government approach to this. There is obviously a State Department diplomatic isolation effort that is going on that is proving

very successful. The Treasury Department and the State Department have worked very aggressively in sanctions along with this body, of course.

We have done a lot on the military side to prepare so that when the President says all options are on the table, those options are actually on the table. So we have put a lot of assets in the theater in case there is a contingency with Iran.

Then, of course, there are intelligence activities and other activities that are going on. So I think we have really taken a full-spectrum approach to Iran and, you know, I think we still have time to pursue that full spectrum approach.

Mr. THOMPSON. I yield back.

Chairman KING. Recognize the gentleman from California, the former attorney general of California.

Mr. LUNGREN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Silber, I don't know. If I were take the Ranking Member's opening statement at face value, I would have thought we wasted our time here because the indication was that all of you witnesses before us don't have any current information; it is all based on what you did the past.

Mr. Silber, what you said today, is that based on out-of-date information or are you privy to intelligence information even now?

Mr. SILBER. Yes, I mean, the information that I am basing my testimony over is live information, current information based on on-going investigations that are happening in New York City as we speak and, in general, working with Federal law enforcement agencies.

Mr. LUNGREN. We were chastened not to look at just a snapshot in time. The 9/11 Commission criticized the United States Government for not connecting the dots. Aren't dots snapshots in time and you take them together and you analyze them and, therefore, you establish patterns and come to conclusions, Mr. Silber?

Mr. SILBER. In New York City, we use the 9/11 Commission study as almost a bit of a bible and we look to that to make sure that in our responsibility of keeping New York City safe, we learned the lessons that happen pre-9/11 and we have to, when we see it, sound the alarm without sounding alarmist.

But based on the dots that we are seeing across the board overseas, whether it is Georgia, India, Bangkok, and, frankly, Washington, DC, we are concerned that we may be moving toward a point where either because of hostilities that break out or the perception of pressure on Iran that we may be moving forward to a higher likelihood of terrorist activity in the homeland.

Mr. LUNGREN. Yes, my observation would be is if we ignored snapshots in time, we are being derelict in our duty and doing exactly what the 9/11 Commission said that Congress and the Executive Branch was guilty of the in the past.

Mr. Braun, a number of years ago I worked with now Vice President Biden to get legislation passed to criminalize of operation of semi-submersibles and now we know they have quasi-submersibles that is, that actually can operate a short depth under the ocean.

It has always occurred to me that while the drug cartels use that to deliver drugs—and now they are large enough to actually deliver people—that that would be a vehicle of opportunity for those who

would wish to perhaps introduce not drugs, but weapons, into the United States.

Has that ever occurred to you? Do you think that is a legitimate concern and if, in fact, there is this connection between cartels and terrorist groups, including Hezbollah, ought that not to be a major concern to us?

Mr. BRAUN. First of all, let me thank you for the legislation. It did a great deal in helping us to get a better handle on addressing that threat. I am not speaking from just a Federal law enforcement perspective, but it helped our Coast Guard and our Navy immensely. So, again, thank you.

Look, it is one of those threats that I happen to still lose sleep over. These things are now fully submersible, able to dive to depths, and remain submerged up to 100 feet deep for significant periods of time. They carry as much as 8 or more tons of cocaine.

They are typically—and, obviously, that takes up a lot of space, Congressman, and that contraband could be replaced with operatives. That contraband could be replaced with weapons, any number of things.

It is important also that the FARC, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, also a designated terrorist organization by our country, the European Union and several other countries, are the ones that are paying for and utilizing—paying for the manufacture of these things and, then, putting them into service. So that worries me.

Finally, look, when these things now are capable of making it from the north coast of Colombia all the way into Northern Mexico, Southern California is just, you know—not much water separating that distance. It is something we should be concerned with.

Mr. LUNGREN. I thank you for your testimony. I thank you for your service and I thank all the witnesses.

Chairman KING. The gentlelady from Texas, Ms. Jackson Lee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the Chairman and the Ranking Member for holding this hearing, and for all of the witnesses that are here. Our time is very short. I will try to be cryptic in my questions. This is a whole area that really requires such a depth of investigation.

Mr. Silber, I have no intent to make any statement on the work that you have done. I think we are all committed to working together to ensure that the homeland is protected. I just spoke about that earlier this morning.

What legislative initiative that you believe is most important in directing efforts toward protecting the homeland?

Mr. SILBER. I think, in general, one of the issues that has been very important has been the terrorism financing issue that some of my colleagues here on the panel have spent a lot of time looking at, both in and out of Government.

If we can constrict the ability for terrorist organizations, whether you are talking about an al-Qaeda or a Hezbollah or entities linked to Iran, and constrict their ability to move money and get money, you potentially limit their ability to act.

So I think that is one particular form of legislation. We have seen it effective on the al-Qaeda front and we believe it is going to have a pinch on the Hezbollah and Iran front.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Coming from New York, I remember distinctly how New York came together, but I also remember the commitment to not let the terrorists have us turn on ourselves.

Do you still believe in the basic infrastructure of civil liberties and civil rights in the Constitution, even as we turn our attention to fighting terrorism?

Mr. SILBER. Yes, absolutely.

As I mentioned in my opening statement, really all of our efforts in New York City are grounded in law as well as the U.S. Constitution. We realize that some of our best allies are going to be in the diversity of New York City and the communities that we have the ability to, in a sense, be the eyes and the ears and detect something before even law enforcement may become aware of it.

So as much as those relationships can be strengthened, and that is something that our community affairs unit makes their highest priority, that in a sense safeguards all of us.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Dr. Kahl—thank you, Mr. Silber.

I want to continue that line of reasoning to the other gentlemen. I am well aware of the influence of drugs. I think, to Dr. Levitt, you had mentioned that you can see homegrown terrorism here as we speak. We obviously had evidence to the attack or the attempted attack on the Saudi Arabian ambassador.

But Dr. Kahl, let me thank you for reinforcing the President's international perspective on Iran—is that he does not adhere to containment. That Iran having a nuclear weapon is unacceptable and he has not precluded any option, if you will.

But I think what is important again, is the Nation's reinforcement that American citizens or those on our soil—the American citizens have civil liberties rights and certain protections under the Constitution. Is that still your understanding?

Mr. KAHL. Well as a public official, I took an oath to uphold the Constitution. I believe that as an individual, too. So I think, you know, there can be trade space between our security and our liberty, but we have to be clear to preserve our liberty because that is what we are fighting for.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. You adhere to words that came out soon after 9/11 that we don't want the terrorists to force us to terrorize ourselves. You remember some paraphrasing like that?

Mr. KAHL. In general, I think that we should avoid engaging in self-fulfilling prophecies; that is in taking steps that, you know, for good intentions that nevertheless have inadvertent consequences for a whole host of our values.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. But it is clear that Hezbollah has a far reach. I remember their horrific actions in Lebanon in the Lebanese war. But if you could focus on the homegrown terrorism, and your depth of understanding of Hezbollah's impact in influencing individuals that are here in the United States that would be the least-perceived operative—is that the way they are working; that they would be working with the least-perceived operative; someone who may not show themselves clear to be intending to do wrong?

Well, does someone feel—

Mr. KAHL. Yes, I am not really—Congresswoman, I am not really the right person to—

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Dr. Levitt, he is pointing to you.

Mr. LEVITT. I am sorry, I didn't know if you were asking me or him.

I think that Hezbollah primarily will work through its own operatives and through its own networks, some criminal. But the FBI has made public the fact that Hezbollah has proactively also started looking for people who don't fit the main profile and, therefore, it is incumbent upon us to be aware of that as well.

Again, since Hezbollah has the ability to extort and pressure people also who might not be willing followers, this is also a line of investigation that warrants attention.

All of these efforts that have been put in place since 9/11 make it more difficult for the known established, hardened operatives that we may already know about through other intelligence tripwires that we put out there. And so it is to be expected that whether it is Hezbollah or al-Qaeda or somebody else, they are going to look for people who don't fit the profile that we might normally associate with them.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I thank you for your kindness.

I would like to work with this committee on this matter and I would just like to place on the record, Mr. Chairman, that I want to uphold in doing so, not racial profiling and not involving in labeling one group, but we need to work on this issue together.

I thank the Chairman and the Ranking Member.

I yield back my time.

Chairman KING. The gentlelady's input is always appreciated.

The gentleman from Texas, Mr. McCaul is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for holding this hearing.

You know, ever since I was a Federal prosecutor working with the Joint Terrorism Task Forces, I have been concerned about the presence of Hezbollah and the Quds Force, the influence of Iran in the Western Hemisphere; in many ways more sophisticated than al-Qaeda and you don't know what you don't know.

We don't know how many of these operatives are in the United States. Certainly talking to Mexico, they are—and they don't really know how many operatives are in Mexico.

Then after the plot to assassinate the Saudi ambassador went down—to me that was a bit of a game-changer because we always viewed, you know, Hezbollah and Quds Forces as more of a financing role.

Then Operation Titan came down. The DEA had a very successful bust that showed a nexus between the Quds Forces and the drug cartels.

To me this is a very dangerous cocktail. Operation Titan was more, you know, money laundering, but the idea that they could become operational at some point in the future working together, to me is a real risk.

Then when you look at the connection between Karakas and Tehran; Karakas and Damascus; Mr. Ahmadinejad in his tour in the Western Hemisphere; the Castro connection; the idea that while Iran cannot deliver a nuclear missile; the idea that they could have weapons grade uranium and bring that across the

Southwest Border in, say, a backpack and detonate a dirty bomb in the United States, does become a more real threat.

So with that,—I guess, Mr. Braun, you are—being from the DEA, what do you see in terms of Clapper’s testimony about them potentially becoming operational and also the potential ties between these drug cartels and the terrorist organizations?

Mr. BRAUN. Well, you know, as I said, Congressman, the DNI used that example as proof of his key concern, the intel community’s key concern, that Iran, you know, may have made kind of a monumental decision and may have decided to posture themselves; prepare for an attack on the homeland as things continue to heat up.

He used that example to recruit what the Quds Forces operative believed was a member of the ultra-violent Los Zetas Mexican drug trafficking cartel as his key example to drive home that concern.

Yet you know, this is the—really, it is proof that this witches’ brew, quite frankly, is—it is bubbling over in many parts of the world.

You know, when most people think of, you know, “drugs terror nexus,” they immediately think of, you know, Latin America. But let me be perfectly clear, as Europe’s demand for cocaine continues to grow and as the Mexican and Columbian cartels, including the FARC have sent their operatives into West Africa and North Africa to establish the transshipment infrastructure needed to move tons of those drugs, these bad guys are now routinely coming in very close contact with the likes of Hezbollah, Hamas, al-Qaeda, who are buying for the same money, the same turf and the same dollars.

It is really a nightmare scenario. My point being is that if anyone thinks for a moment that Hezbollah and Quds Force, the masters at leveraging and exploiting existing illicit infrastructures globally, are not going to focus on our Southwest border, and use that as perhaps a spring board in attacking our country, then they just don’t understand how the real underworld works.

Mr. MCCAUL. In fact Kourani crossed the border, as Dr. Levitt had mentioned. My time is limited, but we sent a letter to the President calling for significant covert action in Iran, cyber, and also the designation of the Quds Force as a foreign terrorist organization.

I was surprised, given the bombing of our Marines in Beirut, Buenos Aires, the Jewish Community Center—that they are not on the Foreign Terrorist Organization list.

I introduced the bill this morning, along with the Chairman’s support to do just that. Would that be helpful in terms of giving us more authorities to go after the Quds Forces in the United States?

Mr. BRAUN. You know I think it would. But even more importantly, it makes them a target. Our Nation’s security resources and apparatus understands that they are now a designated foreign terrorist organization and it just naturally causes them to focus more heavily on that threat.

That designation means a great, great deal.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you.

Chairman KING. The gentleman’s time is expired.

Mr. Higgins is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Firstly, let me just say I was proud to join with my colleague, Jeff Duncan to introduce H.R. 3783, the Countering Iran and the Western Hemisphere Act, which I am pleased to say was marked up and passed in the Foreign Affairs Committee earlier this month.

The legislation would call for the State Department to investigate Hezbollah's presence in the Western Hemisphere and create a long-term comprehensive strategy for keeping our communities and our Nation safe.

The purpose of this legislation, or the inspiration, came from hearings in this very committee, where expert witnesses had informed our committee that Hezbollah has a presence in the 20-country region of Latin America, but also in 15 American cities, as well as four Canadian cities.

We were also told in subsequent testimony that we shouldn't be all that concerned about that presence because their activities were limited to fundraising.

Well, that is not comforting. I think where there is a presence, there is an intent and there is a severe threat.

We all know Hezbollah is a terror organization that commit to violent jihad. They act as a proxy for Venezuela, for Syria and for Iran. Their presence in Latin America could also be viewed as a pervasive presence toward the goal of having a greater presence in North America.

I also want to recognize the work of the New York City Police Department. Following, you know, the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, the New York City Police Department has established itself as probably the most effective counterterrorism organization of the world.

It is a difficult balance between keeping the homeland safe and protecting individual liberties, but I think they have done a very good job in that regard.

So I would just like to hear from our witnesses about not only the presence of Hezbollah in the Western Hemisphere but specifically the threat in North America by their presence.

Mr. SILBER. Thank you, Representative.

You know, I think the dynamic that we heard about in North Carolina with this cigarette case, where you had conducting criminal activity; that criminal activity was funding Hezbollah operations, or Hezbollah activities overseas by its transmission to Lebanon—you had a population of people who were fundraisers, but at some point in time, could be turned into facilitators, and ultimately operatives; and the fact that some of these individuals had military training that they had received from Hezbollah in Lebanon.

I mean, all those dynamics that you heard about in that case are all dynamics that map very well to the current situation in New York City. Without going into details about the investigations that we have going on, those map very much in parallel to what we are seeing in terms of the type of people, the type of backgrounds, and the type of activities that are going on.

Mr. SWECKER. Yes, I think what is noteworthy about that case, and I think it is an indication of how Hezbollah operates throughout the United States, is they are burrowed deep into our society

already. They have been around a lot longer than al-Qaeda, and a lot longer than al-Shabab, and some of the other shiny objects that we are concentrating on now.

I think we need to—they understand how to use our financial system. They got an SBA loan, a false loan. They bribed a loan officer. Credit cards—they understood the financial system, how to exploit the immigration system.

So they are well entrenched in society, and well positioned to do something, or facilitate someone else coming in and doing something and blending in. They can manufacture documents. It is all there, and it is all in place. They don't have to make it happen. It is already well in place.

The good news is there is 104 Joint Terrorism Task Forces across the country. You got 56 field intelligence groups, and you have got a new preventative mindset out there, instead of reacting to what is going on. I think our intelligence community and the FBI, and NYPD, and other agencies are out there shaking that tree. I think we are well positioned to know what they are doing.

Mr. BRAUN. You know, Mike Chertoff, when he was the Secretary of Homeland Security—in fact, it may have been before this committee—as he had one foot in the door and one foot out, about 4 years ago, testified about the threat posed by Middle Eastern terrorist organizations on the United States.

Then-Secretary Chertoff said that, you know, we need to maintain the focus on al-Qaeda—a shiny object, a very shiny object, and, you know, a real threat. But he said the real threat is Hezbollah. Hezbollah has what al-Qaeda could only dream of having.

They have established relationships with the most powerful international drug-trafficking and organized-crime syndicates ever faced by law enforcement. They obviously maintain close relations with other designated terrorist organizations around our globe.

Congressman, whoever told you that Hezbollah is now in 15 cities—I think they woefully underestimated it. Part of the problem that we got is we don't really know. That is what worries me a great deal.

Congressman Lungren, you brought out the importance of connecting the dots. That is important. But what we need to get to the business of is actually producing more dots to connect. I think that NYPD is doing just that within the rule of law. That is extremely important. Quite frankly, I think that Federal law enforcement could learn a great deal from the NYPD model.

Chairman KING. Gentlemen, the time has expired.

Mr. CRAVAACK is recognized now.

Mr. CRAVAACK. Thank you very much. I would like to thank the chair for having these, what I consider very important, illuminating discussions here.

Mr. Braun, sir, you said that one of the things that has been apparent is that Hezbollah is entrenched; it is organized probably much different than a lot of the other agencies or characters that we have seen in the past. Would you agree to that statement?

Mr. BRAUN. Absolutely; highly sophisticated organizational and operational structures.

Mr. CRAVAACK. It is interesting in your prepared testimony you said, "In the context of this hearing, it is important that we re-

member that the Quds Force is also responsible for Iran's strategic missile program. And many experts believe they will be holding the keys to the country's nuclear weapons program, if it makes it off the ground." Is that correct?

Mr. BRAUN. That is correct.

Mr. CRAVAACK. Now, if I understand it correctly, the Quds Force reports directly to Iran's supreme spiritual leader, the al-Khomeini; is that correct?

Mr. BRAUN. I am not an expert on Iran, but that is my understanding. Yes, sir.

Dr. Kahl, could you come on in?

Mr. KAHL. Yes, the Quds Force reports up through the IRGC, the Revolutionary Guard Corps, to the supreme leader. The head of the Quds Force, Suleimani, is a close confidant of the supreme leader.

Mr. CRAVAACK. Also, sir, in your testimony, you mentioned in regards to sanctions. Now, the difference in my opinion—it is much different from having sanctions towards a politically based country versus an ideology-based country. Would you agree to that?

Mr. KAHL. I guess it depends on what you mean. If it speaks to whether Iran is a rational-enough actor to make a strategic calculation in the face of these, you know, pressures on them.

I think the conclusion of our intelligence community, as well as the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as well as the former chief of Mossad, Meir Dagan, is that they are sufficiently rational, and sufficiently strategic to be able to make calculations that threaten the regime.

I think when the regime is at risk—I think that sanctions arising to the level that they could force the regime to back down.

Mr. CRAVAACK. Would Hezbollah be considered a rational actor?

Mr. KAHL. Actually, I think that you see Hezbollah and its activities, vis-à-vis Israel and others, trying to calibrate its activities.

The Iranians do this, too. You know. They use force in the form of subversion, militancy, terrorism. But they try to calibrate their attacks to a level below that which would generate a massive retaliation.

In fact, in 2006, Hezbollah probably miscalculated when it kidnapped those Israeli soldiers leading to the war there. I think it learned a lesson from that. I would just say one thing.

I think there has been a lot of talk about the possibility that if the Quds Force controlled the nuclear program and its ties with Hezbollah or drug cartels, that they would somehow pass a nuclear device, or a radiological device that would find its way into the homeland.

You know, you can never say "never," but that would be very, very, very unusual, because the regime in Tehran is not suicidal, and would know that doing that would generate massive retaliation. It is worth noting that Iran already has weapons of mass destruction. They have chemical weapons.

They have never passed those weapons to Hezbollah, for precisely the reason that they try to calibrate their activities below the level that they think would generate massive retaliations. So I think nuclear terrorism is very unlikely.

Mr. CRAVAACK. Well, that was one of my concerns, actually.

Mr. Silber, can you give me a definition of what a dirty bomb is? Are you capable of providing that?

Mr. SILBER. Yes.

I would say generally what we are looking at is an explosive device that entails the utilization of some type of radioactive material. It is not at the sufficient strength to be a full-blown nuclear weapon, but the radioactive material that is included in this explosive device might render certain areas unlivable for a period of time.

Mr. CRAVAACK. Possibly up to a year?

Mr. SILBER. Possibly up to a year; actually, possibly longer.

Mr. CRAVAACK. Mr. Braun, you said that we have identified that Hezbollah has pre-established routes into the United States. Would that be a correct statement?

Mr. BRAUN. That would be a correct statement.

Mr. CRAVAACK. In understanding the nuclear capability, the low-level radiation that would—nuclear material that actually would be needed for a dirty bomb could be pretty easily transported through those routes. Would I agree to that?

Mr. BRAUN. Well, you know, Congressman, there are hundreds of tons of narcotics that take up large spaces that are moved across that border every single year. So moving a dirty bomb or any other weapon of mass destruction would—I don't believe would be all that difficult.

If I could say one thing—

Mr. CRAVAACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. BRAUN. I was not trying to imply in any way that I thought the Quds Force would do that. With that said, never say "never," just as the doctor said.

What concerns me is, the same organization, the Quds Force, that now holds the keys to the strategic missile program, may well be holding the keys to Iran's nuclear weapons arsenal at some point in the future.

That same organization that was responsible for trying to hatch this crazy plot to assassinate the Saudi Arabian ambassador right here on U.S. soil. That is what we need to be concerned about. These guys obviously are not, at least always, acting with a sound mind and sound purpose.

Mr. CRAVAACK. Your point was well taken, sir. I understand that; that is what was my question—about rationality of the threat.

My time has expired. I yield back.

Chairman KING. Thank you. The gentleman yields back.

The gentlelady from New York, Ms. Hochul, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. HOCHUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the broad view of what the threat is in North America. I am going to be a little more parochial.

I represent the border of Canada in Buffalo. We have four border crossings. We have had threats. We have had problems in our area.

I want to know whether there is an overall impression of the collaboration that is going on between the United States and Canada with respect to, for example, the presence Hezbollah has in Toronto.

Do we have a good grasp of what is going on in Toronto? As much as I love New York City, Mr. Chairman, it takes me 8 hours to drive from Buffalo to New York City from my district. It takes me about an hour to get to Toronto. So even though it is a foreign country, it is closer. That threat is right there. It could affect the people in my region as well.

So I just want to know, the collaboration we have with the Canadian government, is it adequate? Do we have adequate resources to protect the Northern border? What is our knowledge of what is going on in Toronto?

Mr. SWECKER. CSIS, I think, in Canada, has declared Hezbollah their number one threat, if I am not mistaken. I think they are very much on top of what Hezbollah is doing. We relied heavily on their version of FISA material for our prosecution. They had some excellent evidence up there. They have been all over this very same group.

So I think they are—I think they are very much on top of Hezbollah and the threat with Hezbollah. There is regular contact with them and our domestic intelligence services, and of course, the agency.

So I don't think there is any doubt that Canada is very much attuned to the threat posed by Hezbollah and the border crossings.

But as Mike pointed out, the leaky border, the leakiest border is the Southwest Border. There is no doubt about that. That is where most of the drugs are coming across. That is where the well-established routes are. There are well-established tradecraft, concealments and that sort of thing. We could go through a whole hearing about how well they can hide material coming across the Southwest Border.

Ms. HOCHUL. Again, I am very attuned to the attention we give to the Southwest Border and it is deserved, but then I am also concerned that we neglect, you know, it is hard to see—you know we had the Lackawanna Six Case in my community.

Those people came over through Canada, they walked in and got a legitimate driver's license, and they did what they did. So that is why I am concerned as well. I mean these were U.S. citizens who collaborated with people from Canada as well. So there is a lot involved even in our pocket of the world and I—again, the Southwest Border needs protection.

I want to make sure that we have the adequate resources on the Northern Border because—and we have a great relationship with Canada, they do what they can—but I want to make sure that that is considered a high priority of our Government as well.

Mr. LEVITT. If I can add, the Canadians are great. We have done also wonderful things, and their cooperation is wonderful.

But when I was last before this committee, I mentioned I am finishing a book on Hezbollah's global presence right now. I have had the opportunity not only to interview U.S. law enforcement, but many foreign law enforcement intelligence agencies as well, especially in Canada.

On both sides of the border, people have told me their concern about the ability, even today, for Hezbollah operatives to be able to be able to cross that border. Again, I point you to the example of Fawzi Ayub. It is in my testimony. He was involved in a

Hezbollah hijacking before he came to Canada. He was involved in terrorist activity after Canada. At one point he was living in Dearborn, going across the border.

I spoke to U.S. officials in different communities along our Northern Border, several of whom expressed to me their concern that perhaps in the event that Hezbollah decides to carry out an attack here, the individual might not be someone in the United States, but someone just across the border who could come across with documents either forged or illegally obtained, but otherwise accurate, and do some things.

But the good news is that people on both sides of the border are very attuned to this. The cooperation really is very, very good and so I think that that has done a lot to minimize the threat.

Ms. HOCHUL. The Pentagon has proposed cuts to the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station, which is in my district right on the border of Canada. Would you agree with this threat that exists in Canada as well as in our homeland that it probably makes sense to keep a military presence strong on that border?

Mr. LEVITT. Honestly, I think it is apples and oranges. I don't know that the military base there has anything to do with border security. I don't know, maybe it does.

Mr. HIGGINS. It does.

Mr. LEVITT. What I would want to make sure is that the people who are involved in border security—border patrol, FBI, DHS—they have the strong presence there. But that base may have nothing to do with this issue. I don't know.

Ms. HOCHUL. Thank you. Another question?

I yield back the balance—

Mr. BRAUN. Congresswoman, if I could just quickly say something, I—before I was transferred back to DEA headquarters for the third and last time, I served as the special agent in charge of the Detroit field division for DEA. Now I can tell you that in those days, the DEA, the FBI, ICE, all agencies shared great relations with our Canadian counterparts and I believe that that continues to this day.

What concerns me about the Northern Border is our obsession with defending the one-yard line, which has been, you know—which has been the Southwest Border. We need a defense in depth. We need to focus on shoring up the Northern Border and then going even further South into Latin America, as far as that border's concerned.

If you look at just the simple geographical enormity of the Northern Border—twice the size of the Southern Border. If you look at the border patrol resources on the Northern Border versus the Southern Border—I mean there are areas where folks could cross by the thousands and no one would ever know it. That is what concerns me about the Northern Border.

Ms. HOCHUL. I agree 100 percent. Thank you very much.

Chairman KING. The gentlelady yields back.

The gentleman from South Carolina, Mr. Duncan is recognized.

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for your willingness to hold this hearing.

The panel, I think, has done a fabulous job, along with this Congress, going back for the last year, of really clearly showing that

there is a clear involvement of the Iranians; specifically Quds Force and their proxy Hezbollah, in this hemisphere.

You know, others in the world are starting to take notice, there is an article—and I reference the Center for Army Lessons Learned—the gentleman, Norman A. Bailey, I believe has testified before Congress. He says this, “The curious thing is that this interest in the hemisphere represents”—and this article is entitled, “What are the Persians Doing Over Here?” Okay?

Here is the thing that is—that, “This interest in this hemisphere represents the first time in the 5,000 year history of Persia as a sovereign entity that such interest has been demonstrated. There is no affinity whatsoever between the monarchic or Islamic Iran and the countries on this side of the Atlantic—historical, cultural, political, economic or otherwise.

“Nevertheless, as we shall see, the last few years have seen a totally unprecedented level of interest by Iran in the region.”

I think that clearly sums up the question that we are talking about today.

I want to thank Mr. Higgins for referencing a bill, H.R. 3783, that I sponsored; bipartisan bill that passed out of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. It is headed to the floor for a vote. Members of this committee hopefully will have an opportunity to bring some of the lessons learned from this panel and this hearing to the debate on the floor to pass this bill out and focus on the Iranian threat and what the United States can do to counter that.

When I said others are beginning to notice this threat, I will reference Univision’s documentary recently which basically pointed out a lot of the things that the Iranians are involved in; in fact, the cyber-terrorism threat, using the Venezuela consulate in Miami and the resulting removal of one lady from that consulate back to Venezuela.

There was an article today in the Jerusalem Post that talks about why Congress suddenly cares about Iran, the Iran threat and Latin America. That was just today in the Jerusalem Post. So the threat is real.

So I guess the question I have—we have identified it. We are all on the same page of this as a real threat.

So I ask the witnesses and I will start with Mr. Braun. What can we do now? What can the United States Government and this Congress do going forward?

Mr. BRAUN. Great question. I have got three things.

What we need is interlocking counter-narcotics and counterterrorism strategies that—you know as, the bad guys have come together, agencies and institutions in this town that are focused on counter-narcotics or counterterrorism are drifting further apart.

We need interlocking strategies and we need singular funding streams because, as you know, Congressman, that is what, you know, drives agencies and their strategies in this town. That is extremely important.

The second thing that I would say is we need to develop or focus more on a defense-in-depth strategy. We have been singularly focused almost on defending the one-yard line, the Southwest Border. There is—you know, I am not saying that we didn’t need to beef some things up there after 9/11. We most certainly did.

But any strategy that is designed to defend the one-yard line, as you well know—a former athlete—you know, it is a strategy that is doomed to failure.

Right after 9/11, about 60 percent of all of DOD's D&M or detection-and-monitoring assets in Latin America went away. They were sent to other parts of the world. Rightfully so, but most of those resources occasionally on a daily or a weekly basis, they may filter back in but then suddenly they are gone again.

We have lost too much capacity in our neighborhood to keep things in check and we need to do a better job at doing those things.

Then I would finally say that, you know, we need to refocus on confronting or refocus on the traditional organized-criminal types of activity; drugs, money laundering, arms trafficking, human trafficking.

We need our Federal agents—especially our Federal agents—and Federal law enforcement personnel going head on into these threats because, naturally, they will, if they are engaged in that kind of activity—naturally, they will become either directly or indirectly in contact with very powerful terrorist organization operatives and terrorists that are in our neighborhood.

Let me remind you that that is exactly what happened. That is how that plot was foiled against the assassination plot against the Saudi Arabian ambassador. There was DEA information and his DEA handlers that were focused on drugs and money that brought him into contact with a Quds Force operative that was communicating directly back with Quds Force central.

We need to refocus on the traditional threats.

Mr. DUNCAN. Right. You mentioned the word neighborhood—Chairman KING. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. DUNCAN. Yes, thank you.

Chairman KING. The gentlelady from California, Ms. Hahn.

Ms. HAHN. Thank you, Chairman King.

This has been a great hearing. I had to step away to actually meet with some port officials who are here this week with the—they are having a conference with ports all across this country. My questions are—I am just going to throw the three questions out and then maybe you can all decide who would like to answer.

No. 1 is—what keeps me up at night is our ports and what I believe is a lack of real attention from Homeland Security on securing our ports—wondering if any of you could comment on that.

When Mr. Cravaack talked about dirty bombs—you know, we, by the way, are scanning less than 3 percent of our containers that come into this country through our various ports. How easy would it be for this terrorist organization to infiltrate our homeland through our ports? I think they are the most vulnerable entryway into this country, but I would like to hear what you have to say about it.

Also, just talking about connecting the dots—and as you described that was how one of these plots was foiled—was really connecting the dots. I know we are making tough choices back here in terms of spending cuts and funding opportunities going forward. You know, we had a committee hearing, I guess it was last month,

on the Fusion centers and how important those are throughout our various cities in connecting the dots.

For my perspective, Los Angeles and LAPD—how much are our organizations talking to our local law enforcement on the ground?

So kind of speak to the funding cuts that we have already proposed in terms of how does that affect these programs going forward? If somebody could, speak about whether or not port security is kind of a hole in all this operations.

You know, the other thing I was thinking about when you were talking about these guys getting SBA loans, which is amazing to me because one of the things I hear from my small business in my community is how difficult it is to access SBA loans; the amount of paperwork they have to go through and the collateral that they have to put up.

That is one of the biggest concerns for my small businesses is their inability to access small business loans. So are we sharing these kinds of concerns with our Small Business Administration on the ground in the different cities where these loans are being processed? Is this information that we are sharing with the proper administration in the Federal Government?

Mr. SWECKER. Can I take a quick shot at that one; because I think it is a follow up to Congressman Duncan's question about what else can be done.

You know, one of the issues with 9/11 was the compartmentalization of information and that failure to connect up the dots, and everybody holding their information close.

So what I think Congress can do is break down those walls; continue to break down those walls and facilitate the use of technology. The banks and the insurance companies and the private sector are using information every day to gather information for marketing purposes. There is no reason why we can't break down those walls of data within the Government and make matches and link up information and connect up those dots and also making sure that law enforcement and the intelligence community has the tools.

Technology is moving ahead fast and the ability to stay up with interception capabilities and that sort of thing needs to keep up with the technology that is out there. I think the intelligence community struggles with that.

So making sure that they have the right tools and breaking down the walls of information are two very important things to keep in mind.

Mr. LEVITT. I will just add, you know, for the research of my book, I spent a decent amount of time out in California not only with LAPD and LA Sheriff's Department, but FBI Long Beach and also in terms of the ports, at Long Beach Port.

I am actually very impressed with the work they are doing. I think there is an issue in terms of the ports and there was that one-yard line. There are some excellent efforts being done by DHS in support of the bureau—a good friend of mine and Mr. Swecker's—on trying to deal with the container issues not only when they get into our country; but in terms of that, there is going to have to be some risk analysis.

In terms of connecting the dots, I have to say, I have been tremendously impressed, specifically in Southern California and elsewhere as well—but you asked about Southern California; about the work of the Fusion Center there which is located out at LA Sheriff's Department.

But almost every time I am there I see people from FBI. You know, there is not only people who are detailed there, but they are working together all the time. I think it is a world of difference from when I was working at the FBI pre- and just through 9/11.

Mr. BRAUN. Just quickly, ports—I think they pose a significant risk. As you said, less than 3 percent of all the containers are being scanned.

So how do you counter that? I would go back to a defense-in-depth strategy. Those things are all emanating from other parts of the world. We need a defense-in-depth strategy. We need more resources abroad to identify these threats, develop the intelligence, and then make sure that it is shared where it should be.

With respect to Fusion centers, they are great. The only concern that I have got is that so many of these things are regional in scope. So those that are utilizing them have got a regional snapshot of what is happening in the region.

What we have got to get better at is connecting the Fusion centers so that those who are using them and need them the most see the most accurate photograph, or picture, or snapshot that they possibly can.

Chairman KING. The gentlelady's time expired, and I thank her for support she gives to the work of committee.

I recognize the gentleman from Missouri, Mr. Long, for 5 minutes.

Mr. LONG. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to all the witnesses for being here today.

Dr. Kahl, I would like to ask you—given the geographical obstacles and logistical concerns, is Israel even capable of striking Iran's nuclear facilities by themselves?

Mr. KAHL. They are capable. It depends on what the target set is, but they would likely have to go after the Natanz enrichment facility, the Fordo enrichment facility, the Iraq heavy-water plant, the Isfahan uranium conversion facility, and likely a number of other places.

They would need dozens and dozens of aircraft to be able to fly 1,000 miles to those targets. They have the military capability to do it. That said, they don't have the military capability, I don't assess, to set the program back very far. That is, they can get to their target; they can drop bombs on their target. But senior U.S. defense officials have consistently said that they think Israel, at most, could set the program back 1 to 3 years. The lower end of that estimate seems more likely to me.

Mr. LONG. Okay, 1 to 3 years—that brings up my next question.

How many years has it taken Iran to get to this point in its development of nukes?

Mr. KAHL. The nuclear program started under the Shah, so it has been multiple decades since the 1970s.

Mr. LONG. So it has taken 40 years to get to this point.

Mr. KAHL. Yes. Our kind of proliferation efforts, both in the previous administration and this administration, has slowed them down appreciably. I mean, they continue to make progress, progress that is troubling, but they continue to be slowed down as well.

Mr. LONG. An attack carried out by Israel would only set the program back 1 to 3 years, in your estimation, is that accurate?

Mr. KAHL. Correct. I think the lower end of that estimate is more likely.

Mr. LONG. Okay. What does it take to—what do they need to do to develop a nuclear weapon?

Mr. KAHL. Well, there are several major components.

Mr. LONG. Right, what are they?

Mr. KAHL. Yes. The first is weapons-grade uranium.

Mr. LONG. Right.

Mr. KAHL. That requires them to enrich to above 90 percent. So far they have enriched a stockpile sufficient for about four bombs' worth of weapons-grade uranium, but they have only enriched it to 3.5 percent. Then they have also a smaller stockpile of 20 percent in—

Mr. LONG. At 3.5 percent, and they have to have it at what level?

Mr. KAHL. So they have enriched several tons' worth of low enriched uranium at the 3.5 percent level, which is the reactor fuel level. They have also enriched a certain amount of—20 percent uranium ostensibly for the Tehran research reactor.

To go up to weapons grade, they would have to enrich that existing stockpile up above 90 percent which, according to independent estimates, would take them somewhere in the neighborhood of 4 to 6 months. But it is important to note that if they tried to do it, they would have to do it either Natanz or Fordo, which are both under inspection, which means they'd get caught.

So the first component is weapons-grade uranium. The second component is that they would have to have a weapon's design and have done all of the various experimentation and manufacturing to actually construct even a crude device. Then they would have to figure out a way to deliver that weapon, which is why you have an estimate of about a year total from a decision to be able to generate a testable device, and several years to be able to put one on a missile.

Mr. LONG. So you have to have the delivery system.

Mr. KAHL. You have the weapons-grade uranium, you have to have the weapon's design and you have to actually assemble it and you have to have the delivery system.

Mr. LONG. There has to be test of the delivery system, right, or not?

Mr. KAHL. Well, it depends. It depends, you know, if they are going to do an implosion device that is sophisticated enough to be put on the tip of a missile, they are probably going to have to test that. If they do a crude gun-type device like the weapons that we deployed in World War II, at the end of World War II, they might not have to test that.

Mr. LONG. In your testimony you say, and I quote, I believe, "Meanwhile, in the aftermath of a strike, Iran is likely to rush to

rebuild its nuclear program in a way that is harder to detect and more costly to stop.”

What do you mean by “harder to detect?”

If they are capable of that, why are they not doing that at this point?

Mr. KAHL. Well, the major reason is that Iran remains a party to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. While they are not always very cooperative with the IAEA, the IAEA does do regular inspections to their declared facilities, which means currently it is actually very difficult for Iran to break out and develop a nuclear weapon without getting caught.

The concern some have expressed is that in the aftermath of an Israeli strike, for example, which is the scenario you mentioned, Iran would likely use that strike to shatter the international consensus currently isolating it, and kick out the IAEA inspectors, which means that the international community would have a lot more difficulty seeing what Iran was doing and Iran would have an easier time reconstituting its program in secret.

Mr. LONG. Are they getting full access now?

Mr. KAHL. They have full access to the declared facilities. We don’t know what we don’t know, but they get full access to the declared facilities. They are trying to get access, with limited success, to some of the facilities that might be related to weapon’s related research. The Parchin facility is one example of that.

Mr. LONG. My time has expired. If I had any time to yield back, I would.

Chairman KING. I thank the gentleman for yielding back the time he doesn’t have, but we appreciate the thoughts.

The gentleman from Louisiana, Mr. Richmond, is recognized.

Mr. RICHMOND. First of all, let me thank you all for coming in and sharing your knowledge with this; and your experience and your recommendations for how we move forward.

I guess part of my question—and maybe Mr. Braun or Mr. Swecker, who both had recommendations—do you know if the recommendations you gave us—if they are currently being carried out or if the DEA and CIA and FBI and ATF, for example, is refocusing on traditional threats and paying more attention to the drug trafficking?

Mr. SWECKER. Well, I think one thing you have to recognize—and what we talked about this morning has punctuated that—is the convergence of criminal activity and terrorist activity. Terrorists need money and they raise money mostly through action these days. So we we have talked about anti-money-laundering statutes and regulations. We have talked about technology. We talked about breaking down the silos of information. I think all of those are underway.

They can always get better. Whenever you have agencies you have walls, and it is harder to share information. So anything that facilitates that sharing of information is good. The Fusion centers are good. The Joint Terrorism Task Forces are good; staying on top of current—more current techniques.

I worked in the days when we had the FISA Wall up and you could not share information between the criminal and intelligence.

So I think it is infinitely better than it was on 9/11. But it is not perfect. But I think what you have done with passing these enabling legislations—Patriot Act—I know it is a bad word in some circles—has been tremendously valuable in updating these techniques.

Mr. RICHMOND. I guess that is exactly what I was looking for. I think the Ranking Member's point with that was that it would be very helpful to have current members of the administration here to say if they are heeding those recommendations or how far they are on not compartmentalizing or focusing on the traditional threats.

Dr. Levitt, you mentioned that Hezbollah sometimes will resort to extortion to get things done. There are some who advocate for profiling in our TSA, for example, and in a reverse manner of maybe not searching thoroughly elderly women or doing pat-downs on children. Do we expose them to a risk of being used as a mule; of families being extorted to subject them to—since they have less security things to go through, do we do the reverse and expose them to extortion or something?

Mr. LEVITT. I don't know of any evidence where something like that has happened. I do worry about—"racial profiling" has become a very charged term. There is much more to profiling than race, and there has to be. It has to be intel-driven.

We know in the Charlotte case, for example, at one point, as they were speeding across interstates from Carolina to Michigan—couldn't figure out how they were constantly getting tickets, but time was money and they were being told to speed and they were getting speeding tickets.

They assumed that it was because of racial profiling. It wasn't. So they hired white, blonde women to drive the trucks and told them time is money, speed up to Michigan. And couldn't understand why the U.S. Government was not profiling white, blonde women. It wasn't the case. But there the potential that they will use people that are not part of the traditional, not racial, but intel profile for what a person—

Mr. RICHMOND. Correct.

Mr. LEVITT. The distinction really is relevant to people who are from their community; mostly, as I said, because they have family back home and that puts them in a vulnerable position.

Mr. RICHMOND. Then anyone who can answer this question—the employee at the Small Business Administration who was bribed—do we have any of the demographics on that person? Was that person a Muslim extremist? What was that person—the nationality or demographics of that person?

Mr. SWECKER. The person was Lebanese. He didn't bribe the SBA official, just created fictitious information in the application so it was basically loan fraud. There was bribery of another bank official to open a bank account and allow them to basically create false identities and create a bust-out scheme with the bank with a checking account.

Mr. RICHMOND. What were the—who was that person? What was he?

Mr. SWECKER. Lebanese.

Mr. RICHMOND. The bank officer?

Mr. SWECKER. Oh, I am sorry. I don't know the demographic of the bank officer.

Mr. RICHMOND. Thank you.

I yield back.

Chairman KING. The gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Meehan.

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you to this very distinguished panel for your presence here today and frankly for each of you for the continuing work you do in dealing with the issue of the concern that we all share about the expansion of the influence of Iranian-inspired revolutionary forces throughout.

Some of you have already participated in a series of hearings that we have held on our subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence. The particular interest to that was the expansion into South and Central America and the involvement.

I apologize to the extent that you may be going over some areas that have been covered previously. Unfortunately, at another committee—I had to participate in.

But I want to expand a little bit on some of the ground that we had covered before with the—do we conclude that there is a, you know, a very specific effort by the Quds Forces to ingratiate themselves into what looks like diplomatic outreach through South and Central America, but in fact can be utilized as a staging platform for other kinds of activities; some of them, you know, supportive of their efforts to utilize drug gangs or other things to raise money to bring back to Hezbollah and some of the other proxies; some of them to be a staging ground for activities within, you know, the United States.

We had testimony about Iranian-trained Hezbollah who were working with the drug gangs along the Mexican borders and they were teaching tunneling technology that has been developed on, you know, utilization against Israel to smuggle in weapons and other kinds of things.

What is the extent to which we are comfortable that we have identified the scope of Quds Force activities in South and Central America? What, in your estimation, is the principal thing we can do to combat against that influence? I will ask the panel to—anybody that thinks they are most positioned to answer it—to jump in. Then anybody has some observations?

Mr. LEVITT. This is something that I spoke to at length in a previous appearance before the subcommittee, and I was honored to do that.

One of the things we talked about then, in light of testimony from the SOUTHCOM commander and others—about the tremendous and recent expansion of the Iranian diplomatic presence in ways that can't be explained by normal diplomatic activity. Given what we do know about Iran's traditional use of diplomatic cover for Quds Force and other terrorist activity is to find ways to pressure our allies in the Western Hemisphere to constrict that presence.

There are lots of ways to do that. You can constrict people to from traveling around the country, much as we do in New York.

Mr. MEEHAN. We know there is involvement in places like Venezuela. But are we finding the same level of involvement in coun-

tries that are traditionally more cooperative with the United States?

Mr. LEVITT. I don't remember the list off-hand. I have them in the previous testimony that I referred this committee to from just a few weeks ago, where I list them out.

Again this commander at SOUTHCOM has put out the numbers and the names of the countries as well. So there is reason for concern there.

My point is there are things that can be done diplomatically to constrict their ability to leverage this diplomatic tool that only states have to their advantage.

Now it is not exactly fair to say only states. There is at least one example, we know, in Venezuela, where Hezbollah had two individuals that have since been designated as Hezbollah by the Treasury Department, who were active Venezuelan diplomats and were doing things in that capacity on behalf of Hezbollah.

So groups also do have the capability sometimes to penetrate into governments that may not be as cooperative as we would like on counterterrorism, and maybe even a little supportive of terrorism to provide that kind of cover.

Mr. MEEHAN. Do you see that as an effort that is separate and apart from their interest in trying to obtain—Iran's interest in trying to obtain a nuclear capacity? Would our taking a more proactive step and encouraging our allies and others to crack down on that, have some kind of an ancillary impact on Iran's ability to obtain nuclear weapons?

Mr. LEVITT. It is largely parallel, but it is not irrelevant.

I mean, for example, I was at Treasury when we started coming up with the sanctions program on Iran. I am very proud of the way it has been working. But one of the areas where Iran has been seeking to evade sanctions is by leveraging financial institutions in South America, several of which we have hit publicly.

So there are areas where these two different issues intersect.

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you Dr. Levitt.

If I had any extra time I would yield to my good friend, Mr. Long. But I do not.

Chairman KING. The gentleman yields back.

My friend from Michigan, Mr. Clarke, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Thank you Mr. Chair.

It is apparent from this testimony today that both Iran and Hezbollah pose a great threat—a threat to this country and also a threat to our ally, Israel. I believe that we need all reasonable options available in order to protect Americans and protect our ally, Israel, from an attack.

My concern, though, is that as we strive to protect our people and our interests; that we don't further engage in profiling and stereotyping against law-abiding American Muslims.

Specifically, there has been a belief that many American Muslims are not fully cooperating with law enforcement.

Perhaps, Mr. Silber, you may have had some experience with New York City Muslims and their role with the New York City Police. If you would have any thoughts that you could share with us on the relationship between the New York City Muslims and New

York City Police, as well as any of the other members here that could testify, regarding the role of American Muslims in working with local or Federal law enforcement?

Mr. SILBER. Yes, I mean one of the unique things about New York City is the vast scope of its diversity in terms of the diaspora populations that we have in New York City from around the world.

We do have a large and vibrant, very multicultural Muslim community, or really communities, in New York City and there have been a variety of different conduits through which the police department works with these different communities. Some elements run through community affairs that specialize in dealing with community leaders. Other elements focus on the police commissioner and other elected officials reaching out, traveling and meeting with members of the community.

Then, frankly, NYPD, which is as diverse as the city that it protects, has a number of officers for all different types of diverse backgrounds, including Muslim, who, frankly, are working on the counterterrorism threat and, frankly, work for me.

So I would say that it has been multifaceted in New York City. As I stated earlier, working with the community; having good relationships really is our best set of eyes and ears to detect something early as it may be metastasizing.

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you Mr. Silber.

With that, Mr. Chair, I yield back my time.

Chairman KING. The gentleman yields back.

Now, last but certainly not least, the interloper, the gentleman from Texas, former Member of the committee, Mr. Green.

Mr. GREEN. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

I greatly appreciate your allowing me to be a part of this august body.

I do want to thank all of the witnesses for your appearing today and for the intelligence that you have afforded us. I am gratefully benefiting from what you have shared.

I do want to focus momentarily with Dr. Levitt. Dr. Levitt, you talked about the traditional profile, which would lead me to conclude that there must be a nontraditional profile. And you did mention at least one example.

Before I go to my question, would you just go back through the example of utilizing certain persons to drive cars please? I want to make sure I clearly understood the example that you were sharing?

Mr. LEVITT. Sure, with pleasure.

Mr. Swecker can jump in because this is the Charlotte case, which he ran; and I served as an expert witness in the actual prosecution. So correct me if I get anything wrong here.

The individuals running the cigarette smuggling scam were purchasing bulk cigarettes in the Carolinas and driving them across State lines to Michigan and not paying the tax. This made it a Federal crime. They were speeding as they were driving up to Michigan, and were getting speeding tickets, and assumed that the reason they were getting these tickets is not that they were speeding, but assumed that it was because they were being profiled as Muslim-Americans.

So they decided to have Caucasian blonde women drive the cars and the vans. They, too, were told to speed. They, too, got tickets.

They couldn't understand how it was that now American law enforcement was profiling Caucasian blond women. The criminal element of speeding didn't occur to them; that they assumed that it must have been some type of profiling.

I don't think there is a nontraditional profile of Hezbollah. It is just that law enforcement is aware. In my testimony, I cite FBI—which has stated this publicly—that we do know that Hezbollah is interested, and has been for years in seeking out people who may not fit what they believe—Hezbollah believes—we would see—American law enforcement—as a traditional profile; meaning someone from Lebanon, someone from certain types of places in Lebanon, Baalbek in the East, or some of the towns and villages that Mr. Silber cited, Bint Jbeil and others in the South. Of course, not everybody from these places is Hezbollah. But there might be certain types of things that they assume—this is their assumption—that we would be looking at. They are looking for other people.

So FBI has noted that there are Hezbollah operatives that are not Lebanese; that are Iraqi; that are Iranian or otherwise. That is something we should be aware of.

Mr. GREEN. Is it possible that they would metamorphose into selecting persons who are of American ancestry?

Mr. LEVITT. We haven't seen that as much as we have seen with Sunni's recruiting—people converted to Sunni Islam. There is a small number of that type of thing.

My bigger concern as I get to my testimony is their ability to leverage criminal networks—are the types that Mr. Braun has discussed. These are non-Muslim and they are not Hezbollah. They are not Quds Force. But by virtue of working together, they are able to do things on behalf of the group, knowingly or otherwise.

We know that Hezbollah leverages criminal associations here, in Europe, for operational purposes, in part, to get around the extra strictures that have been put in place post-9/11.

Mr. GREEN. When we talk about these networks, are they likely to be persons who are from the country that we are in?

Mr. LEVITT. Not the criminal networks, not necessarily. You know, in the Charlotte case, almost all the individuals were from Lebanon, with the exception of some of the people they married, et cetera; some real, and many more sham marriages; a huge fraud component.

Mr. GREEN. Dr. Levitt, are you getting close to saying that we shouldn't worry about persons who are born in this country becoming a part of any of these criminal activities?

Mr. LEVITT. No, not at all. Anybody from anyplace is liable to get involved in criminal activity. That is what makes these relationships so powerful for a group like Hezbollah.

Mr. GREEN. Is there reason for us to make sure that our vision is broad, and that we don't exclude persons simply because they happen to be from a given place?

Mr. LEVITT. Exactly.

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Swecker, would you say a word on this, please?

Mr. SWECKER. No, I think we have to have 360-degree vision on this, and not get locked into a certain paradigm. I think it is very logical, and this group acted logically in having Angela Tsoumas, for one person—a white American female driving the cigarette

loads up to Detroit, once they realized that they were getting stopped all the time. They were speeding, but they thought it was because they were being profiled.

They did get noticed when they were buying the cigarettes. So they began to send other people who weren't nearly as noticeable to go buy the cigarettes.

So short answer to your question is, yes, we have to have full vision. We can't get locked into one paradigm. But I don't think we are. I think that there is very much a realization that we can't just—a terrorist doesn't wear a dark mustache and a dark hat, and look a certain way.

Mr. GREEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman KING. Mr. Green, time is almost expired.

I want to thank all the witnesses for your testimony, Members for their questions.

I think it is interesting to note that there is not one word of testimony, nor—certainly no question from either side which disputed the fact that there are hundreds of Hezbollah operatives in this country. They are capable of being turned operational. That it is really a question of when and where, and when that decision is made.

So I want to make the record clear here that everything we heard prior to the hearing from law enforcement, and from experts, what we have brought out today at the hearing, and even what was brought out in questions from both sides—that I believe the thesis has been proved; that Hezbollah is a threat to this country, a growing threat, and it has gone from terrorist financing to being capable of fully operational terrorist activities against the country.

So I want to thank the witnesses. I also want to just mention to the witnesses that Members of the committee made some additional questions. We would ask you to respond to them in writing if they are brought forward. The record will be held open for 10 days. Without objection, the committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:59 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]

THE AMERICAN MUSLIM RESPONSE TO HEARINGS ON RADICALIZATION WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITY

Wednesday, June 20, 2012

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:18 a.m., in Room 311, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Peter T. King [Chairman of the committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives King, Lungren, McCaul, Bilirakis, Cravaack, Meehan, Quayle, Duncan, Marino, Thompson, Sanchez, Jackson Lee, Cuellar, Clarke of New York, Richardson, Richmond, Clarke of Michigan, and Hahn.

Also present: Representative Green.

Chairman KING. Good morning, the Committee on Homeland Security will come to order. The committee is meeting today to hear testimony on the Muslim community's response to this committee's hearings on radicalization in the United States.

The Chair wishes to remind our guests today that demonstrations from the audience, including the use of signs and placards, as well as verbal outbursts, are a violation of the rules of the House. The Chair wishes to thank our guests for their cooperation in maintaining order and proper decorum.

At this time, I recognize myself for an opening statement.

Fifteen months ago, this committee—the Homeland Security Committee, which was formed in the wake of the tragic attacks of September 11—held the first in a series of hearings into radicalization of the Muslim-American community.

The necessity for these hearings was obvious, and there should have been bipartisan support. Attorney General Holder, for instance, had stated in a major media interview that a crisis of radicalization to violence had arisen within the Muslim-American community.

The Attorney General said what kept him awake at night were 126 cases of homegrown terrorism since 2009, 90 percent of which involved American citizens or residents in contact with or inspired by al-Qaeda, who plotted to kill other Americans in mass-casualty terror attacks. That kept me awake at night, too.

Yet, from the moment I announced the hearings, I was attacked by politically correct special interests and their unthinking allies in the media led by the *New York Times*. More than 1,000 protestors came out in the rain to rally against me in Times Square the Sun-

day before the first hearing. Even Kim Kardashian found time in her busy schedule to note her objection to the hearing.

Of course, none of the nightmare scenarios anticipated by the media ever occurred. No religious war broke out. Not one bigoted word was uttered during the four investigative hearings we held, including the first-ever joint hearing with the Senate Homeland Security Committee.

What we did do was force into the open the long-overdue National debate on Muslim-American radicalization. Here is what our committee's investigations and hearings have put on the public record so far. We heard expert testimony by four former top law enforcement officials; four activists in the Muslim-American community; three relatives of terrorists or terror victims; and three senior military officials. Many were new voices who were given a platform by the hearings.

The investigation and witnesses reveal that one of the threats posed by radicalized Muslim Americans is a clear and present danger to homeland security. Videos, internet, and face-to-face radicalization and recruiting by al-Qaeda and its affiliates inside our homeland emerged over the past 3 years, due in large part to our success in attacking al-Qaeda overseas. Radicalization in prisons has often been unchecked and aided by what the committee learned were over 70 tapes in U.S. Federal Bureau of Prisons inmate libraries by American citizen and AQAP leader Anwar al-Awlaki who was later killed in Yemen.

The most successful radicalization and recruitment effort by an al-Qaeda affiliate was Somalia's al-Shabaab group, which signed up upwards of 50 American citizens for violent jihad. Homegrown terrorists' target of choice has increasingly been U.S. military communities inside the homeland. The number of military insiders suspected of being radicalized to violent Islamist extremism is a still-classified but truly dangerous amount of on-going cases.

Our investigation compelled elected officials, the Government and the media to confront an issue that is politically volatile and politically correct. Some elements, of course, refused to accept reality or engage in honest debate. For instance, it was the media who almost 11 years ago had demanded to know why 9/11 was "allowed" to happen and demanded that Congress take steps to ensure that we never again underestimated an enemy in our midst.

This committee was formed for that purpose. When I became Chairman again last year, I saw a clear Constitutional duty to ask tough questions about counterterrorism, and our investigative hearings showed that the mainstream media doesn't always get it right, nor is it consistent.

For example the *New York Times*, besides attacking me, is now focusing its venom on the New York City Police Department for its focus on the Muslim-American community despite the fact that New York is the No. 1 Islamist terrorist target in the country and the NYPD has prevented numerous attacks—up to 14 attacks.

In 1993, following the first World Trade Center attack, the *Times* blamed law enforcement for not doing enough against what they label as, "mysterious Muslims" operating out of New Jersey led by the "Blind Sheikh" Omar Abdul Rahman. At that time, the *Times* said, "Closer monitoring of the sheik may not necessarily have pre-

vented the bombing, but it might have. If incidents like the Trade Center bombing can't be completely prevented, they can and should be made extremely rare."

Well, that is exactly what this committee has been doing—confronting in open hearings the uncomfortable truth about the current terror threat. I lost more than 150 neighbors, friends, and constituents on September 11 and I never want it on my conscience that I didn't do all that I could to prevent another attack or that I caved in to political correctness.

The overwhelming majority of Muslim Americans are outstanding Americans. Yet the reality is that the Islamist terror threat comes from that community. As a recent Pew poll demonstrated, 16 percent of Muslim Americans have a favorable or only a somewhat unfavorable view of al-Qaeda. That adds up to almost 440,000 people who are living in this country. Also, part of the Pew poll show that 5 percent of Muslim Americans actually have a favorable view of al-Qaeda and that would come to more than 150,000 Americans who are living in this country.

That is why we have held this series of hearings and why we will not back down. That is also why I look forward to the testimony of the Muslim-American witnesses who are here today to testify on the impact which those hearings have had within their community. I applaud them for their courage and I look forward to hearing their insights.

With that, I yield to the Ranking Member, the gentleman from Mississippi, Mr. Thompson.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Today's hearing is the fifth hearing in this committee's series on radicalization in the American-Muslim community. Since the committee's first hearing on radicalization, the Obama administration has taken several steps in dismantling al-Qaeda's operations abroad. Osama bin Laden, Anwar al-Awlaki, Samir Khan—all have been killed.

In essence, the world has changed. But despite a changing world, which requires us to look forward, this committee seems to want to look back. We are holding today's hearing to discuss the effects of previous hearings. I am not sure we have ever had a hearing to gauge the effects of prior hearings. Given the challenges the Nation faces in homeland security, the on-going problems at TSA, the ability of FEMA to meet the needs of disaster survivors, the effect of budget cuts on research and development within science and technology—just to name a few—I am not sure that a hearing to gauge the effects of our hearings is the most effective use of Congressional time and attention.

But this is not the first time I have questioned the premise of this series of hearings. Prior to the first hearing, I wrote the Chairman to request that the coverage of the hearings be expanded to broaden our inquiry into radicalization. I noted that there were domestic groups that may constitute a threat because of linkages between extreme ideology and a willingness to take violent action. My request was turned down.

As we meet to once again hear testimony about Muslim radicalization, I am pretty sure I know what will be said. I am sure that the witnesses will testify that these hearings have helped

Muslims come forward. However, in reality, there was never a problem with Muslims coming forward. As noted by Attorney General Holder, the cooperation of Muslims and Arab-American communities has absolutely been essential in identifying and preventing terrorist threats. As further emphasized by Michael Leiter, Director of the National Counter-Terrorism Center, many of our tips to uncover active terrorist plots in the United States have come from the Muslim community.

So we have to make clear that the communities are a part of the solution and not part of the problem. These statements from law enforcement officials and terrorism experts support the notion that Muslim-American community is not afraid to come forward and has been coming forward to provide tips to police, prevent radicalization, and fight terrorism. In short, cooperation of the Muslim-American community occurred long before these hearings began.

So as we consider the effects of these hearings have had, I need to be clear about what I hope the effects have been. I hope that the hearings did not perpetuate the notion that the United States is at war with Islam. Such a notion would only help the recruitment efforts of al-Qaeda and similar groups.

John Brennan, the President's Chief Counter-Terrorism Advisor, has noted that describing our enemy in religious terms lends credence to al-Qaeda's propaganda. Although the hearings were narrowly focused on Muslims, I hope they did not have that effect.

I hope these hearings did not encourage a belief among Americans that the fellow citizens are inherently dangerous because of religious affiliation. I know there have been many times in this country's history when those in power have decided that some people are inherently dangerous. Once that determination has been made, public officials feel justified in infringing on Constitutionally-protected rights.

About a week ago, a group of Muslim Americans filed suit against the New York Police Department for infringing on the speech, religious, assembly, and due process rights of Muslim Americans. I hope these hearings did not help provide a Congressional stamp of approval for groups that espouse anti-Muslim beliefs. As noted in a report by the Center for American Progress, witnesses at these hearings often repeated myths that originated in anti-Muslim think tanks.

But most of all, I hope these hearings did not increase the number of hate crimes against Muslims. According to the FBI, in 2012, hate crimes against Muslims rose nearly 50 percent in the United States. Although the statistics have not been released for 2011, the year these hearings started, I hope we do not see an increase.

Mr. Chairman, the actions of this committee did not create an anti-Muslim attitude in this country, but as elected officials, we have a duty to help decrease negative sentiments and encourage cooperation among all people in this Nation.

I hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle share the belief and remember the words of President Bush in the days after September 11. President Bush said, "America counts millions of Muslims among our citizens. And Muslims make an incredibly val-

uable contribution to our country. In our anger and emotion, our fellow Americans must treat each other with respect.”

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

[The statement of Ranking Member Thompson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RANKING MEMBER BENNIE G. THOMPSON

JUNE 20, 2012

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As noted by Attorney General Holder, the cooperation of Muslim and Arab-American communities has been absolutely “essential in identifying, and preventing, terrorist threats.” As further emphasized by Michael Leiter, Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, “many of our tips to uncover active terrorist plots in the United States have come from the Muslim community. So we have to make quite clear that the communities are part of the solution and not part of the problem.”

These statements from law enforcement officials and terrorism experts support the notion that the Muslim-American community is not afraid to come forward and has been coming forward to provide tips to police, prevent radicalization, and fight terrorism. In short, cooperation of the Muslim-American community occurred long before these hearing began.

So, as we consider the effect these hearings have had, I need to be clear about what I hope the effects have not been. I hope that these hearings did not perpetuate the notion that the United States is at war with Islam.

Such a notion would only help the recruitment efforts of al-Qaeda and similar groups. John Brennan, the President’s chief counterterrorism advisor, has noted that describing our enemy in religious terms lends credence to al-Qaeda’s propaganda. Although the hearings were narrowly focused on Muslims, I hope they did not have that effect.

I hope these hearings did not encourage a belief among Americans that their fellow citizens are inherently dangerous because of religious affiliation. I know there have been many times in this country’s history when those in power have decided that some people are inherently dangerous. Once that determination is made, public officials feel justified in infringing on Constitutionally-protected rights. About a week ago, a group of Muslim Americans filed suit against the New York Police Department for infringing the speech, religion, assembly, and due process rights of Muslim Americans.

I hope these hearings did not help provide a Congressional stamp of approval for groups that espouse anti-Muslim beliefs. As noted in a report by the Center for American Progress (CAP), witnesses at these hearings often repeated myths that originated in anti-Muslim think tanks.

But most of all, I hope these hearings did not increase the number of hate crimes against Muslims. According to the FBI, in 2010, “hate crimes” against Muslims rose nearly 50 percent (from 107 to 160) in the United States. Although the statistics

have not been released for 2011—the year these hearings started—I hope we do not see an increase.

Mr. Chairman, the actions of this committee did not create an anti-Muslim attitude in this country. But as elected officials, we have a duty to help decrease negative sentiments and encourage cooperation among all people in this Nation. I hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle share that belief and remember the words of President Bush in the days after September 11. He said: “America counts millions of Muslims amongst our citizens, and Muslims make an incredibly valuable contribution to our country. In our anger and emotion, our fellow Americans must treat each other with respect.”

Chairman KING. I thank the Ranking Member. I will just take the liberty, and I will give you time to respond if you wish. But you mentioned the lawsuit that was filed against the NYPD. You also quoted John Brennan earlier on. I think you should say that—also put in the record—that John Brennan, just last April 21, said that he has full confidence the NYPD is doing things consistent with the law, and he gave them specific credit for being able to identify and stop terrorist operatives and terrorist attacks here on our shore. The success is in the record in terms of keeping the city safe.

So if we are going to put something in the record about the NYPD, I think the counter should be put in from the leading Homeland Security advisor in this administration, where he says he fully supports the NYPD and the actions they have taken.

We have a distinguished panel—

Okay. Sure. Gentleman from Mississippi.

Mr. THOMPSON. I actually want consent that the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Green, be allowed to sit in on the hearing.

Chairman KING. These hearings would not be complete without Mr. Green being present.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you.

Chairman KING. Reserving the right to reject. But I won't. No.

Without objection, the gentleman from Texas is allowed to be seated.

We have a distinguished panel of witnesses for our important hearing today. It is a pleasure to welcome Dr. Zuhdi Jasser back to our committee. It was appropriate for Dr. Jasser to be here today, because he was the lead-off witness at our first radicalization hearing last year.

He is the president of the American Islamic Forum for Democracy, an organization he formed in the wake of the 9/11 attacks as an effort to provide an American-Muslim voice advocating the preservation of the founding principles of the United States Constitution. Dr. Jasser served 11 years in the United States Navy as a medical officer and as a physician currently residing in Phoenix, Arizona.

Ms. Asra Nomani is a professor in the practice of journalism at Georgetown University School of Continuing Studies. She is a former reporter for the Wall Street Journal and the author of “Standing Alone: An American Woman’s Struggle for the Soul of Islam.” During a time in Pakistan in 2002, Wall Street Reporter Daniel Pearl was staying in Ms. Nomani’s home when he was kidnapped. She became active in the ensuing investigation to find him.

She has provided commentary for CNN, NPR, and BBC, and has served as instructor at Islamic culture training centers for the Fed-

eral Government. She was born in Bombay, India, and came to the United States with her family at the age of 4.

Dr. Qanta Ahmed is the author of “In the Land of Invisible Women: A Female Doctor’s Journey in the Saudi Kingdom,” and is a prolific writer on political and religious issues relating to Islam. Dr. Ahmed serves as an associate professor of medicine at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, and has practiced pulmonary and critical care medicine in the National Health Service in the United Kingdom and in Saudi Arabia. She is the first Muslim woman and first physician to be selected to be a Templeton-Cambridge Journalism Fellow in Science and Religion at the University of Cambridge.

Dr. Ahmed—this is how I first came to know her—has played a strong role in treating 9/11 workers under the recently passed James Zadroga law and has treated many law enforcement officers from the FBI and NYPD.

Ms. Faiza Patel serves as a co-director of the Liberty and National Security Program at the Brennan Center for Justice. Before joining the Brennan Center, Ms. Patel worked as a senior policy officer at the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in the Hague and clerked at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. Ms. Patel is a graduate of Harvard College and the New York University School of Law.

I would thank all the witnesses being here today. I would also remind them that your full testimony will be submitted for the record. I ask you to summarize your statements and try to keep them within the 5 minutes.

The Chairman now recognizes Dr. Jasser for his opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF M. ZUHDI JASSER, MD, PRESIDENT AND
FOUNDER, AMERICAN ISLAMIC FORUM FOR DEMOCRACY**

Dr. JASSER. Thank you, Chairman King, Ranking Member Thompson, distinguished Members of the committee for seeking my testimony again, and allowing me to give you an update about what we have learned from your hearings so far and also where we are headed.

From the first hearing last March—the American-Muslim Community’s Response to Muslim Radicalization—this process has shed the light of day for many Americans upon areas that we need to address, diagnose, and begin the process of solving the ideological threat we face from Islamist radicalization. Make no mistake, as much as we have had some successes at countering some of the violence, at the end of the day, the threat, if anything, is growing with the growth of Islamic radicalism in the Middle East. We see Islamist parties coming to power in many countries.

For many, that very statement in these hallowed halls is heresy. But for me, this is a lifelong mission to confront the problems within my faith community that are a threat to both our country and my co-religionists. While I am sure that much of today’s discussion will focus on a portrayal of American-Muslims as supposed victims of some right-wing conspiracy, the reality is that I am American-Muslim and I am not a victim.

Since your hearings began, so many Muslims told us that they were tired of having their identity stolen by two groups. One is the radicals that commit acts of terrorism. The other are the grievance groups whose denials, lawsuits, and cries of bigotry have actually caused more negativity towards Islam and Muslims than bridge-building.

So our work is about reclaiming my faith from a political construct that is discriminatory and a threat, not because it has the chance of bringing down a republic in my lifetime, but because its primary target is the freedom and liberty of my children. So many Muslims acknowledge to us that we can't address it without peeling the onion of Islamism away from Islam.

It is absurd to allow a threat that exploits our religion to avoid any critique in these hallowed halls because of its theological, political underpinnings may offend the majority of a faith. You can't allow a threat to instantly wrap itself in a faith and then all of a sudden be insulated because you may say that it may offend a majority.

In fact, the primary way then to engage this threat is exactly what these hearings were about—through engaging responsible, unapologetic Muslims who seek the truth and want to better their faith from the causes of radicalism. Does this mean that I or anyone who engages in these hearings believe that all Muslims are a threat? Absolutely not and I think it is offensive to imply that I believe that.

But I do believe that by not confronting these issues, we are allowing the radicals and extremists to define our faith for the world. Again, I do not submit one iota of my own civil rights when I discuss these issues.

What these hearings provide is a dialogue that can bridge the gap for those that see no problem within the Muslim community with those that see all Muslims as a problem. The polarization that we saw leading to these hearings resulted in hysteria that decried bigotry, Islamophobia, and McCarthyism—to name a few.

I was even told by Islamist leaders through e-mails and communication that my testimony would lead to hate crimes against Muslims. Sixteen months later, we have had hundreds of new members come after my testimony. We have developed a coalition—The American Islamic Leadership Coalition—that quadrupled in size in the months after our testimony. We have begun to hear from your further hearings about more work that we need to do.

Our success, growth, and feedback have demonstrated the opposite. I want to read you a couple of statements I received from Muslims around the country right after my testimony. Zulfi from Virginia stated, "I commend you for the excellent presentation, Dr. Jasser. I felt like for the first time, a Muslim is speaking for me. You stole what I was thinking all along."

Nabil from Ohio said, "Allahu Akbar. Dr. Jasser, today I am happy to see a Muslim who thinks like me. The first word in Islam is 'Iqra' or 'read.'"

Zuhair from Kansas said, "What you have been expressing is exactly why my family came from Saudi Arabia. I want to know how to become a member. I want to help as much as I can change the

way Muslim youth feel about this country and about Arab dictators.”

The way these hearings have been—and it is seen an exponential growth in our support. But there has been also the other side of the response—those that have attacked us for fear-mongering and have tried to stifle our conversation and tried to stifle the fact that we are a diverse faith community—diversity not only ethnically but ideologically, which I think we often forget in these very ideologically diverse halls.

Ten years after 9/11, our heroes at the Department of Homeland Security remain occupied with basically a “whack-a-mole” program. Even any discussion about the fact that it is not just violence, but ideology that radicalizes, is often suppressed.

If we cannot develop a strategy—if you look at the National strategy for counter-terrorism, for example, that the White House put out only months after our hearings began, those—they mentioned the words ideology, but not once did they identify what that ideology was. Our coalition developed criteria by which we recommend—and your Chairman distributed that—

Chairman KING. Doctor, if you could try to close in about 10 seconds—15 seconds.

Dr. JASSER. Yes. As a husband, a parent of 3 children, and a leader of my own community, I took a keen interest in these hearings. Please join me and other Muslims in asking you to continue these hearings so that they can know that they can keep asking a wide array of leaders questions against conventional wisdom without fear of intimidation and being silenced.

Thank you.

[The statement of Dr. Jasser follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF M. ZUHDI JASSER

JUNE 20, 2012

Thank you Chairman King, Ranking Member Thompson, distinguished Members of the committee, for seeking my testimony. My name is Dr. M. Zuhdi Jasser and I am the president and founder of the American Islamic Forum for Democracy.

When I opened my testimony before this committee in March 2011 I thought it was important to address the polarization that existed within these chambers and in the marketplace of ideas that had stifled the legitimate and needed dialogue about Muslim issues in this country. While we are in many ways more than ever still strangled by this polarization, I believe history will show that your series of hearings in the past 16 months directly confronting the threat of Muslim radicalization in the United States opened the long-overdue dialogue both here in the halls of Congress and more importantly in Muslim communities across our great country. It has been a difficult first step, but one so many American Muslims have told us has been of immense value. I commend the committee’s leadership for having the willpower to see these hearings through despite the cacophony of critics trying to silence our work.

AMERICAN MUSLIM RESPONSES TO THE HEARINGS

From that first hearing in March on the American Muslim community’s response to Muslim radicalization, to your subsequent hearings that focused on radicalization in American prisons and the threat to our homeland by Al-Shabaab and to our military, this process has shed the light of day for many Americans upon areas that we need to responsibly address, diagnose, and begin the process of treatment.

The sign of a healthy democracy is our ability to openly confront threats that exploit many of the core sensibilities we take for granted in our culture. Ultimately, Mr. Chairman, your hearings have allowed us to begin to breach two major obstacles in that treatment:

(1) The discipline to focus on specific areas inside the United States where the Islamist threat incubates without fear or blindness of denials, apologetics, or political correctness.

(2) The respectful engagement of emerging long-silenced diverse voices from within our Muslim faith communities in a public and pragmatic discussion on how we can best address Islamist radicalization.

One of the most profound results we have seen from this National discussion is the important recognition that American Muslims are not a monolithic community that shares one set of values and one single voice. American Muslims are very diverse in our ideological structure and many if not most of us do not support the victimization and denial mantra that has been defining our communities for decades.

Immediately after my testimony, we received literally hundreds of emails over 90 percent of which were extraordinarily complementary from American Muslims. We also gained hundreds of new members in the weeks following the hearings. Below are a few exemplary emails from American Muslims which depict the thirst among many American Muslims for a new narrative and a frank discourse on radicalization.

For example on March 10, 2011 I received these emails:

(1) Zulfi A. from Virginia stated, "I commend you for your excellent presentation at the Congress today. I totally agree with you. I felt like for the first time a Muslim is speaking for me. You stole what I have been thinking all along. Seems like no one understood what you are talking about in your reference to 79 billion spend by Saudi's spreading of Wahabi Islam through out the world. I am from Peshawar and live here in Virginia and know CAIR very well from the inception"

(2) Nabil S. from Ohio stated, "ALLAH AKBAR DR. JASSER TODAY I AM HAPPY TO SEE A MOSLEM WHO THINKS LIKE ME YOU DID A GREAT JOB ON THE HILL. THE FIRST WORD IN ISLAM IS 'EKRA' READ." (emphasis his)

(3) Astra K. from Rhode Island stated, "PEACE BE UPON YOU, BROTHER! AS AN AMERICAN BORN, WHITE, FEMALE CONVERT TO ISLAM, THE RELIGION, I THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART FOR YOUR INCREDIBLY HONEST AND WISE TESTIMONY IN WASHINGTON D.C. WHICH JUST NOW ENDED. I WATCHED IT ONLINE." (emphasis hers)

(4) Zuhair A. from Kansas, stated, "Thank you Dr. Jasser, you represent the same belief I have and try to express, I came from Saudi Arabia in 1993 I established my family and roots in the country. What you have been expressing is exactly how I feel, I want to know how to become a member I want to help as much as I can to change the way the Muslim youth feel, in this country and other Arab country, I believe it starts with our home countries if the youth can take these ailing blood sucking dictators of their respective countries and decided to live in a democracy this might help fight the radicalization, it help them understand that."

In the wake of these hearings we have seen an exponential growth in the number of Muslims who are willing to courageously step forward in support of American values over Islamism and openly embrace a political system built in reason while rejecting the theological mandate of the Islamic state put forth by Islamist organizations like the Muslim Brotherhood and its hundreds of offshoots around the world. We did certainly receive our share albeit a far smaller number of hate-filled communications mostly from Muslims who we engaged that were critical about the hearings and had not actually viewed the testimony. Upon viewing, most reported to us that "American Muslim" groups and the media did not report on the substance of the hearing but only vilified Chairman King and Dr. Jasser.

Our own Muslim Liberty Project at AIFD which we started last March 2011 and had its second annual leadership retreat in March 2012 has students from 12 different States engaged in learning the core values of American society and how the Islamic faith can reject political Islam and thus fit comfortably within American society. Our American Islamic Leadership Coalition (AILC) as a direct result of our testimony in March has expanded from 6 to over 25 Muslim thought leaders and organizations in North America and we are now also looking to Europe to broaden our Western coalition of reformist Muslims who span the political realm from left to right but share one thing alone—the desire to provide our Nation an alternative to the Islamist groups and to help mold a strategy against the threat of political Islam and its Islamist organizations like the Muslim Brotherhood legacy groups in the United States.

BEYOND THE VAGARIES OF COMBATING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Peeling the onion of denial that some form of a “theo-political” problem exists has not been without its challenges and landmarks. The public and private fallout from these hearings alone have been a clinic in exposing some of the pathologies hampering the progress of homeland security and genuine long-lasting counter-radicalization. Ten years after 9/11 our heroes at the Department of Homeland Security remain occupied predominantly with a highly sophisticated whack-a-mole program that is entirely dependent upon finding and capturing radical Islamists when they are in the final steps of their long Islamist journey having chosen a militant path of Islamism and on the verge of committing an act of terror.

As Mr. John Cohen stated last November before Members of this committee, the Department is “not using ‘radicalization.’ [Its] focus is not to police thought but to prevent violence.”¹ For me as an American Muslim this is not about just treating the symptom of violence, it is about fighting the disease that leads so many of my co-religionists down a path that ends in violence. Would we not be smarter to develop programs that keep them from stepping out on to that Islamist path much earlier on in their radicalization before they get to the violent endpoint? It is not about policing thought. It is about demonstrating to a vulnerable part of our society that American values and freedom is the better pathway for their faith practice and in no way conflicted with our beautiful faith of Islam.

In my first testimony² before you, I laid out examples of that continuum of radicalization from the insidious, non-violent separatist Islamism to that militant more aggressive Islamism which directly threatens us. Our humble experience in the wake of these hearings has been that given the right environment, the vast majority of Muslims welcome assistance in confronting that subset of Muslims who are Islamists so that we can then better prevent the fueling of that subset of Islamists that are militant. The communications we received from so many Muslims a few of which I shared with you confirm this. If we cannot undertake in these halls the development of a strategy against the Islamist ideology that exploits America, exploits the faith of Islam, and exploits our freedoms to avoid critique, then we have shirked our responsibility as Americans and I submit also as observant Muslims.

Unfortunately, the White House’s counterterrorism strategy released in July 2011 bears out this same problem. I have attached a response from our American Islamic Leadership Coalition (Appendix I)* which this committee distributed to Congress as reading material in August 2011. Therein over 25 Muslim leaders and their organizations noted that while the White House’s National Strategy for Counterterrorism (NSCT) released on June 28, 2011 used the word “ideology” over 20 times it never identified what that ideology was. We identified areas of concern. We noted that the report:

1. Appeared to reflect a largely pro forma, rather than substantive, approach to countering extremist ideology and the radicalization of Muslims in the United States and abroad.
2. Does not define individual rights, or articulate a systematic strategy to promote them.
3. Fails to define al-Qaeda’s ideology, and its relationship to Islamist ideology and movements in general.
4. Provides no criteria for determining with which Muslim groups the administration will conduct its outreach programs.
5. Fails to articulate a strategy to counter Islamist ideology in general, or cyberjihad in particular.
6. Focuses narrowly upon al-Qaeda as the enemy.

Our coalition then laid out specific recommendations to improve upon these shortcomings:

- (1) The U.S. Government should clearly and publicly define the ideology of al-Qaeda that we seek to defeat, and realistically acknowledge its intimate links with Islamist ideology and political movements in general. Ignorance and/or lack of honesty in this arena is no virtue. This necessarily entails discussing, and addressing, the manner in which theocratic regimes in Iran and Saudi Arabia export their Khomeinist and Wahhabi/Salafi ideologies worldwide, thereby fueling the spread of Islamist terrorism, and strengthening other Islamist

¹ Andrea Stone, “Counterterrorism Czar Resists Muslim Labels, As Critics Say Right-Wing Threat Looms Larger”, (*Huffington Post*, November 17, 2011)

² M. Zuhdi Jasser, M.D., “Testimony of M. Zuhdi Jasser, M.D.” Testimony before the U.S. House Committee on Homeland Security, “The Extent of Radicalization in the American Muslim Community and the Community’s Response,” March 10, 2011.

*Appendices attached to this document have been retained in committee files.

groups such as the Taliban, Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Muslim Brotherhood's global dawa (proselytism) movement;

(2) The U.S. Government should distinguish between the religion of Islam and Islamist ideology (a distorted interpretation of Islam), whose adherents seek to conflate their own political agenda with the religion of Islam itself. Reverence and respect for the religion of Islam does not and should not entail submission to the dictates of an ambitious minority of Muslims who seek to instrumentalize religion for the acquisition of worldly power;

(3) The U.S. Government should acknowledge the diversity of American Muslims, and recognize that genuinely pluralistic, tolerant, and spiritual Muslim leaders possess the theological legitimacy, authority, and credibility required to counter Islamist ideology and movements from within Islam, and should be encouraged and supported in their efforts to do so;

(4) The U.S. Government should engage non-Islamist Muslim groups to help develop and implement effective counter-radicalization programs, which affirm the principles of liberty and individual rights, within an Islamic narrative;

(5) This engagement should facilitate the production of compelling content (narratives) and their distribution, through proactive use of the internet, which is one of al-Qaeda's primary means of ideological indoctrination and recruitment;

(6) The U.S. Government should support the development of robust, on-the-ground efforts to expose the brutal reality of Islamist oppression, violence, and terror, and broadcast the message of Love, Mercy, and Compassion—which fosters respect for human dignity and individual.

As a faith community, focusing on the militants and violence alone is an exercise in futility which gives non-violent Islamists the ability to appear mainstream. Focusing only on violence forces non-Muslims to approach the issue of radicalization in an overly simplistic binary approach of—good Muslim non-violent, bad Muslim violent. The reality is that Muslims who are violent extremists do not become so overnight. They come to that endpoint along with common travelers within the global supremacist political movement which is Islamism or political Islam. Islamism defined is the desire of some Muslims to create Islamic states or societies based in the interpretation of Islamic law (shariah) by faith leaders where the Muslim community (ummah) is also synonymous with the “Islamic nation-state”. These quasi-oligarchical leaders can be imams, clerics, or Islamist scholars who believe that their expertise gives them the right to determine and impose their interpretations of religion upon Muslim masses. Thus, Islamists ensnared in the theo-political movement of Islamism are inherently unable to identify with and bond positively to our own American concept of a nation based in an Establishment Clause, the separation of mosque and state, a man-made Constitution, and reason.

If you witness the public response of Muslim Brotherhood legacy groups in the United States to these hearings you will see the lengths they go to in vilifying anyone who dares address the threat at its source—Islamism. An observant Muslim becomes labeled by the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC) and Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) as “astro-turf” or “Uncle Tom.” The term Islamophobia is used incomprehensibly against devout Muslims as a battering ram to shun us within our own local faith communities for having the audacity to say that we have a problem and they are contributing to it. These groups wrap themselves in the blanket of my faith and imagined civil rights abuses in an attempt to deny Muslims like me a voice in this argument. Imagine Ranking Member Thompson if Republicans were able to remove your voice from the debate. Despite accusations to the contrary, our fight against Islamism is not about denying someone a seat at the lunch counter it is about fighting a political construct that is at complete odds with the Constitution of the United States.

With persistent name-calling, ad hominem attacks against our work and baseless accusations of Islamophobia, MPAC, CAIR, and their colleagues are extremely successful at silencing or striking fear in the voices of reform and opposition. But there is immeasurable teaching value in our witness of these actions. These hearings will eventually compel these Muslim Brotherhood legacy groups to do one or all of the following:

- (1) Defend or condemn the ideological constructs of Islamism, the Islamic state, and political Islam and its instrument of shariah law.
- (2) Refute or admit the direct connection, conveyor belt between Islamism and the very real threat of Islamist militancy.³
- (3) Engage all Muslims in a very public debate about the need to reform against theological constructs that fuel Islamism.

³ Steven Merley, “The Muslim Brotherhood in the United States,” *Research Monographs on the Muslim World, Series No 2, Paper No 3*, Hudson Institute (April, 2009).

(4) Demonstrate ideological diversity and pluralism offering genuinely equal respect and opportunities to all Muslims in our right to define our own Muslim identity.

(5) Publicly debate the central role in which the self-identification of Islamists as Muslim citizens rather than American citizens has in charting their course towards separatism and radicalization.

These hearings have also, moreover, begun the process of compelling the rest of America to also develop a coherent strategy against the ideologies that fuel radicalization by doing one or all of the following:

(1) Creating platforms and opportunities for American Muslims to engage Islamists in No. 1 through No. 5 above.

(2) Set aside partisan exploitation of Muslim issues in order to actually address non-partisan solutions from within the Muslim consciousness for the greater good of National security.

(3) Cease the labeling as “bigoted” or “Islamophobic” those individuals Muslim or non-Muslim with the courage to dissect theo-political constructs of Muslim radicalization.

(4) Realize that the ideological battle between liberalism or modernity and Islamism is not only manifested in the Arab awakening of the Middle East and North Africa but also a reality for Muslims living in the United States.

The Arab awakening has given the United States many teaching moments. Before these hearings and the upheaval in Middle East, the terms Islamist or political Islam were labeled by many as being derogatory conspiracy theories. After the raging debate in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya there can no longer be any doubt that Islamists exist and they are prevalent. Groups like the Muslim Brotherhood believe that political advocacy and their political parties are synonymous with their Muslim identity. While these groups can be dominant in the political arena in these countries, they clearly do not have a monopoly on Muslim political thought. Again there is significant ideological diversity in Muslim populations and the current backlash against the Brotherhood in Egypt demonstrates that there are plenty of advocates for secular liberal democracies. They just are not as well-organized or rooted yet as the Brotherhood and other Islamists in region.

This is important to the United States because our own Muslim populations are born from immigrants from this region and while far more familiar with democracy may in fact have not reformed against Islamism and have generally the same diversity between Islamists, non-Islamists, and anti-Islamists. Immigrating to the United States and being raised here does not neutralize the lure of Islamism or contrarily immediately make us advocates of Jeffersonian democracy. In fact with only nascent advocates for liberty, Islamism has flourished on the heels of a petro-dollar-fueled Muslim Brotherhood evangelical movement into the West.

The United States needs a Liberty Doctrine for our approach to the changes in the Middle-East and American Muslims need a Liberty Doctrine for the continual education of our children or we risk breeding an ideology that will tear at the very fabric of what it means to be an American. Extensive research and documentation on the connection between the ideology of the Islamic state (and its closely associated corollary of Caliphism) and eventual radicalization has been provided by the work of experts like Dr. Magnus Ranstorp, Director of Research at the Center for Asymmetric Threat Studies at Sweden’s National Defense College⁴ and Dr. Douglas M. McLeod, project lead at the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. In his work “Support for the Caliphate and Radical Mobilization,”⁵ (Appendix II) he basically chronicled what my own research and experiences as a Muslim have demonstrated. He stated,

“Our research demonstrates that the Caliph imagery is a strong motivator within Muslim discourse. Pious zealots are often swept into the political expression of Jihad while attending small study groups (Hairgrove and McLeod, 2008). For some Muslims, the imagery of an Islam reflective of the golden era of Muhammad is a religious value worthy of pursuit in terms of life goals, finances, and personal sacrifice ‘in the cause of Allah.’ This ideological war for the ‘hearts and minds’ for Muslims is considered a war for a ‘collective identity’ and has no shortage of patriots willing to join the struggle.”⁶

⁴Dr. Magnus Ranstorp, “Preventing Violent Radicalization and Terrorism: The Case of Indonesia”, Swedish National Defence College (2009).

⁵Dr. Douglas McLeod and Frank Hairgrove, “Support for the Caliphate and Radical Mobilization”, Start Research Brief (January 2008).

⁶McLeod and Hairgrove, 3.

The work of A.H.E. Kyai Haji Abdurrahman Wahid, former President of Indonesia who edited the book, *The Illusion of the Islamic State* recently released in English lays out “How an Alliance of Moderates Launched a Successful Jihad Against Radicalization and Terrorism in the World’s Largest Muslim-Majority Country” (Appendix III).

These leading scholars, Muslim leaders, and intellectuals have laid out the centrality of Islamism to the radicalization process and the separatism that drives the “violent extremism” of Islamism. These hearings have launched America into the long overdue educational process of understanding the existence of a battle in our souls as Muslims between a personal spiritual path of Islam and the theo-political movement of Islamism.

COUNTERING ISLAMISM IN OUR MILITARY: THE NEED TO DEVELOP A STRATEGY

There are many fronts in this battle and these hearings have begun to address some of those. As a former U.S. Navy Lieutenant Commander and medical officer your hearings on the radicalization of Muslims inside the U.S. Military is of particular importance to me. Muslims serve the U.S. Military with pride and distinction every day. When we allow political correctness and, as former Army Chief of Staff General Casey has discussed numerous times, a desire for diversity to override our commitment to truth, we insult that service. There is a threat both inside and outside of our military and if we cannot address it we leave our service members vulnerable.

Our armed forces are becoming ground zero for American Muslims in the ideological struggle between Americanism and Islamism. Thus, inside our military is a distinct opportunity with regards to how we as a Nation can confront that internal conflict of identification between whether a Muslim becomes an Islamist or becomes a patriot who serves heroically in our armed services. I would like to build upon my discussion in the first hearing about Maj. Nidal Hasan the perpetrator of the Nov. 5, 2009 Fort Hood massacre. At the time I remarked about how the simple profound difference between his consciousness and mine as American soldiers holds the key to creating more effective counterterrorism programs. (Appendix IV)

Unfortunately Nidal Hasan is not the only example. More recently, U.S. Army Pvt. Naser Abdo points to that serious conflict. Pvt. Abdo was ultimately convicted recently of planning a copycat attack on the members of the Fort Hood military community. There is an irreconcilable conflict between allegiance to the United States, with its secular Constitution, and fealty to the consciousness of an Islamist state that centers on the Qur’an as its constitution and the ummah (Muslim nation) as its global citizenry. The crucial and difficult question a Muslim soldier needs to be asked is this: “Do you have any sense of loyalty to the ummah and its Islamic state?” Those who answer in the affirmative pose a problem. The Pentagon’s 2010 after-action report, “Protecting the Force: Lessons from Fort Hood,” revealed a blind spot by failing to address the warning signs of Islamist radicalism that were abundantly clear prior to the massacre. Pvt. Abdo’s history has shown again that our military leadership is simply not equipped to deal with the challenges political Islam presents to National security and the protection of our armed forces.

Private Abdo made public pleas that his faith and military service were incompatible because of alleged obstacles to his religious practices, unsubstantiated claims of harassment, and a refusal to go to Afghanistan. He claimed that an abundance of religious sources told him to abandon a non-Muslim army. He told ABC News that he wanted out so he could “spend his life combating Islamophobia.”⁷ In my own 11 years of service, not once did I feel a conflict between my orthodox practice of Islam and my service as a Naval officer. Conversely, the assistant deputy secretary of the Army shockingly granted Pvt. Abdo his conscientious objector (CO) status in 2011 and recommended dismissal from the service. But in the mean time he was charged by the military for possession of child pornography on his Government computer and went AWOL from Fort Campbell, Ky. He was apprehended when a gun store owner in Killeen, Texas, reported his suspicious purchases and behavior to the police.

The Army’s approval of his status as a conscientious objector deeply damaged the perception of Muslims in the military, because it implicitly validated Islamism as a protected belief system synonymous with being Muslim. Yet the vast majority of American Muslims are in the United States because we reject Islamism. Clearly, not only do we not have a mechanism to filter for Islamism in our military enlistments and security clearances, but we are giving their political separatist beliefs the pro-

⁷ *World News with Diane Swayer*, ABC News, ““Devout Muslim Soldier Hopes to Avoid Deployment to Afghanistan”, August 31, 2010.

tections of religious freedom. Muslims have also fought many wars against other Muslims since Islam's inception. Certainly, for the vast majority, our allegiance is first and only to the United States and never to any Islamist constructs of the Islamic state, the ummah, or jihad. Faisal Shahzad, the confessed Times Square bomber, stated to the judge at his arraignment, "We Muslims are one community. We are not divided." He proclaimed that he was a "mujahid" or a "Muslim soldier." Nidal Hasan similarly called himself a "Soldier of Allah." Nasser Abdo had a year-long campaign denouncing the military he volunteered to serve. This self-identification is central to the Islamist threat. Yet the theological underpinnings of Islamist radicalization remain for the most part ignored by military officials, who fear appearing to discriminate against Muslim soldiers. It would be like being afraid of identifying the impact of communist ideologies upon our troops at the height of the Cold War against the Soviets. That fear of political correctness has been bolstered by leading Muslim Brotherhood legacy groups in America who trumpet grievances at the expense of counter-radicalization strategies. Their platform in fact has a major obstacle to counter-radicalism: The empowerment of political Islam via Islamic revivalism and an aversion to reform via the separation of mosque and state. As an observant Muslim, I am testifying to you that we desperately need to develop a strategy against Islamism and as I listened to your joint hearing on radicalization within our military, I was hoping that one of the primary takeaways be that we urgently develop a strategy against Islamism.

The U.S. military can serve as an ideal laboratory to address these central ideological conflicts between Americanism and Islamism. The threat of Islamism is manifold and we have no National consensus or strategy. We have our work cut out for us. For example, Salah Al-Sawy of the Assembly of Muslim Jurists of America (AMJA) concluded in a 2008 on-line fatwa, "As for optionally obtaining citizenship of a non-Muslim country it is definitely prohibited without a doubt, moreover it could be a form of apostasy." (Appendix V) An AMJA paper in 2009 stated that, "the basic conflict between the declaration of faith and testimony that there is no God except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah and the declaration and pledge of Allegiance of the USA is irreconcilable." (Appendix VI) Many imams at AMJA are cross-pollinated with the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) and other Islamist groups. These ideas need to be confronted and yet they have not.

These hearings have provided the stimulus to do so and now we need to follow through. There are many Muslim leaders who can lead that defense of liberty and understand the need to separate mosque and state. We must acknowledge that there are two sides to this debate within Islam and we need to take the side of liberals over that of the Islamists. Our armed services should declare a moratorium on all Muslim requests for conscientious objector status claimed on the basis of their Islamic faith. Our resources should be directed at how we can promote anti-Islamist liberal ideas into American Muslim consciousness so that they can develop reform-minded strategies to inoculate Muslims against Islamism. Congress should be proactive in pushing for change within the military to recognize that turning a blind eye to the threat is perilous for all Americans including American Muslims and is in and of itself politically incorrect.

TEACHING AND TRAINING OUR MILITARY

These hearings have also opened the National discussion and given us opportunities finally to breach the poisoned atmosphere of political correctness. Within the military there has been recent discussion in the media about rare instances of some virulently anti-Muslim materials.

It was revealed, for example, that at the Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Virginia, one lecturer discussed reducing "Islam to cult status" and that we should "declare all-out war against Islam" among other harmful inappropriate comments to officers in training. But while there is no proof that this is a pattern, American Islamist grievance groups spread this story around the world in foreign media using it to amplify their own mantra that America is in a war against Muslims and Islam. I would like to see our Nation confront Islamism but that should always be done at the same time that we recognize that Muslims must lead that solution from within and that our best allies are observant Muslims who acknowledge and take seriously the Islamist threat. If we let revelations about fringe teachers be dominated by grievance groups who dismiss any discussion of reform and claim a monopoly on Islamic discourse we will prevent the very discussion your hearings have encouraged us to have. I urge you to push our Nation even further down the path of engagement of these difficult issues and threats we have. Again, the military should be a laboratory in which we can begin to aggressively confront those issues and dis-

sect the ideologies that threaten our security while also keeping our eye on the solutions from within the House of Islam. (Appendix VII)

The corrective course of action we take at this point is just as crucial to protect our military members from the equally suffocating harness of political correctness. This ping-pong match between the extremes of “all Muslims are our enemy” and “all Muslims are victims” is stifling the teaching and the conversations that need to be had to fix the very real threat that Muslims who adhere to a militant form of Islamism present. At AIFD we do in fact recognize that the “Islam” of jihad, violence, al-Qaeda, Wahhabism, and political Islam is A version of Islam but it is NOT our Islam. That distinction, that central hope should always be part of Government training.

In the wake of recent revelations, we are already hearing cries for the retraining of all of the service members⁸ who have gone through the course at Norfolk and unscrupulous connections⁹ being made between this course and the Quran burning incident and the troops who desecrated the remains of Taliban fighters in Afghanistan. CAIR has recklessly pedaled this incendiary information on Al Jazeera¹⁰ which is often quite unfriendly media to our military and American interests. The Muslim grievance mill of CAIR combined with some of their colleagues on the left have wasted no time in using this incident as an opportunity to smear the military and to fear-monger within the Muslim community that there is a vast right-wing conspiracy plotting against American Muslims. Lawrence Korb from the Center for American Progress went as far as to recklessly claim on the BBC¹¹ that this event occurred because the U.S. military has elements that are overly influenced by Christian Evangelicals who believe that the United States is at war with Islam. Korb asserted that the military is more conservative than the broader public and that is what created the atmosphere for this type of course to be able to exist.

The reaction of some of these groups to the information released completely ignores the fact that there is a very real theo-political threat to our country. While some of the materials have proven to be inappropriate and reckless, these critics completely miss that those concepts simply are an equal and opposite reaction to the dangerous Islamist apologetics of denial that have filled the media and Government policy advisories. How quickly Islamist groups and many in the media forget the case of Louay Safi who was relieved from training service members at Fort Bliss in Texas? Based on reporting from the *Dallas Morning News*, the Army suspended his contract because of his connections to the American Islamist movement. Safi had been in charge of certifying Muslim chaplains for the U.S. Military on behalf of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), while teaching at Fort Bliss. In an internet posting after the Fort Hood massacre he whitewashed Islamism and blamed Hasan’s extremism on “the systematic demonization of marginalized groups.”¹²

Whether Islamists like Safi who dismiss Islamism and paint Muslims as victims or lecturers like Lt. Col. Dooley who target an entire faith and its adherents, both approaches are doomed to certain failure. The politically correct atmosphere in the military and in our country, however, has prevented an adequate balanced public vetting of the core threats our service members and citizens face domestically and abroad.

We need to have a happy medium. The military should not use material or lecturers that see all Muslims as the enemy and should not use the lowest hanging fruit of Muslim organizations which are Islamists or apologists for Islamist movements. They should instead begin to work with Muslim organizations that truly have our National security interests at heart, such as the growing American Islamic Leadership Coalition. Great Britain did the same when they found that they were working with the wrong organizations. They realized that their PREVENT program failed because they worked predominantly with Islamist groups and didn’t side with organizations that were liberal and secular-minded. Prime Minister Cameron has since called for a “muscular liberalism” when working with Muslims. (Appendix VIII)

As our Government addresses these training issues both within the military and similarly with questions that have been raised regarding the FBI and NYPD training programs, it is imperative that these evaluations are not done in a vacuum and

⁸ Kari Huus, MSNBC.com, “Outrage, calls for action over anti-Muslim materials in military training”, May 11, 2012.

⁹ Greg Milam, Sky News, “Military Course Called For ‘Muslim Hiroshima’”, May 11, 2012.

¹⁰ *Inside Story Americas*, Al Jazeera English, “The U.S. military’s ‘anti-Islam classes’”, May 12, 2012.

¹¹ *Today*, BBC Radio 4. “US condemns ‘War with Islam’ training”, May 11, 2012.

¹² Brooke Egerton, “U.S. torn over whether some Islamists offer insight or pose threat”, *Dallas Morning News*, February 12, 2010.

that they are not directed by organizations that look at this problem through the lens of Islamism and Muslim victimhood.

PATHWAY TO SOLUTIONS

Similar to how this Committee on Homeland Security has addressed Muslim radicalization, we desperately need to develop a National strategy that understands the theo-political movement (Islamism) that threatens us while also balancing the fact that the solution to this threat comes from within the Muslim community and by supporting Muslim organizations who embrace secular, liberty-minded governance. These hearings will have value as long as they continue to directly confront the need for frank dialogue and create avenues for Muslims and all Americans to address the problem and penetration of Islamism within our faith communities. The histrionic reaction of leading American Islamist organizations before these hearings and then their silence afterwards should point Americans to the fact that the groups are unwilling to address root causes and ideologies. Americans should also note that when they ask the question: "Where are Muslims with the courage to confront radical ideologies?", the answer is that we are vilified, smeared, and targeted by grievance groups that stand to lose a great deal when we Muslims finally crack the code on how to defeat "political Islam".

Toward that end, these hearings have been a teaching moment that has set the stage for just that journey. From here, I believe we should:

(1) Determine a consensus on how the U.S. Government defines and engages Islamists at all of its levels within the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branches. Recent revelations that the White House, for example, has been meeting with organizations like CAIR which the FBI has blacklisted demonstrates an inconsistency that reveals a deep-seated ideological disconnect in understanding the threat we face to homeland security.¹³

(2) Lay out a clear policy on how the U.S. Government engages the Muslim Brotherhood abroad and its legacy groups and apologists domestically. Sec. State Hillary Clinton surprisingly stated last November that "What parties call themselves is less important to us than what they actually do."¹⁴ And on June 13, 2012, five members of Congress including Cong. Michelle Bachman (R-MN), Trent Franks (R-AZ), Louie Gohmert (R-TX), Tom Rooney (R-FL), and Lynn Westmoreland (R-GA) sent letters to the Inspectors General of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the Department of Defense, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, and the Department of State asking about the involvement of the Muslim Brotherhood in agency policies.¹⁵

It is time that we stopped dancing around our approach to the Muslim Brotherhood and its constantly morphing positions. We need a consistent strategy that realizes the basic disconnect between Islamism and western democracy and realizes that our Government facilitates these organizations to our own detriment. (3) We need to develop a Liberty Doctrine both domestically and internationally that embraces what is exceptional about America. Prime Minister Cameron of the United Kingdom has made similar calls for a "muscular liberalism". (Appendix VIII)

Our founding fathers were very comfortable discussing ideologies that covered the intersection of religion and politics in the public space. Your hearings have appropriately pushed our communities to return to that tradition and become better Americans, and better Muslims. As a Muslim who fears for the future of our youth and the influence upon them of the domestic and global Islamist movements, it is actually my love of my faith that gives the fuel to counter Islamists and advocate for more hearings that continue to expose the many fronts in the battle of ideas against Islamism and its advocates.

Chairman KING. Thank you, Dr. Jasser. The Chairman now recognizes Ms. Nomani for her opening statement.

STATEMENT OF ASRA Q. NOMANI, PRIVATE CITIZEN

Ms. NOMANI. Thank you so much, Chairman King.
Chairman KING. Turn on your microphone.

¹³ Neil Munro, "Administration admits to 'hundreds' of meetings with jihad-linked group", *The Daily Caller*, June 8, 2012.

¹⁴ Tiffany Gabbay, "Clinton: U.S. will work with Arab Springs Islamist parties", *The Blaze*, November 7, 2011.

¹⁵ Erica Ritz, "'House Members Demand Answers on Depth of U.S. Involvement With the Muslim Brotherhood'", *The Blaze*, June 15, 2012.

Ms. NOMANI. I am an amateur at this. Thank you, Chairman King and Ranking Member Thompson for the invitation to come here. Thank you to all the representatives that are here and to all of our guests here in the hearing room.

Last year, I awakened my son in the pre-dawn darkness of a March morning. It was the first hearing that you were holding and he was 8 years old at the time. A 4 a.m. wake-up call was not in his idea of a great day. But I wanted him to come to this hearing because he is a boy who was born in 2002, the first of our generation post-9/11. We are a Muslim family that I come from and he inherits, in my mind, the interpretation of Islam—this challenge that we have of extremism in our community. It is our children's generation that will continue to carry this responsibility of how to tackle this very serious problem.

We waited in line and I bring him here today. He gets a seat without having to wake up in the dawn. I bring my parents, because to me, they are my moral compass in my conversation I am going to have with you today.

I am going to try to speak to you from the heart, both as a mother and as a Muslim, as a journalist who has reported on the issue of extremism, and then also as a friend. When my colleague and friend from the *Wall Street Journal*, Danny Pearl, left my house for the interview from which he did not come back, the men who met him at the compound where he was then killed, slayed him in the name of Islam, the way that we slaughter animals inside of our faith. They cleaned the floor that was bloodied and then they did their prayer. To me, that was the greatest betrayal of the faith that my parents had taught me.

The frustration that so many people have felt from Muslims who don't acknowledge this problem is the same one that I have felt, because it is a real issue. The idea of extremism and terrorism is grounded in religious theology for so many people inside of our faith. As a communicator, what I want to try to break down for you is why I think this is happening, so that perhaps we can try to heal some of the wounds and the grievances and much of the pain that I think is part of this conversation.

I believe that in our Western society, we have what you call this low-context culture—this idea that we go from point A to point B. So when you ask a Muslim, "Is there a radicalization problem in the community?", you are going to expect a straight answer. But inside of our Muslim community, we are defined very much by this loopy kind of conversational style that is associated with high-context cultures that African-American society also has, that Hispanic society—that a lot of societies from Asia also have. What happens is a potential culture clash, where you can't talk to each other.

In our Muslim community then, a former FBI analyst—an agent—has identified that we are very much wound collectors. We talk about the crusades. We talk about the Ottoman Empire, Colonialism, and all of the grievances. When you have that cycle of wounds, you create a circle of denial, I believe, where you in fact respond to issues of seriousness with defensiveness, dismissiveness, deflection, denial, demonization, also. So that you end up saying, you are picking on us—you are at a war with Islam.

What has happened then, in my eyes, is that, we as a community have denied much of the problem. For me, these hearings are really a critical conversation to be had. I know that they are not easy and they are very difficult. Especially, in a culture like mine, where shame is such a critical component, it represents a type of shaming.

But what I would like to gently suggest to both my community and to those who are trying to communicate with it, is that we can move from collecting wounds to owning up—that in our Muslim faith, we have a theology. We have a verse in the Koran that says very clearly—stand up for justice, even if it is against your own kin. That is a really difficult idea for any community, but I fundamentally believe that inside of an Islam of grace, we can actually have a conversation that brings healing to all the communities involved.

I thank you for this opportunity to be part of that conversation. I thank my son for being here and my parents for being that accountability in my own life, so I could come to you and speak to you from the heart.

Thank you.

[The statement of Ms. Nomani follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ASRA Q. NOMANI

TOWARD AN ISLAM OF GRACE: OWNING UP INSTEAD OF BEING WOUND COLLECTORS

JUNE 20, 2012

“O ye who believe! Stand out firmly/For justice, as witnesses/To God, even if it may be against/Yourselves, or your parents/Or your kin.”—“Al-Nisa” (The Women), Qur’an 4:135

WAKE-UP CALL

In early March 2011, in the pre-dawn darkness of a cold, rainy morning, I stirred awake my son, Shibli, now 9, to make sure we got seats for the first hearing of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security on a critically important topic: “The Extent of Radicalization in the American Muslim Community and That Community’s Response.”

As the sun rose, we stood sheltered from the rain in the marble and limestone threshold to Cannon House Office Building at the corner of Independence Avenue SE and New Jersey Avenue SE, the first in line, waiting for the building’s doors to open. I felt, as a boy born into a Muslim family, my son should be witness to history. Born in 2002, he is part of the first generation born after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States by 19 hijackers acting in the name of Islam, and the issue of radicalization inside the Muslim community is an issue that his generation will inherit. I wanted him to be witness to the important, albeit difficult, conversation that was to be had in the hearing room.

To me, the hearings represent an important wake-up call that we, as a Nation, are not going to continue to simply tap dance around the reality of an extremist ideology of Islam that is wreaking havoc in the world. My son was thrilled to miss a day of school, staying for the entire hearing, earning him a sticker from a U.S. Capitol Hill Police officer. (Having a Pokémon game with him helped during some of the slow moments.)

For today’s hearing, “The American Muslim Response to Hearings on Radicalization Within their Community,” I bring my son again, this time to sit in the front row behind me with my parents. Thank you to the honorable Chairman Peter King and Members of the committee for the invitation to speak.

In Islam, we have a symbolic manifestation of accountability at the end of every prayer, turning to say, “As-salam-ailaikum,” or “Peace be upon you,” to metaphorical angels that sit on our shoulders, recording our deeds, bad and good, for our judgment day. In my life, my parents and my son symbolize to me the people to whom I feel most accountable, and I testify today, emboldened by the values of truth tell-

ing, honesty, and service my parents taught me, invoking our Muslim faith, and with a clear sense of farz, or duty, to do whatever I can do to ensure a better future for my son and his generation.

What I hope to do this morning is speak to you from the heart as an American and as a Muslim, but most importantly as a mother. I know that the issue of radicalization within the Muslim community and the community's response to it is very polarizing, but I hope that we can speak to each other from a place of sincerity so that we can protect and express the values and principles in which we believe, guided most of all by higher principles of truth-telling and justice.

In my testimony, I will focus on the topic of the hearing—identifying the patterns in the American Muslim response to the hearings on radicalization—and I will draw broader conclusions about Muslim responses to the issue of extremism in our community and offer recommendations on how the response can be transformed within an Islam of grace, more healthy and healing for all sides in the conversation. Except for describing how I have seen radicalization express itself in my life, I won't spell out the many ways that an extremist ideology of Islam has taken root in Muslim communities since that isn't the scope of this particular hearing.

Unfortunately, I believe that, inside much of our Muslim communities, we have departed from our very clear sense of holding ourselves accountable. The Muslim community's response to the hearings on radicalization within our community—much like the response of many communities to internal problems—hasn't been one of taking ownership of our problems but rather engaging in a strategy of deflection.

This same strategy of deflection has expressed itself in our wider response to radicalization, terrorism, and the presence of an intolerant interpretation of Islam in our world today.

We are very much a culture of denial, fixated on perceived wounds.

Indeed, all of us carry wounds from generation to generation and throughout our personal lives. Slavery in the United States, the Holocaust, apartheid in South Africa, the Rwandan genocide, the religious wars in Ireland, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the smoldering tensions in Kashmir. These are just a few historical examples of deep wounds passed from generation to generation, both on the personal and societal level. On a personal level, our wounds can be emotional or physical abuse, abandonment, death, poverty, and so much more. On a societal level, they can manifest in war, genocide, authoritarianism, civil injustice, and also so much more.

How we respond to wounds comes to define us, as individuals and communities. It very much guides the ways in which we respond to challenges and conflicts in the world.

I would argue that many in our Muslim society have adopted a culture as “wound collectors,” holding onto grievances and responding to scrutiny with a strategy characterized by four very distinct elements: Denial, deflection, demonization, and defensiveness.

I believe we have the capacity to practice an Islam of grace that includes compassion, forgiveness, truth telling, and owning up.

I speak from several vantage points. As a mother and as a Muslim, I have witnessed the radicalization of my community over my lifetime, and I care very deeply about directly challenging the interpretation of Islam that fuels militancy and terrorism. Pakistani militants and al-Qaeda operatives, including 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammad, kidnapped and killed my friend and colleague from the *Wall Street Journal*, Daniel Pearl, in the name of Islam.

As a former reporter for the *Wall Street Journal* for 15 years, I have witnessed communication strategies that work and those that don't. As a journalist reporting, writing, and commenting on extremism for the last decade for publications from the *Daily Beast* to the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, *Time* magazine and the *Washingtonian* magazine, I have observed and reported on the communication strategies of Muslims from ordinary citizens to government officials and the leaders of militant and terrorist organizations. As an activist in the Muslim community for women's rights and tolerance, I have faced the response of Muslim leaders, organizations, and individuals to issues of controversy. As I write my testimony, a Muslim blogger has already tried to discredit my fellow witnesses and me as “astroturf Muslims,” in the politics of marginalization and takfir, the act of proclaiming other Muslims “non-Muslims,” if they dare to challenge conventional wisdom.

Finally, as a cultural trainer for the last 3 years to the U.S. military and other Federal agencies, including the FBI, I have tapped my graduate studies in international communications, emphasizing cross-cultural communications, to translate communication patterns expressed in traditional Muslim cultures to military and Federal personnel deploying to Afghanistan and Pakistan. I work with one purpose: To save lives.

RADICALIZATION

To come to the conclusion that we have responded to radicalism from a place of denial, I had to first become convinced myself that radicalism exists inside of our communities.

Born in 1965 in Mumbai, India, into a conservative Muslim family, I have come to accept this truth after a lifelong journey that has brought me face-to-face with the darkest expression of Islam in the world today.

In the summer of 1969, I arrived in the United States with my older brother, Mustafa, to join my parents as immigrants to this country. In India, my mother had worn the full-face veil and black gown that is called the burka. Her mother, my nani, wasn't at her husband's deathbed when he passed from this earth because men were visiting at the moment and she was required by her family's interpretation of Islam to leave the room.

My family settled in Morgantown, WV, where my father, Zafar, was a professor of nutrition at West Virginia University and my mother, Sajida, ran a boutique. Growing up, my best friend was Nancy Drew.

In this country, my family practiced a conservative but open-minded interpretation of Islam. I didn't go to junior high school dances but my parents allowed me to run track in shorts and a tank top. My father started a mosque but I wasn't allowed to enter because the men had imported a tradition that women and girls aren't allowed to enter mosques. My mother taught me to read the Quran at home.

As a child, I saw the encroachment of intolerant interpretations of Islam into our American Muslim community. At potluck dinner parties of the local Muslim community, we had met freely as families, with no separation between women and men, but in the mid-1970s, I found myself, as a girl, relegated to separate areas with the women. As females, we always got less food and fewer bottles of Sprite. One thing the American civil rights movement had taught us that I found to be completely true: Separate is not equal.

By the 1970s, the government of Saudi Arabia had gotten oil money and on the campus of West Virginia University we were starting to see students from Saudi Arabia, importing their country's strict Wahhabi interpretation of Islam to my community, bringing with it sectarianism, sexism, and intolerance.

For most of my life, I sat on the fence, calculating, like many in our community, that it was just easier to look the other way than confront difficult truths. I lived in denial. I was one of the many moderate Muslims who simply cowered or walked away from confrontation, intimidated into thinking we are less pious or faithful—or concluding it isn't worth the bother. Social ostracism is one weapon in silencing dissent.

Sept. 11, 2001, was my call to action. I flew to Pakistan to make sense of the ideology of Islam that had inspired the 19 hijackers to kill themselves and some 3,000 others.

On January 23, 2002, I directly faced the darkness that has been expressed in the name of Islam. Daniel Pearl, a close friend from the *Wall Street Journal*, was visiting my rented home in Karachi, Pakistan, with his wife, Mariane, when I stood by the gates to my house with Mariane, waving goodbye to him as he set off in a yellow taxi for an interview from which he never returned.

Danny was kidnapped off the streets of Karachi, held in captivity for about a week by Pakistani militants who ascribed to a radicalized interpretation of Islam called Deobandism, a sort of Wahhabi ideology of South Asia. He was then brutally slaughtered in the name of Islam by men who laid their prayer rugs upon the bloodied floor to raise their hands to the heavens, saying salam to the metaphorical angels on their shoulders before slipping into hiding.

Later, the mastermind of 9/11, Khalid Sheikh Mohammad, confessed to killing Danny with his "blessed right hand." When the FBI and Pakistani investigators came to my house to tell Danny's wife that they had received a video, "The Murder of the Spy-Journalist, the Jew Daniel Pearl," documenting Danny's murder, Mariane ran into the bedroom she had shared with Danny, slammed the door shut, and sent shock waves of blood-curdling screams into the night air.

Outside the door, I sat on the stairs, collapsing my head into the open palms of my hands, speaking to myself the Muslim prayer for protection that my mother had taught me in my earliest days, trying to make sense of the men who justified killing my friend because he was Jewish.

I faced another challenge: I had just discovered I was pregnant. My boyfriend, a Muslim, had told me we would wed before Danny's kidnapping, but he had left on the first day of Danny's kidnapping in fear of getting trapped in an international dragnet. By the Islamist laws of Pakistan put in place in 1979, under the influence

of the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam promoted globally by Saudi Arabia, I was a criminal because I wasn't married, my baby as evidence against me.

Needless to say, I returned home to West Virginia, where my son was born on October 16, 2002. When I was in the delivery room, doctors told me that my son's heart rate was falling precariously low. I started saying "Allah hu" with every breath, inhaling the power of the Divine and exhaling it out into the universe.

In these two moments of peril, I tried to invoke a higher spirit for all of the reasons that religion was created: To usher forward calm and solace.

Over the next years, as I tried to make peace with my faith, I realized that our Muslim world is in a spiritual crisis. Since September 11, 2001, we have been challenged as a community. For some of us, that has meant promoting an interpretation of Islam that is tolerant and good. I embrace an interpretation of Islam that we call "Islamic feminism," rejecting the second-class status afforded women in much of the community, going into the main halls of mosques in the United States reserved only for men, an act for which I've been harassed in mosques around the country from my hometown mosque in Morgantown, WV, to Los Angeles, Seattle, New York City, and Washington, DC, including the "9/11 mosque" in northern Virginia, ironically a place of refuge for some of the 9/11 hijackers, former al-Qaeda propagandist Anwar al-Awlaki, and the Fort Hood shooter, Major Nidal Hassan. In 2000, women at 66% of the U.S. mosques prayed behind a curtain or partition or in another room, compared with 52% in 1994, according to a survey of leaders of 416 mosques Nationwide.

In my mosque in West Virginia, I got a copy of a Quran published by the government of Saudi Arabia. The original first chapter of the Quran innocuously reads: "Show us the straight way. The way of those on whom Thou has bestowed Thy Grace. Those whose (portion) is not wrath, and who go not astray." (1:6-7)

Changing the translation, the Quran published by the King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Quran in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia spells out exactly who has gone astray: the "Christians" and the "Jews."

"Guide us on the straight way. The Way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, not (the way) of those who earned Your Anger (such as the Jews), nor of those who went astray (such as the Christians)." (1:6-7)

I found the same spirit of frightening theology in a book distributed by our local Muslim Students Association, *Women in the Shade of Islam*, by a Saudi cleric, arguing for an interpretation of Islam of a controversial verse, 4:34, to allow a husband to "beat" his wife. And pulling sermons from a Saudi website, *alminbar.com*, one of our imams warned us from going on the "dark path" of the West. Under trial to be banned for protesting these disturbing teachings, I borrowed from religious reformer Martin Luther and posted "99 Precepts for Opening Hearts, Minds, and Doors in the Muslim World" on the front door of my mosque (Attachment 1).

For others, the challenge has meant clinging even more tightly to tradition and ideology so that our identity cannot be shaken as an ummah, or community. The net effect has been devastating. We are failing our youth. We are failing the world. And we are failing our faith.

It is for the future of our children that I firmly believe we have to change the course of relations between Muslims and the West. My experience in Karachi was life-changing and propelled me onto a path as a writer, challenging conventional doctrine, interpretation, and ideas in my Muslim community. I call my new incarnation *jihad bil kulum*, or "struggle of the pen," to assert a new way of thinking about taboo topics from militancy in the community to issues of sexuality, women's rights, and truth-telling.

Last month in May 2012, reporting for *Washingtonian* magazine, I attended the Guantanamo Bay arraignment of the five defendants charged for the 9/11 attacks, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammad. Cues about how important Islam is to the thinking of these five men speak volumes. Defendant Ramzi bin al Shibh did the call to prayer in the military courtroom, to be followed by Khalid Sheikh Mohammad laying his prayer rug toward Mecca and leading the four other defendants behind him in prayer to the heavens. They ended their prayer as we all do, in our Muslim communities: Saying salam to the figurative angels on their shoulders.

SAVING FACE

Like every faith, honesty, truth, and justice are values of importance in Islam. But the notion of truth-telling in the Muslim community is a complicated one.

From a cross-cultural communications perspective, pioneered by scholars such as Edward T. Hall, societies and individuals fit into two typical models: High-context

and low-context. This analysis is by no means black-and-white, but it's a frame of reference.

High-context cultures are typically characterized by communication styles that require a lot of context, family lineage, for example, having great value. These cultures include countries such as Afghanistan, Japan, China, Pakistan, India, and nations inside Africa, Latin American, and South America. Muslim communities fit into this category.

Low-context cultures, in contrast, require little context, an individual's personal identity, for example, being more important than ancestry. They typically include the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, and most other Western nations.

There are some characteristics of high-context, shame-based cultures that express themselves in confronting difficult issues, such as the issue of radicalization in the Muslim community. One of the most important elements is how Muslim communities are largely characterized by a high value for honor and an aversion to shame. Muslim communities, like so many, are largely shame-based societies, and they don't take easily to admitting their problems.

In the name of honor—and saving face—many in the Muslim community circle the wagons and deny ugly truths, like many communities respond when they feel like they are under siege. In these cultures, saving face trumps truth-telling. Since these cultures are also collectivist in nature, a criticism against an individual or a discussion of a specific issue is often taken as an affront against the entire culture.

Thus, in these cultures, people often take a very defensive posture to issues that risk embarrassing the community. In a discussion on the specific, narrow issue of radicalization in the Muslim community, we get defensive statements filled with hyperbole, such as, "The United States is at war with Islam," "Not all Muslims are bad," and "Islam is on trial," rather than precise, nuanced discussions. This has very much been the response of Muslim organizations to the committee hearings and the broader issue of radicalization in the Muslim community. A discussion of a precise issue is perceived as an affront to all.

In low-context cultures, when we can ask a simple question, "Is there a radicalization problem inside of Muslim communities?" we expect a straight-forward answer: Yes or no, moving directly from the questioner at point A to the respondent at point B. In fact, in low-context cultures, largely defined by guilt instead of shame, confessions have great value. It works to tell someone in a guilt-based culture: "Go ahead. Get that off your chest. You'll feel better."

Figure 1: Low-Context Communication Style



In high-context cultures, we get a long-winded, loopy contextual answer between point A and point B. In shame-based cultures, individuals don't feel better by confessing; they feel worse for bringing shame upon themselves and perhaps their family and community.

Figure 2: High-Context Communication Style



What can occur when these two styles meet is classic cross-cultural communications clash.

Figure 3: Cross-Cultural Communications Clash



In the case of the committee hearings, we heard about the issue of extremism in white supremacist communities, the perceived civil rights abuses against Muslims, the historical legacy of colonialism, and the illegitimacy of commentators on the issue. For the most part, from Muslim critics of the hearing, we didn't get a straight answer to the question of radicalization in the community.

In much the same spirit, when former 60 Minutes correspondent Ed Bradley asked Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, a prominent American Muslim leader, about the 9/11 attack, Mr. Rauf responded with a contextual answer: "It is a reaction against the policies of the U.S. Government, politically, where we espouse principles of democracy and human rights and where we ally ourselves with oppressive regimes in many of these countries." The response caused Mr. Bradley to even stammer: "Are—are—are you in any way suggesting that we in the United States deserved what happened?" Mr. Rauf responded, "I wouldn't say that the United States deserved what happened, but the United States policies were an accessory to the crime that happened."

The net result: A classic case of cross-cultural communications clash. Mr. Rauf drew the ire of American listeners who didn't want to hear the historical context of the attacks, and he got head-nodding from Muslims who appreciated the context he brought to the discussion.

"WOUND COLLECTORS" AND "COUCH JIHADIS"

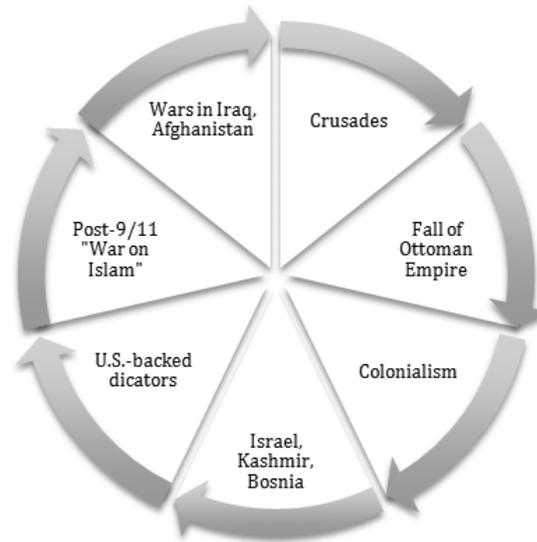
In 2005, Joe Navarro, a former FBI special agent, coined the concept of terrorists as "wound collectors" in a book, *Hunting Terrorism: A Look at the Psychopathology of Terror*, which incorporated years of experience analyzing terrorists worldwide from Spain to today's Islamic movements. He wrote that "terrorists are perennial wound collectors," bringing up "events from decades and even centuries past." He noted: "Their recollection of these events is as meaningful and painful today as when they originally took place. For them there is no statute of limitations on suffering. Wound collection to a great extent is driven by their fears and their paranoia which coalesces nicely with their uncompromising ideology. Wound collecting serves a purpose, to support and vindicate, keeping all past events fresh, thus magnifying their significance into the present, a rabid rationalization for fears and anxieties within."

To me, this phenomenon extends to the larger Muslim community, where there are wounds expressed in living room debates that earn many Muslims status as "couch jihadis," as one U.S. law enforcement official referred to them in conversation with me. I grew up eavesdropping on these "couch jihadis" in the men's sections of our dinner parties. Indeed, Mr. Navarro, told me, "Collecting wounds become cultural," for communities worldwide. Clearly, knowing a community's wounds is important to understanding its history, Mr. Navarro said, but he noted, "The beauty of extremism is that it doesn't allow forgiveness."

In the Muslim community, you could spin a wheel and pluck from a number of grievances that would have as much relevance today as when it was first experienced. I call this a "circle of wounds" that very much express themselves in our Muslim communities.

Steven Stosny, a psychologist and the author of *Love Without Hurt*, counsels individuals struggling with wounds defining their interpersonal relationships, but he says wounds can also define a culture or community. "There is a cultural quality to wounds," he told me. "Collecting wounds holds the group together." He said that wounds can also lead to "denial and complete insensitivity" of others' hurts. Approached a different way, however, healing can emerge: "When you can focus on another's wounds," he said, "you heal your own."

In America, I would gently suggest, we haven't yet healed the wound from 9/11. And in the Muslim community, we have a circle of wounds from the Crusades to the modern day wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Figure 4: Circle of Wounds in Muslim Communities**CULTURE OF DENIAL**

In the years since 9/11, the Muslim community has launched obtuse public relations campaigns that don't address issues of radicalism head-on, but rather focus on these perceived wounds. Speaking as a journalist, this is a disastrous PR strategy, whether it's expressed by Union Carbide following the Bhopal, India, disaster or by Muslim organizations following the 9/11 attacks.

This strategy expresses itself in Muslim communities worldwide, leading outsiders to ask frustrated questions such as, "Why doesn't the moderate majority Muslims speak up against extremism?" Often, many Muslims think they are speaking up, but they don't realize their statements are filled with denials and deflection.

In 2008 in Pakistan, local pop stars attempted to challenge the issue of militancy in the country with a song akin to the U.S. pop song, "We are the World." To me, they did the kind of tap dance that frustrates so many. I call it the "tap dance of denial." The Pakistani song was "Ye Hum Naheeh," or "This is not us," in Urdu, the official language of Pakistan. In the lyrics, the pop stars refer to the militancy exported from Pakistan to targets from London to Mumbai, India, and Time Square, New York, and sing, "This story that is being spread in our names is a lie." There is an obfuscation of the truth in their denial.

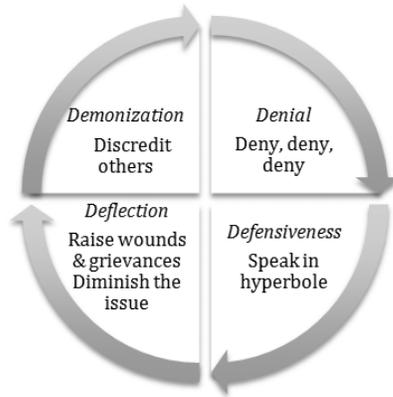
In a moment of clarity, the singers acknowledge a truth about the self-destructive nature of militancy and terrorism to the Muslim community—and the consequence of paralysis. "We are scared of the dark so much that we are burning our own home," they sing. The singers ultimately acknowledge the grief at hand for all: "Your hurts are a deep sea—our wounds are deep."

Studying the response of Muslims to difficult issues from the House hearings on radicalization to the presence of Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad, Pakistan, near the nation's capital, I've identified four elements typically found in the Muslim community's leaders and citizens as they attempt to save face:

- Denial: Outright denial of the problem.
- Demonization: Employing this approach, it's common to attempt to discredit others.
- Deflection: Diverting the discussion, most often to grievances and wounds.
- Defensiveness: Framing the discussion as an attack on the entire culture and religion.

This dynamic expresses itself in a self-perpetuating circle of denial that feeds anger, frustration, and hurt.

Figure 5: Circle of Denial in Muslim Communities and Beyond

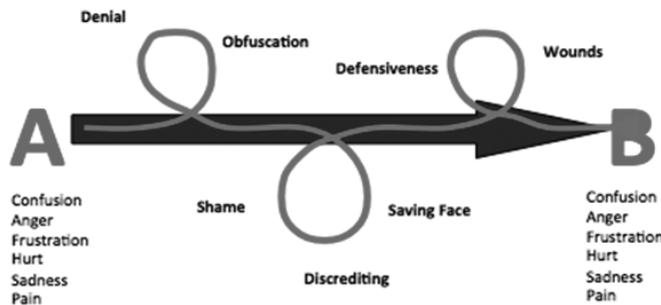


The net effect of the communications culture clash is disastrous for all sides, leading very often to anger, hurt, pain, confusion, and anger for everyone. Even in jest, in an episode called, “To Kill a Mockingturd,” after the killing of Osama bin Laden in Pakistan, comedian commentator Jon Stewart crumpled a piece of paper in frustration, responding to former Pakistani leader Pervez Musharraf’s denials about knowledge of bin Laden’s presence in his country, Mr. Stewart asking, rhetorically: “You know what hurts the most?”

Mr. Stewart responded, “You lied to me! You lied to me!” He ended: “I can’t talk about this!”

This same cycle of frustration and anger occurred, from my perspective, in the wake of the announcement that a mosque was to be built near Ground Zero for the 9/11 attacks in lower Manhattan, Imam Faisal Abdul Rauf an early proponent. Many New Yorkers perceived the plans to build the mosque as insensitive. I agreed. The cycle of confusion, anger, pain, frustration, hurt, and sadness spilled over onto the streets of New York on the anniversary of 9/11 as protestors against the mosque confronted supporters.

Figure 6: Culture Clash between Muslim Communities and Others



In our Muslim community, the constant airing of grievances can paralyze us from taking personal responsibility for problems within our community. We live in a state of shame and victimization. That leads to insensitivity, defensiveness, and denial. For example, after 9/11, leaders at a Long Island mosque with which Chairman King had had good relations were quoted in the newspaper, repeating conspiracy

theories. The mosque's interfaith director at the time said: "Who really benefits from such a horrible tragedy that is blamed on Muslims and Arabs? Definitely Muslims and Arabs do not benefit. It must be the enemy of Muslims and Arabs. An independent investigation must take place." Chairman King later told the *Washington Post* about his distress over the reaction: "At this key moment for our country, the worst attack on us in history, these people who I thought were my friends were talking about Zionists and conspiracies," he said. "They were trying to look the other way while friends of mine were being murdered."

BREAKING THE SILENCE

To me, the committee hearings have not been a witch-hunt and Chairman King is no Joe McCarthy, the Senator who led hearings on communism in America. Far from being harassment, the committee's hearings have represented a chance for U.S. Muslims to break out of the culture of denial and acknowledge the extremism in our community.

Our worst enemies in America, I would argue, are Muslim interest groups and leaders, who do more to deny the problem of Muslim extremism than to defeat it, thus furthering the alienation of the Muslim community in the West and elsewhere. We need to acknowledge that there is a problem.

Our community heroes should be individuals such as the first witnesses at the committee's hearings: Zuhdi Jasser, a former lieutenant commander in the U.S. Navy who battles ideologues at mosques in Phoenix and Nation-wide, and Abdirizak Bihi, a Somali-American who has challenged extremism in the Minneapolis community that has led to so many Somali-American youths going to their native country to fight for the Muslim extremist group al-Shabaab. Both have challenged extremism in their communities, but they have done so at great personal cost. They realize, I believe, that we have a greater imperative to right wrongs than be silenced by fear of shame.

It's never easy to speak honestly about the "dirty laundry" in any community. In 2003, when I wrote about sexism and intolerance at my local mosque in Morgantown, West Virginia, a moderate young Egyptian-American attorney met me at the local Panera Bread. He had told me that he supported me but when we met he said, "Stop writing." His rationalization: "You are shaming the community."

Liberals complain that the hearings on American Muslims are a racist blame game. They often attempt to discredit and marginalize any Muslims trying to express their truth about the radicalization of Islam. This is what I witnessed happen to the Muslim witnesses at the first hearing. From my vantage point in the fourth row of the packed hearing room, sitting next to my son, Shibli, I was left with a very lasting memory. The hearing didn't amount to the much-anticipated slam against Muslims but rather it devolved, ironically, into an attack on the Muslim witnesses. It was horrifying to watch and more difficult to explain to my son.

The attempt to discredit war stories from the trenches in the battle against extremist interpretations of Islam is extremely troubling to me because so much of the inspiration for reform comes from the success of liberals in the U.S. civil rights, women's rights, and other social justice struggles. I'm as liberal as you can get: Pro-gun control, pro-choice, pro-union, and pro-same sex marriage. But, on this issue of challenging extremism inside Islam, the hearing revealed to me that many liberals, sadly, are overlooking a serious issue of extremism, in the name of political correctness. While well-intentioned, this approach is, to my estimation, short-sighted. If we continue at this rate of denial, as a Nation, we don't stand a chance against al-Qaeda and Islamic militancy.

To me, the stories of the witnesses resonated. They expressed the same dynamics of intimidation that others and I have experienced trying to challenge dogma at our mosques. What's so disheartening is that women's rights and civil-rights leaders and activists have fought the same forces of intimidation and theological distortion that we face in the Muslim community when we challenge the dogmatic. We should be natural allies. Challenging the authority and legitimacy of other Muslims is usually the tactic puritanical Muslims (and all ideologues) use to silence reformers. It's a game in which Muslims try to out-Muslim each other.

Interestingly, conservatives have recognized the importance of challenging Islamic extremism. The liberals attack leaders such as Chairman King as the wrong person to lead the discussion. But the reason I support these hearings is that, at least, this committee has the courage to hold this conversation and to explore this critical and contentious situation.

As the final gavel fell, one of the activists hurled one final insult at Jasser, the Phoenix physician. "You hate-monger!" she yelled at him. But Jasser had accom-

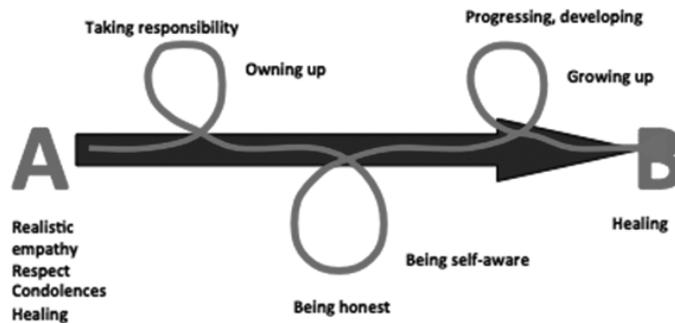
plished something very different: As a Muslim, he had broken the silence that only empowers the extremists.

“OWNING UP”

There is a Quranic verse that reminds us of our divine imperative to testify to the truths of problems inside our community: “Oh ye who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to God, even if it may be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin”—“Al-Nisa” (The Women), Quran, 4: 135.

To transform our culture of denial, we need to do something very simple: Own up. We have Islamic values of forgiveness, truth-telling, and honesty to take personal and societal responsibility for acknowledging, challenging, and ultimately defeating radicalization within the community from an Islam of grace.

Table 7: Growing Up: An Islam of Grace



On the part of the West, there are elements of communication that we can contribute to bridge the gap:

- Realistic empathy can at least acknowledge the wounds. It doesn't have to be expressed as sympathy but rather just empathy for the grievances, wounds, and frustrations that are a part of highly contextual perspectives that many Muslims bring to the conversation.
- Simply being respectful affords some level of humanity in the conversation.
- Expressing even condolences for the perceived injustices can help mitigate the pain.
- With that, perhaps, can come some healing.

On the Muslim side, there are elements of communication that we need to incorporate:

- Owning up to the problem of radicalization and extremism in our communities by being honest about our problems.
- Taking responsibility for our problems so we can be part of the solutions. This amounts to being self-aware so we recognize our problems and our inclination to deflect and deny.
- Progressing and developing our institutions so we give Muslims viable opportunities for expression in politics, the media, and public policymaking.
- I say this in most loving way possible, but we need to grow up, forgiving and approaching the world from a rational perspective, allowing healing not only to others but ourselves.

Dr. Nancy Snow, a professor of cross-cultural communication at the University of California in Fullerton and a friend who has taught this topic with me to the U.S. military, told me, “We face a problem on how we all can move from a place of wound and grievance to one of redemption and hope. We seem to be at our farthest point from each other now. We can choose to keep our distance from each other, but if we do, we'll never heal. We need to come out from the dark places that distance us from each other. We often say in communication circles that sunshine is the best of disinfectants. It refers to shining a light on the darkness, those hidden parts of us that fester—anger, hate, grievance, revenge.”

As a Muslim, this is our jihad bil nafs, or our struggle of the soul, for us as individuals and as a community. As an American, this is our personal and societal battle, as well.

The Muslim community has many valuable contributions to make to the U.S. and Western society, including our focus on values such as truth and justice, but these

important values and truths are lost when our most visible representatives resort to terrorism—and the voices from within our community engage in the cycle of denial.

We allow shame, or *sharam* as it's said in my native language of Urdu, and honor, or *ghairat*, to silence us. To me, this is the voice of our ego, and thus we need to be engaged in this *jihad bil nafs*. We need to choose reason and rationality, not shame and denial. We would be best served by exercising *ijtihad*, or critical thinking, owning up to issues the community's internal problems and issues so it can move past them, evolving and maturing.

We have to shake off the fear of shame and own the problems inside our community. In a sense, we need to be shameless. We have to realize that neither our community nor Islam has to be defined by criminals such as Major Nidal Hassan and Faisal Shahzad, but they will be if we don't accept these men and their ideologies came from our communities but we reject their thinking. Muslim communities may have legitimate grievances about U.S. foreign policy, but those grievances, too often, become excuses for avoiding the ugly truths about radicalization in our communities.

On the eve of this hearing, Rodney King, the victim of police violence years ago, died, his simple message enduring: "Can't we all just get along?"

As Muslims, it is up to us to stop walking on eggshells and avoiding a critical conversation about the dangerous interpretations of faith that exist in our community. It is up to us to lead an intelligent, nuanced, honest conversation, rather than just jumping to the blanket defense of Islam. If we own the problem, then we can all own the solution together.

Last year, when my son was in second grade, before the first committee hearing, he came home with an assignment he had completed in school, titled, "Rights and Responsibilities." In it, he answered the question, "What does it mean to own up?" He responded by confessing that he didn't always brush his teeth when he told me he had. (I had no idea.) Seeing the early lesson my son was receiving in "owning up," I realized that this was the simple mandate we had to realize in our Muslim communities.

My personal heroes are my father and my mother, because they chose truth-telling over status in the community. My father lost his position on our local mosque board when he stood with me for women's rights and tolerance. He also lost his friends. My mother prayed with me in the men's section of the mosque, and she stopped getting invitations to potluck dinners. What they remind me is that, beyond board positions, potluck dinners, and shame, it is our duty, as Muslims, to testify to the truth even if it is against our "kin."

Sitting behind me during my testimony, symbolically over my shoulders, they are the manifestation, to me, of the greater mandate we have as Muslims: To express an Islam of grace that is honest about our extremism, radicalization, and terrorism and constructive in our solutions.

As I would with the angels, I will express one thought to all, upon the end of my testimony, "As-salam-alaikum," or "peace be upon you."

ATTACHMENT 1.—99 PRECEPTS FOR OPENING HEARTS, MINDS, AND DOORS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

These precepts invoke the 99 names for Allah, or God.

1. The Loving One: Live with an open heart to others.
2. The Only One: We are all part of one global community.
3. The One: All people—women and men, people of all faiths, cultures, and identities—are created and exist as equals.
4. The Self-Sufficient: All people—women and men, people of all faiths, cultures, and identities—have a right to self-determination.
5. The Creator of Good: All people have a human right to happiness.
6. The First: A fundamental goal of religion is to inspire in us the best of human behaviour.
7. The Preserver: Religion isn't meant to destroy people.
8. The One Who Gives Clemency: We aren't meant to destroy people.
9. The Absolute Ruler: We are not rulers over each other.
10. The Owner of All: No individual or group of individuals may treat any of us as property.
11. The Mighty: Spirituality goes far deeper than mere adherence to rituals.
12. The Appraiser: We are the sum of our small deeds of kindness for others.
13. The Inspirer of Faith: It is not for human beings to judge who is faithful and who is not.

14. The One with Special Mercy: Humanity and God are best served by separating the “sin” from the “sinner”.
15. The Finder: Virtue doesn’t come with wealth.
16. The Supreme One: All people are created with an inner nature that seeks divine nature and is disposed toward virtue.
17. The Doer of Good: Thus, live virtuously.
18. The Greatest: Have the courage to take risks.
19. The Possessor of All Strength: Have the courage to stand up for your beliefs, for truth, and for justice even when they collide with the status quo.
20. The One Who Honours: Respect one another.
21. The Magnificent: Glorify one another with kind words, not harsh words.
22. The Forgiver: Forgive one another, and ourselves, with compassion.
23. The All-Compassionate: Be compassionate with one another.
24. The Compeller: Love the soul even when we don’t love the “sin”.
25. The All-Merciful: Be motivated by love of God, not fear of God.
26. The Supreme in Greatness: Be kind, respectful, and considerate with one another.
27. The One Who Rewards Thankfulness: Appreciate the freedoms you enjoy.
28. The Accounter: Know that we are all accountable for how we treat one another.
29. The Gatherer: Know that anyone you wrong will testify against you on your judgement day.
30. The Expander: Be friends to one another.
31. The Exalter: Win the greatest struggle—the struggle of the soul, jihad bil nafs—to good.
32. The Highest: Rise to the highest principles of Islam’s benevolent teachings.
33. The Giver of All: Rise to the highest values of human existence, not the lowest common denominator.
34. The One Who Opens: Live with an open mind.
35. The One Who Enriches: The Qur’an enjoins us to enrich ourselves and our communities with knowledge.
36. The Subtle One: Islam is not practiced in a monolithic way.
37. The All-Forgiving: We allow ourselves to be more positively transformed if we accept rather than despise our dark side.
38. The Maker of Beauty: Islam can be a religion of joy.
39. The Maker of Order: In any society governed by oppression and senseless rules, there will be rebellion, whether expressed publicly or in private.
40. The Guide to Repentance: Evil is social injustice, discrimination, prideful rigidity, bigotry, and intolerance.
41. The Nourisher: We were all created with the right to make our own decisions about our lives, our minds, our bodies, and our futures.
42. The One Who Withholds: Certain traditions and ideologies betray Islam as a religion of peace, tolerance, and justice.
43. The Creator of the Harmful: Repression creates fears that are manifested in dysfunctional ways.
44. The Generous: Women possess the same human rights as men.
45. The All-Comprehending: Chastity and modesty are not the sole measure of a woman’s worth.
46. The Last: Puritanical repression of sexuality and issues of sexuality is self-defeating and creates a hypersexual society.
47. The Seer of All: The false dichotomy between the private world and the public world leads us to avoid being completely honest about issues of sexuality.
48. The Majestic One: The Qur’an tells us: There is no compulsion in religion.
49. The All-Aware: The Qur’an enjoins us: Exhort one another to truth.
50. The Knower of All: Thus, seek knowledge.
51. The All-Powerful: Do not put any barriers in front of any person’s pursuit of knowledge.
52. The Ever-Living One: Reject ignorance, isolation, and hatred.
53. The Truth: Live truthfully.
54. The Praised One: Praise worthy aspiration, not destruction.
55. The Manifest One: Be the leader you want to see in the world even though you lack position, rank, or title.
56. The Perfectly Wise: Lead with wisdom.
57. The Originator: Open the doors of ijthad (critical thinking) based on istihsan (equity) and istihsal (the needs of the community).
58. The One Who Is Holy: Honour and respect the voices and rights of all people.
59. The Sustainer: Empower each other, particularly women, to be self-sustaining.

60. The Governor: Do not allow anyone to unleash a vigilante force on any man, woman, or child.
61. The Hearer of All: Be honest about issues of sexuality in our communities.
62. The Expeditor: Lift repression.
63. The Guardian: Reject a sexual double standard for men and women.
64. The Restorer: Reform our communities to reject bigoted, sexist, and intolerant practices.
65. The Righteous Teacher: Question defective doctrine from a perspective based on the Qur'an, the traditions of the Prophet and ijtiḥad.
66. The One Who Resurrects: Know that we all will face a reckoning for our deeds.
67. The Guide: We must open the doors of Islam to all.
68. The Creator of All Power: We are in a struggle of historic proportions for the way Islam expresses itself in the world.
69. The Mighty: The Qur'an is clear: Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to God, even if it may be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin.
70. The Satisfier of All Needs: Political expediency does not override our morally compelled duty to tell the truth.
71. The Responder to Prayer: Spiritual activism is a noble pursuit.
72. The One Who Humiliates: Sexism, stereotypes, and intolerance are the common denominators of all extremism.
73. The Giver of Life: We cannot accept murder in the name of Islam.
74. The Inheritor of All: Racism, sexism, and hatred are unacceptable in God's world.
75. The Taker of Life: Dogmatism and intolerance lead to violence.
76. The One Who Abases: Making women invisible is a defining feature of violent societies.
77. The Just: Women and men are spiritual and physical equals.
78. The Equitable One: Women's rights are equal to men's rights.
79. The Witness: Nothing we do is without a witness.
80. The One Who Prevents Harm: Rejecting injustice is more important than protecting honour.
81. The Delayer: Honour can be the worst expression of ego.
82. The Judge: Justice is not what the majority believes is right.
83. The Forbearing One: We are not judges of each other.
84. The Ruler of Majesty and Bounty: If change will come tomorrow, we should not wait but should create it today.
85. The Trustee: Thus, know women have an intrinsic right to be leaders in all capacities in our Muslim world, including as prayer leaders or imams.
86. The Creator: Reach inside to create the change you want to see in the world.
87. The Forceful One: Stand strong for justice.
88. The One Who Subdues: Stand up to extremists and all forms of extremism.
89. The Self-Existing One: Break the silence sheltering injustice and intolerance.
90. The Originator: Create a new reality.
91. The Glorious: Stand up to the forces of darkness.
92. The Watchful One: Question the source of hate in order to dismantle it.
93. The Protector: Respect women's equal rights and human dignity, from the mosque and the public square to the workplace and the bedroom.
94. The Avenger: Use principles of social justice to define our communities.
95. The Everlasting: Stand up to create an everlasting Muslim world that will enrich our global society.
96. The Patient One: Exercise patience as a virtue, not as an excuse.
97. The Source of Peace: Live peacefully with others.
98. The Light: Create cities of light to overpower the darkness in our Muslim world.
99. The Hidden One: Ultimately our choice is only one: We must create communities with open hearts, open minds, and open doors to all.

Chairman KING. Thank you, Ms. Nomani.

The Chairman now recognizes Dr. Ahmed for her opening statement. Dr. Ahmed—

**STATEMENT OF QANTA A.A. AHMED, MD, FACP, FCCP, FAASM,
PRIVATE CITIZEN**

Dr. AHMED. Good morning. Thank you, Chairman King, and to all of the distinguished Members of the panel for this opportunity to testify.

I practice both Islam and medicine. I have lived and worshiped in the United States for 14 years. My interest in this issue is spiritual, academic, and clinical in several matters. I have practiced medicine in Saudi Arabia, in London where I treated British-Muslim—patients. Currently, in New York, I care for a number of World Trade Center first responders without financial burden through the providence of the Zadroga bill, which has given me a special insight into the burdens of radical Islamist acts on Americans 10 years after the acts are committed.

In my capacity as a Templeton-Cambridge Journalism Fellow, I chose to study Jihadist ideologies at the University of Cambridge. As a result, earlier this year, in March, traveled to the SWAT to actually see a school called “Sabaoon” that many in the State Department will be familiar with, which de-radicalizes child militants who were working with the Pakistani Taliban.

So on one hand, I have seen the impacts of violent Islamist extremism. On the other hand, I have seen how individuals who are vulnerable between the ages of 10 and 20 are inducted into these acts.

Looking at the findings of these investigative hearings to which I have been recently privy, it is clear that similar patterns are at work here in the United States, where vulnerable individuals can be isolated and seduced into a nihilistic and quite separatist ideology, which is not a religion. What is so important about these hearings and why we actually need a synopsis of the hearings is the distinction between Islam and Islamism has been lost in the public discourse. I think these hearings actually provide us that.

Islam is a monotheistic spiritual faith. Islamism is a political ideology with totalitarian missions and is well described within the fields of political science.

The reaction to the hearings in the Muslim community I can speak to you about come from a number of readers. I have over 100,000 copies of my book sold, many in Muslim majority countries, and of course, here in the United States. The reactions are predictable. People are afraid of the scrutiny and hence the accusations that this process is somehow Islamophobic, when I regard it as deeply Islamophilic to be able to distinguish an ideology from a spiritual belief, as well as excitement that this discussion is actually entering an auspicious arena where policymakers can understand and learn more about these issues.

The incidents in New York to which I am privy because a number of my patients are NYPD active-duty or disabled officers are a typical expression of the fears that I think are misplaced based on a myth of understanding the problem, rather than the problem itself.

If you look at the findings of the hearings, radicalization is occurring in the United States in civilian, military, and prison populations. It is not one root exactly. There are multiple, different kinds of roots, but they are well familiar to experts who examine this. This is a real threat. It is by no means a simplistic argument

that all Muslims are bad or all Muslims are good. It is much too complex for that to be an assumption.

I think there is a great difficulty about discussing this issue because of our shortcomings of language. By that I mean, the syntax and also some of the metaphorical and spiritual loading of the words. We are in a post-9/11 era, in a period of extreme speech in both aspects, whether you are a proponent of violent Islamist ideology, which no one here is, or whether you are an opponent of that, which all of us are.

We also have been burdened by a sanitization of the lexicon, which we can use in official conversations, most recently imposed on our law enforcement agencies. If we cannot name these ideologies or talk about these impacts, we certainly can't begin to solve them.

Why would a Muslim who has completed the Hajj, as I have, who has been raised by devoted parents, who herself is observant, take this stance? I think really because I am inspired by one saying attributed to the prophet Mohammed, whose identified that if a Muslim can identify a wrong—whoever sees a wrong—and is able to put it right with his or her hand—must do so. If he cannot, then with his or her tongue. If he cannot, then with his or her heart. So, with that in mind, I thank you for the opportunity for me to be able to meet the bare minimum of my faith, as the Prophet Mohammed defines it, by identifying a wrong and exposing it as such.

Many thanks.

[The statement of Dr. Ahmed follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF QANTA A.A. AHMED

JUNE 20, 2012

Good morning. Thank you Chairman King and Ranking Committee Member Congressman Thompson and distinguished Members of the committee for the opportunity to testify today on such an important issue.

MY MUSLIM IDENTITY

I am a British citizen, and a Permanent Resident in these United States where I have made my home for 14 years. I am a practicing physician and a practicing Muslim. Religion stems from the etymological Latin root *relegere*, meaning to be gathered or bound together. An individual's narrative of his or her religious experience is often a catalogue of relationships and my Islam is no different, beginning with the gift of Islam from my parents.

There is no divide between any of my multiple roles as I have learned following the example of my parents, both of whom remain true to their faith without encroaching upon the public space yet always espousing pluralism and tolerance. They raised me to observe Islam in the same manner.

I pray, I fast during Ramadan, I find worship in my work and I have also completed the Hajj—the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca. Each year I am fortunate to be able to exceed the Islamic duties of charity required of me annually. My parents support my views which I express here in this chamber today and all of my actions which have lead me to this moment. As a family, for generations, we have explicitly repudiated all forms of violence—including those conducted in the name of Islam—long before the specter of radical Islamism ever blighted these United States.

MY VANTAGE AS AN INTERNATIONALLY EXPERIENCED MUSLIM PHYSICIAN

In my 21 years since qualification, I have practiced on three continents; here in the Americas in the United States—in both South Carolina and New York, in Europe, chiefly in London, and in Asia, namely when I practiced medicine for 2 years, from November 1999 to November 2001 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

This peripatetic path has allowed me to engage intimately with Saudi Muslims as I attended them in their critical illnesses, and later work for many years to im-

proving their public health and that for all Muslim pilgrims to Mecca; and with British Diaspora Muslims as I attended them in Britain's capital. I functioned in these roles as a treating physician, a physician-educator, a physician colleague, a mentor to training doctors. My work has led to numerous publications both in the medical academe and the mainstream media.

For over a decade, I have also been invited to teach and speak at numerous conferences in the Muslim-majority world including for the Saudi Arabian National Guard Health Affairs, for the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Health, for the U.S. Consulate in Jeddah, for the Saudi Arabian Soccer Federation, the American University of Sharjah, and other settings. I have also been asked to visit hospitals and meet physician colleagues in Pakistan. Most recently in November 2011, as a visiting professor I was invited by FIFA to the first meetings evaluating impacts of Ramadan on the elite Muslim footballer convening in both Doha, Qatar and in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

I have therefore lived among, met, treated, taught, worked with, published with, researched with, befriended and, on occasion, been repudiated and abandoned, by many Muslims in many dimensions.

MY EXPERIENCE OF THE BURDEN OF RADICAL ISLAMISM ON MY AMERICAN PATIENTS

Currently, my work as an attending sleep disorders specialist involves personally attending to the World Trade Center First Responder patient population of Nassau County at Winthrop University Hospital. Our hospital provides state-of-the-art care to 2,500 of these Americans without financial burden each year through the provenance of the Zadroga bill, spearheaded by Chairman King and his colleagues.

Hence patients in my personal practice today include multiple members of U.S. law enforcement including active-duty, disabled, and former NYPD, active-duty FBI agents, active, disabled and retired FDNY, former members of the New York Federal Crime Bureau and others who are officially designated as World Trade Center First Responders—6,000 of the Nation's 40,000 first responders live on Long Island. Many of these patients have roles in counter-terrorism task forces today.

I treat these men and women for sleep-related complications developed as a result of their service to our Nation including obstructive sleep apnea syndrome, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression and other conditions. Attending them gives me special insights into the indiscriminate burden of radical Islamist acts born by our community a decade after they assaulted humanity in my adoptive home, New York City, an assault I witnessed from Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Understanding the work and the suffering of my patients and the toll it takes on them makes clear to me the enormous sacrifice they and their families make to safeguard us at times of crisis and in between, a sacrifice much of the Nation has forgotten, or remains unaware of. As a Muslim meeting these Americans reveals the devastating impact of radical Islamism to which few others—Muslims or non-Muslim—will ever be privy.

MY EXPERIENCE WITH CONTEMPORARY RADICAL ISLAMIST IDEOLOGY

In Spring 2010, in recognition of my academic work on Hajj Medicine and health diplomacy, I was selected as the first Muslim woman to complete a Templeton Cambridge Journalism Fellowship in Science and Religion at the University of Cambridge in England. Following a meeting with an internationally recognized expert in counterterrorism, I reviewed data exposing me to the brutality of contemporary radical Islamists and decided focus my fellowship on the psychological manipulation of Islam into the service of terror. I thus specifically evaluated the mechanisms of martyrdom and jihadist ideology as expressed by contemporary radical Islamists. This work both informed my specific knowledge and the many publications I have authored since. My experience of being a Templeton Cambridge Fellow adds special academic context useful to me in interpreting the salient findings of this series of investigative hearings.

As a result of my work at Cambridge, I have met with some of the leading minds approaching counterterrorism studies. One such meeting with one Pakistani neuropsychologist piqued my interest sufficiently to travel to the North West frontier Province of Pakistan (now renamed KPK) in March 2012 to visit Malakand, now secured by the Pakistani military. There, I spent 3 days at "Sabaoon," the Pakistani school founded by civilians to deprogram child militant operatives engaged in militancy with the Pakistani Taliban. There I treated local villagers and traveled to nearby Mingora to see rehabilitated child militants readjusting to community life after successful deprogramming.

At Sabaoon, I met with doctors, teachers, psychotherapists, military leaders, and the child militant rehabilitees themselves all boys aged between 10 and 20. I was

also invited to attend the relatives of these boys for a 1-day traveling clinic to provide basic medical care during which I met, interviewed, examined, and treated the mothers, sisters, grandmothers, siblings, children, and spouses of convicted militant operatives, suicide operation “martyrs” and suspects currently in detention in Saudi Arabia. I recorded many photographs of my visit which I can share in a classified forum if the committee determines there is a need.

During the visit, though I was not granted clearance to question the students directly, under supervision of my fellow physician colleagues and with the Pakistani Rangers nearby, I was allowed to meet with one 15-year-old Pakistani boy in particular. I listened to him for about an hour as he described his transition from a school boy of 13 walking to school, his seduction by an older boy with tales of a “purer”, “more legitimate” Islam—that of the Taliban’s—his voluntary decision to run away and join a network of Taliban militants, his deliberate and very labyrinthine confinements in hiding centers called “markaz” (centers), his handlers’ persistent and successful maneuvering defeating the dedicated efforts of his parents to retrieve him, his training and preparation which he chillingly termed “Tarbiyyat” which means “religious education” (consisting of advanced training in the use of a handgun, the deployment of a grenade and the successful detonation of a suicide jacket) and, finally, his ultimate surrender to a police officer in the designated target of attack—a nearby mosque. I have in my possession his de-identified narrative which can be reviewed in a classified forum but as is not available for disclosure in this public record.

This young boy’s naivete, his isolated and distorted world view, his lack of knowledge of bin Laden or 9/11 and his indoctrination all revealed to me that Islamist ideologies are active, alive, and moving ahead far beyond the reach of 20th Century al-Qaeda ideology. Further, his halting and unconfident Urdu reminded me much of the nascent transition from boyhood to manhood of my own brothers when they were younger, who fortunately have been sheltered from such manipulations by opportunities our family could give them because we are so attached to our native Britain and Islam, not Islamism.

Further, the young boy also revealed his Islamist-indoctrinated hatred of certain sects of Muslims, including Shias who are a minority in Pakistan, his belief that anyone collaborating with a western-dressed individual was an enemy of Islam—including Pakistani troops who are usually dressed in western trousers—and that any who engaged with U.S. troops was also an enemy to Islam.

Exactly these ideologies are being promoted in the United States today, often through portals—whether via internet portals, recurrent migration to Somalia, Sudan, Pakistan, Yemen, or other locations, circulated videos, or pockets of extremism in numerous centers of gatherings including mosques and this series of investigative hearings have revealed that. The essential construct is the same—separation, supremacy, and unquestioning acceptance of nihilistic ambitions—including the deployment of brutally violent measures—all of which collude to eradicate any other diversity.

Since 2009, I have authored dozens of Opinion columns and Editorials published in the mainstream American, British, Dutch, Israeli, and Pakistani press examining the politics and theology of radical contemporary Islamist ideologies.

Unsurprisingly, I have learned the consequences of opining in the free press. I have been subject to personal attack and abuse on-line. In my journalistic activities I also have learned how difficult it is for American newspaper editors, American network television producers, and American media bookers to approach either solicited or unsolicited opinion pieces or television interviews concerning issues pertaining to Islam. There has been a distinct chill in the public discourse including here in the United States which is driven by the rising cries of Islamophobia, the advancing grip of Islamist claims of defamation of Islam which they advance through Islamist Lawfare, the internationalization without protest of Blasphemy laws and the general fear of political “incorrectness” which leads to an enormous loss of counter-arguments in the debate about Islamism and its distinctions from Islam.

THE REACTION TO THE HEARINGS IN THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY

My community begins with my family who not only supports these hearings but have welcomed them. We have a large family thriving in the United States from coast to coast, settled in this country since the 1960s. One of my family members, my cousin, has served in the United States Navy. Earlier than that, some of my maternal uncles trained and studied in 1950s America as invited scholars. Many of us are American citizens. We are also very well acquainted with the abuses and discrimination that pass for “official Islam” as expressed in Islamist Pakistan and are

extremely aware of the hazards of empowering those who espouse a supremacist ideology born of Islamism but masquerading as Islam. To my surprise not a single member of my family discouraged me from participating in these investigative hearings even though they remain aware of the risks this can pose to me in my everyday life.

I also have a vibrant Muslim readership among my almost 100,000 readers of my book, who communicate with me through social network platforms, letters, and emails or respond on-line to articles I have authored in almost every major mainstream publication in the United States. Many of my self-identifying Muslim readers express fear that the investigative hearings will misrepresent Islam and fuel Islamophobia while also expressing excitement that this discussion is entering the public space in such an auspicious arena. Their sentiment about the investigative hearings revolve more around the scrutiny of activities of some Muslim Americans rather than the actual findings of the investigative hearings which few of them could cite.

For my support of these investigative hearings and for my writings sympathetic to the concerns of these investigative hearings I have also been subject to intimidation on Twitter often from self-identifying Muslims who clearly denounce these hearings. Their abusive hostility is largely centered on the claim that my views supportive of these investigative hearings as unrepresentative of Muslim Americans.

On a professional level many of my former academic Muslim colleagues now eschew contact with me as my political voice has become more widely heard, some because of the personal affront it causes them and others because they are beholden to theocratic Muslim states and now see their relationship with me as a risk. It is significant that only one member of my circle of academic Muslim colleagues in the Middle East wrote to me with encouragement. They see my support of America in general as "collusion."

A recent publication on *Huffington Post* is more encouraging of the Muslim-American reaction. In it I wrote about my Evolution as an Anti-Islamist Muslim and I found it generated an overwhelming response many of them very positive from self-identified Muslims who commented my views to be ahead of the public awareness and supported my endeavors and views including my call for the exposure of the imposter of Islamism to be distinguished from Islam.

It is however important to add that as an Anti-Islamist Muslim my community IS America, as Islam demands it, not an enclave within America, but the entire Nation. These investigative hearings while entitled to examine the reaction of American Muslims within their communities might be better expressed as our reaction within America because this is what Islam teaches us—that we must collaborate, cooperative, enhance, and contribute to the community surrounding us, and not remain in insular, disengaged groups which engender and then empower silos of disconnection and disaffection.

Unfortunately the reaction in wider America to these investigative hearings has been initial vilification and later disdain as manifested by the extraordinary disinterest of the mainstream media in the hard findings of these hearings. This uninformed response has not been redirected by informed or motivated media coverage despite the opportunity to redress the balance, revealing the wider media may itself have some discomfort denouncing Islamism.

HOW I INTERPRET THE FINDINGS OF THE HEARINGS

These investigative hearings reveal radicalization is on-going in multiple sectors right here in the United States, in our civilian community, in our military community and in our prison community. Muslims in America can be radicalized despite the best efforts of their parents or mentors. We also have learned radicalization in America is usually facilitated by handlers and Islamist seducers who operate on multiple planes using multiple forms of media and are facile at identifying or exploiting the vulnerable. This is exactly how Pakistani Taliban Islamists operate in Pakistan and elsewhere based on what I have seen in person and my extensive reading of, and meetings with, counter-terrorism experts. We cannot ignore the domestic risks here and threat both to our National security, and by extrapolation, to international security. I cite a few examples revealed by these investigative hearings:

On December 7, 2011, Daris Long, father of a son murdered by radical Islamists testified "the political correctness exhibited by the Government over offending anyone in admitting the truth about Islamist extremism masked alarm bells that were going off. Warnings were ignored, Major Nidal Hassan was able to openly praise the Little Rock shootings in front of fellow army officers and then commit his own jihad". This is consistent with the shortcomings of language and the paralysis of po-

litical correctness that I identify as one of the barriers to examining radical Islamism in the United States.

On March 12, 2011, Melvin Bledsoe testified that his son Abdul Hakim Muhammad was “brainwashed” by Nashville Muslims leading to his terrorist training in Yemen to return to murder one soldier and injure another at a U.S. military recruitment center. This confirms the same forces seducing a Pakistani schoolboy in the SWAT are at work in the American heartland.

On July 27, 2011, Ahmed Hussen, President of the Canadian Somali Congress recognized our vulnerability in this ideological battle of Islamism with Islam and Islamism’s exploitation of victimhood: “There has not been a parallel attempt to counter the toxic anti-Western narrative that creates a culture of victimhood in the minds of members of our community.” This confirms the utility to Islamists of cultivating a manufactured sense of victimhood among vulnerable Muslims.

MY MOTIVATION TO ENTER THE PUBLIC DISCOURSE: TO COMBAT ISLAMISM

In the years since 9/11, every Muslim has been compelled to confront his or her identity. This has been a direct function of the martyrdom terrorism acts of 9/11. Since then, the lay audience and much of expert opinion has been unable to separate Islamism from Islam. Today this is our greatest challenge. Distinguishing Islam and Islamism requires nuance and care, which few in the media are prepared to provide or even qualified to identify.

Some, while well-intentioned but deeply uninformed, retaliate against the sound intelligence and countermeasures that must be taken, including mechanisms such as these investigative hearings, and instead unwittingly collude with the non-violent manifestations of the Islamists which have long since evolved to new elements masquerading as the “peaceful” translators and “owners” of Islam. I am here to tell you non-violent Islamists are not the owners of Islam nor is their intent peaceful.

I was in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia when the Towers fell. Within hours, I discovered my sentiments of loss and sorrow were not widely shared, either by Saudi physician colleagues or by fellow non-Saudi Muslim expatriate workers, many of whom had been trained by Americans in New York City like myself or other cities in the United States—some of us even shared the same professors of medicine.

This discovery came as a terrible shock to my naiveties at the time and I was patronizingly ridiculed for being so “pro-American.” I realized the version of Islam my parents had given, and our reverence for the nations who had sheltered and reared me—Britain and the United States—wasn’t widely accepted. That fellow physicians, as highly-trained and as privileged as I, could be elated at the loss of life and the transient bowing of America’s spirit utterly displaced me to a new, harsher reality.

In the wake of 9/11, I saw Osama bin Laden feted as a hero in Pakistan, nation of my matrilineal and patrilineal heritage. On one trip I recall a Pakistani driver in Karachi explaining to me why 7 years after 9/11, Pakistani families were still naming their newborns Osama in his honor. He was still deified, recognized by many as a “defender” of Islam, a “warrior savior”. Nothing could be more offensive to my beliefs as a Muslim or my principles as a human being. This was extraordinarily difficult to reconcile with the knowledge that Islam condemns all murder, and particularly the execution of non-combatant civilians in any setting. In my mind bin Laden and his sympathizers had renounced Islam by their acts and represented nothing more than violent terrorists and those who named their first-borns after Osama were lionizing nothing more than a mass murderer.

Soon after my return from Saudi Arabia, I began to record my experiences in a manuscript that would become my first book, *In the Land of Invisible Women* now in its 10th edition and published in 13 countries including Muslim-majority Senegal, Indonesia, Turkey, Pakistan, and Mauritius. Realizing I would be representing two versions of Islam—mine, and that espoused by the theocracy of Saudi Arabia—I needed to broaden my reading around key areas.

It was in my reading that I discovered the political ideology termed Islamism, and the many strains of contemporary radical Islamism, both violent and non-violent. I learned unlike my own experience, many Muslims struggled with a pervasive sense of inferiority, influencing their beliefs, sense of justice and identities leading to deep and rather novel resentments. The fascist supremacy of Islamist ideologues was therefore a predictably appealing, if very frightening development, which was completely alien to the Islam I knew.

Over this decade the Islamist voice has become increasingly prominent both in the United States and globally—whether in advancing the intrusion of the ritual symbolism of Islam into the public space—for instance the battle for the niqab in the public arena in France, the demands for the veil to be permitted in FIFA soccer

tournaments, or the most recent debacle involving the vilification of the NYPD for their counterterrorism efforts drawing false accusations of Muslim profiling.

Throughout the world, including in the United States, the Islamists' goal is one and the same: To stoke the fires of unwitting Muslims into believing in their own manufactured sense of victimhood as a means to exploit both the uninformed Muslim and often times the liberal democracies where we make our homes. It is this last fallacy, of collective victimhood, that most fuels my drive to expose Islamism for what it is—a weak yet vicious imposter for a great religion, an imposter which seeks to exploit and devour both Muslims and non-Muslims alike in its pursuit for power and dominance. These forces are at work as we testify now in this room at this hearing—an effort by three Muslims which will predictably be derisively labeled as a collaboration in our own persecution. I am here to testify that nothing could be further from reality.

CIVIL LIBERTIES OF MUSLIMS ARE AT NOT AT STAKE

Many critics of these investigative hearings (both Muslim and not) charge them with a threat to Muslims' civil liberties in America. My most vociferous opponents, referring to Muslims' American civil liberties, state: "give away your freedoms not mine" (An American Muslim); "This is not 1910 America and what happened to the Jews—Jews have only just stopped walking on eggshells in America. Watching what's happening to Muslims makes me sick" (An American Jew); "We need a Rosa Parks to stand up for Muslim rights" (a non-Muslim American); "Park 51 shows Muslims do not have civil rights"; "some want Lower Manhattan to be 'An American Jerusalem' (a non-Muslim American). They identify my support of these investigative hearings as my collusion in the fictional erosion of Muslim civil liberties.

While I respect the fears which birth these concerns, I can firmly strip them aside. Muslims in America do not have the painful history of African Americans or of Jewish Americans. Our privileges as Muslim Americans today have been guaranteed in part by the struggles of the Civil Rights era and by the travails of the Jewish Americans before us. We do not, in any extrapolation, face similar disadvantages as earlier American history reveals. To claim such is a gross distortion of history and demographic data in the United States proves this.

I would also add I denounce the above assertions of an equivalency between the sufferings of other minority populations in America and that of Muslim Americans with some authority. I understand all about being a Muslim woman without civil rights as predicated by my 2 years living under Wahabi theocracy without any civil or human rights including those Islam bequeathed me 1,500 years ago. I also understand the total extinction of civil rights on minorities—both Muslim and non-Muslim—as experienced in Islamist Pakistan as described to me by Christians, Ahmadi Muslims, and Zoroastrians during my last visit to Pakistan and in my extensive contact with minorities.

I have lived the impact of the Islamist narrative both in Saudi Arabia, during my extensive travels in Pakistan and in my years treating Americans in New York as well as when examining the lives of my orthodox Bengali British migrants in East London or training some of the very neo-orthodox Muslim doctors of that area.

MUSLIMS ARE NOT VICTIMIZED BY THE HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATIONS

As you learn of my biography, know that I am part of an economically powerful American demographic. According to Pew Forum data Muslims are mainstream and mostly middle class. I am rather representative.

Like me, 65% of Muslims in America are first generation and 18% of us have South Asian heritage. The majority of foreign-born Muslim Americans arrived, like me, in the 1990s—50% of us have moved here for economic or educational opportunity—I did so for both reasons. Forty-six percent of us are, like me, women, and around 31% are my age—between 40 and 54. We are a multiracial multiethnic group with over 68 different nationalities before becoming American. Our income and education reflects the U.S. public and 16% of us earn more than \$100,000 annually compared to 17% of the general U.S. public who do the same—a 1% disparity.

In my native Britain, the income disparity for those Muslims who earn over 40,000 sterling annually is more than 10%. Equivalent incomes earned in France comparing between Muslim and average public show even greater disparity of 12%, in Germany 14% in Spain 19%.

Muslims in America have achieved more, faster, and more often, in America than in any other Muslim Diaspora setting. My experience is very much the mainstream Muslim-American experience. I ask the committee to recognize that most Muslims are not mistreated by efforts to protect our integrity as Americans though they are

certainly entitled to be offended at these efforts and America guarantees their right to be offended.

The offence claimed by many Muslim Americans whether at the first hearing in this series or for instance pertaining to the NYPD's activities more recently, is misplaced. Instead of denouncing methods of intelligence gathering, Muslims in America should be denouncing the findings of those intelligence missions: The active Islamists among us. The furor has been misdirected, much to the benefit of committed Islamists at work within this Nation's borders.

WHY IS IT SO HARD TO DISCUSS THE ISLAMIST THREAT TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA?

There are serious shortcomings of language in engaging in this particular discourse. In the post-9/11 era there has been a gravitation towards extreme speech and a pervasive lack of integrative complexity in public speech as shown by critically important research performed at the University of Cambridge among others. Such lack of nuance is very well exploited by the cultivating Islamist.

The arrival of a sense of "otherization" of Muslims into the public lens has facilitated the grip of Islamist Lawfare on the public dialogue—fueling both the victimhood of Muslims and the outcries of the offended liberal. The false claims and crocodile tears of Islamophobia and the encroaching advancement of the idea of defamiation of religion which is pushed by the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) elsewhere, here in America intimidates journalists, news media, and others from engaging in dialogue who may face spurious lawsuits if they dare engage in this dialogue.

These profound problems with language have extended to the U.S. Government decree banning enforcement agencies from discussing the very threats we have heard at this series of hearings, banning the word "Islamist" for instance. This sanitization of our lexicon reveals a shocking and perhaps specious reluctance to engage with the problem or worse, a foolhardy embrace, unintentional or otherwise, with the Islamist stance.

IN CONCLUSION

Islam is nothing if not justice. Any injustice committed or pursued in the name of Islam is anathema to the believing Muslim and counter to the ideal which is Islam, yet Islamists demand unjust abominations—foundational to their beliefs—of their subscribers.

Muslims must remember their duties, not only to themselves, or their Maker, but also to their society wherever they find themselves. Unlike Islamism which mandates it, Islam reviles claims to supremacy, instead appealing for humility. The Prophet Mohammed (SAW) himself admonished his followers not to make claims of supremacy over Moses, or indeed any other messenger of God. The Qur'an repeatedly reminds the Muslim that "to each is sent a Law and a Way" and to each they must "judge themselves by their Law and their Way." Islamist Muslims overlook this and many other principles of Islam.

Our role as believers is to cooperate and collaborate and enhance the world, not to oppress, discriminate, exclude, or murder others. Major Muslim majority nations under the guise of democracy—foremost Pakistan—are operating as Islamist Supremacists who legally persecute Muslim and non-Muslim minorities to extinction with impunity. These are not the ways of Muslims. These are the ways of fascists.

We must redirect media interpretation and expose their bias and painful lack of contextual perspective while commending the efforts of these investigative hearings in anticipation of future hearings which will surely assess progress, intervention, and outcome data of measures enacted since.

We also cannot examine the radical Islamist thereat in the United States in a domestic vacuum. This is a transnational, cross-continental issue mandating an international response. While we have been pursuing conventional international warfare and in fact have assassinated the leader of al-Qaeda for instance, we have remained dangerously vulnerable because of our delayed realization of the political science aspects of Islamist ideology and the very serious threat this poses to our democracy. These are vulnerabilities which cannot be safeguarded by drones, or gunships but instead must be secured by counter ideological warfare which begins here, by widening the debate, discussion, and scholarship in this arena.

There is an overwhelming need for focused examination of the interface of Islam and Islamism. These investigative hearings provide the first public foray examining this divide in real-time as expressed in contemporary America. Until these questions are asked, and later answered, until more American Muslims confront the discomfort of disarticulation from their unquestioning brotherhood with the "Ummah" and

its worst elements, the shifts between Islam, Islamism, and the West, between puritanical Islamists masquerading as Muslims and true moderate non-Islamist Muslims, will continue to be tectonic and devastating.

In my position of privilege and opportunity, one shared with many Muslims in America, if I do not oppose Islamism, I am failing in my Muslim duty to American society and in failing American society, I profoundly fail as a Muslim. I am reminded of a saying attributed to the Prophet Mohammed by one of his companions who recounted it to an early believer:

“Whoever sees a wrong and is able to put it right with his hand, let him do so; if he can’t, then with his tongue, if he can’t, then with his heart. That is the bare minimum of faith”.

This, having both hand, tongue, and heart, I am committed to live by and therefore I thank you Chairman King, Ranking Committee Member Congressman Thompson, and the distinguished Members of the Committee on Homeland Security for enabling me to fulfill the bare minimum of my belief today.

Chairman KING. Thank you very much, Dr. Ahmed.

Now I recognize Ms. Patel. Am I pronouncing your name right?

Ms. PATEL. That is right.

Chairman KING. Ms. Patel, for an opening—at least we agree on that—for an opening statement. Recognized for 5 minutes. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF FAIZA PATEL, CO-DIRECTOR, LIBERTY AND NATIONAL SECURITY PROGRAM, BRENNAN CENTER FOR JUSTICE

Ms. PATEL. Good morning. Let me begin by thanking Chairman King, Ranking Member Thompson, and the distinguished Members of this committee, for the opportunity to appear before you today.

My name is Faiza Patel and I co-direct the Liberty and National Security Program at the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU Law School.

I think we all agree that terrorism is a serious threat to our country. Our response must be equally serious and must be driven by evidence, not assumptions and stereotypes. It is with this in mind that I approach today’s topic—the response of the American-Muslim community to this committee’s earlier hearings on radicalization.

With due respect to the opinions of those who have testified before me, I have to point out that American Muslims across the country, joined by voices from multiple other faiths, have objected to these hearings as singling out one religious community for undue scrutiny. Why this wide-spread opposition? The answer, I believe, does not lie in political correctness or defensiveness. We all recognize the importance of Congressional oversight. Such oversight should focus on empirical evidence.

The premise that radicalization, whether defined as the adoption of a particular belief system or the embrace of actual violence, is prevalent among American Muslims—American Muslims—is contrary to all empirical studies. Polling by the Pew Research Center shows that vast majorities of American Muslims have consistently held the view that suicide bombing and other forms of violence against civilians are never justified. In fact, American Muslims are the most likely among all religious groups to hold this view.

Nor has America faced a wave of terrorism from its Muslim residents. A recent study shows that the number of prosecutions for terrorist plots averages approximately 20 per year. As Michael

Leiter, the head of the NCTC testified before this committee last month, this threat is absolutely tiny—a minute percentage.

Equally unfounded is the notion of a conveyor belt—a religious conveyor belt—whereby certain Muslims become more religious, then embrace radical views, and finally, commit a terrorist attack. But 14 years of research by the Rand Corporation shows that there is no single pathway to terrorism—a conclusion that is shared by security agencies and supported by the weight of social science research.

A person's ideology or religiosity is simply not an effective means of predicting terrorism. In contrast, up to 80 percent of terrorist plots in America have been foiled using good old-fashioned police work, directed at signs of actual criminal activity.

These types of theories jeopardize our security by driving a wedge between Muslims and law enforcement agencies. American Muslims have provided information on roughly 35 percent of terrorist plots that have been derailed in the last decade. Top law enforcement officials describe this cooperation as absolutely essential.

Singling out one religious community for scrutiny as potential terrorists paints them as a threat. What happens when Americans start to view Muslims as security threats, rather than as friends, neighbors, and colleagues? The data from 2011 are not available, but the data from 2010 show increasing anti-Muslim sentiment. Forty-five percent of Americans believe that the values of Islam are at odds with the way—of the American way of life.

According to the FBI, anti-Muslim hate crimes in the United States rose by almost 50 percent in 2010. EEOC data show dramatic increases in complaints of anti-Muslim bias in the workplace. Muslims constitute less than 1 percent of this country's population. They now constitute 25 percent of the complaints received by the EEOC.

According to the Justice Department, while Muslims make up less than 1 percent of the population, some 7 percent of the cases investigated under the law that bars discrimination against houses of worship have involved mosques. These statistics suggest that rather than focusing narrowly on American Muslims' reactions to these hearings, we would do well to consider the real experience of Muslims in this country, which includes hate crimes and employment discrimination, and opposition when they try to fulfill their fundamental duty to pray.

In closing, I would like to ask this committee to reject these divisive assumptions about American Muslims. Like all religious communities, American Muslims are committed to the security of our country. America will be safest when we all work together towards this goal.

Thank you very much.

[The statement of Ms. Patel follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF FAIZA PATEL

JUNE 20, 2012

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee on Homeland Security: On behalf of the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law,¹ I thank you for providing me the opportunity to present testimony this morning.

I am Faiza Patel, Co-Director of the Liberty and National Security Program at the Brennan Center. The Brennan Center is a non-partisan public policy and law institute that focuses on fundamental issues of democracy and justice. My program, in particular, works to ensure that our counterterrorism efforts are appropriately targeted to the threat we face and are consistent with our Constitutional values.

Terrorism is a serious threat to our country. Our response must be equally serious and must be driven by evidence, not assumptions and stereotypes. But this committee's recent hearings on radicalization do not, in my view, rest on a firm factual basis. They proceed from a premise—which is contrary to empirical evidence—that “radicalization” is prevalent among American Muslims and poses an existential threat to our country. Moreover, they adopt a view of “radicalization” that treats religious belief as a precursor to terrorism.

These empirically flawed assumptions, when given the imprimatur of a Congressional hearing, have concrete negative impacts. They undermine our safety by alienating the very communities who have helped law enforcement uncover and foil attempts at terrorism. By casting Government suspicion on an entire religious community, they may have contributed to anti-Muslim sentiment among Americans which manifests itself in polls, an increase in hate crimes and employment discrimination against Muslims, and opposition to efforts by Muslims to build mosques and community centers where they can pray and impart their faith to their children.

AMERICAN MUSLIMS' RESPONSE TO RADICALIZATION HEARINGS

The family of American Muslims encompasses many diverse communities. Thirty-five percent of American Muslims are African Americans whose ancestors were Muslims who came over on slave ships or who have embraced Islam. Others are immigrants from countries as varied as Kosovo and the Philippines, who have come to the United States to build better lives for themselves and their children. Some American Muslims are secular; others hold tight to their religious identity. They speak a babel of languages, from Urdu to Arabic to Swahili to French. You can find Muslims in every walk of life and every profession. Given their diversity, it is no surprise that we hear many voices responding to this committee's radicalization hearings.

But one message is heard again and again: These hearings unfairly single out American Muslims for scrutiny. No less than 74 Muslim, Arab, and South Asian groups have registered this objection.² Their views represent the opinions of tens of thousands of American Muslims. Other faith communities, as well as civil rights groups of every stripe, also wrote to this committee voicing the same concern. A total of 77 such groups included these concerns as part of the record of the first hearing. They were joined by 57 Members of Congress³ and the editorial boards of newspapers across the United States.

It should come as no surprise that American Muslims feel unfairly singled out by these hearings. The hearings proceed from the assumption—which is contrary to systematically collected evidence—that “radicalization” is prevalent among American Muslims and poses an enormous threat to our country. The second—equally faulty—assumption of these hearings is that someone who is particularly devout in his or her Islamic faith is well on the way to becoming a terrorist.

Unfortunately, these errors are not harmless. They have dire consequences for our society. When Members of Congress select the community of American Muslims for scrutiny as potential terrorists, it encourages all of us to view them through this lens. And there is reason for concern about the impact: Polls show deep-seated suspicion of Islam and Muslims; hate crimes and discrimination against Muslims are

¹ This testimony is submitted on behalf of a Center affiliated with New York University School of Law but does not purport to represent the school's institutional views on this topic. More information about the Brennan Center's work can be found at <http://www.brennancenter.org>.

² See Letter from 51 advocacy organizations to John Boehner, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, and Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives (Feb. 1, 2011) (on file with author); Letter from 54 public interest organizations to the H. Comm. on Homeland Sec. (Mar. 10, 2011) (on file with author).

³ See Letter from Members of Congress to Peter King, Chairman, H. Comm. on Homeland Sec. (Mar. 9, 2011), available at <http://www.stark.house.gov/images/stories/112/letters/starkdingellletter.pdf>.

on the rise; and, around the country, Muslims seeking to build mosques and community centers have met with opposition based on fear of their faith.

THE THREAT OF AMERICAN MUSLIM RADICALIZATION

The first of this series of hearings was titled “The Extent of Radicalization in the American Muslim Community.” Unfortunately, the hearing did little to systematically evaluate this very question.

To begin any discussion of this topic, one must identify what is meant by the term “radicalization.” While the term is susceptible to many interpretations, in the years since the September 11, 2001, attacks it is generally used to denote a process by which Muslims in the West become terrorists. It has both an ideological component and a criminal one.

The ideological component is, in essence, the adoption of “radical” ideas, which encompass a range of beliefs from a conservative understanding of Islam to objections to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to the view that violence is justified in furtherance of religious, political, or social goals. Obviously, some American Muslims do espouse “radical” ideas, just like some people from every religious faith as well as some who do not espouse any religion. But leaving aside, for a moment, the question of whether “radical” views can be used to predict terrorist violence, do we have any evidence indicating that “radical” ideas are at all common among American Muslim communities? On the basis of empirical evidence, the answer is a resounding no.

Polling by the Pew Research Center shows that vast majorities of American Muslims have consistently held the view that suicide bombing and other forms of violence against civilians are never justified.⁴ Another recent poll, this one by Gallup, shows that American Muslims are most likely among all religious groups in the United States to hold the view that attacks on civilians by individuals or small groups are never justified.⁵ At least 7 in 10 American adults from all major religious groups agree that such attacks are never justified, but Muslim Americans are most opposed, with nearly 9 in 10 rejecting such attacks.⁶ Both polls show that American Muslims generally hold a “very unfavorable” view of al-Qaeda,⁷ and fully 92 percent think that Muslims living in the United States do not sympathize with the al-Qaeda terrorist organization.⁸ This empirical research supports the conclusion of a 2010 RAND Corporation report that individuals turning toward violence would find little support in American Muslim communities: “They are not Mao’s guerillas swimming a friendly sea.”⁹

The criminal component of radicalization consists of actions in furtherance of a terrorist attack and can include activities such as recruitment, operational planning, and, ultimately, execution. Of course, any terrorist attack that is planned or executed on U.S. soil is a matter of great concern. But when we examine the extent to which American Muslims have actually been involved in terrorist attacks, we find that the numbers are by no means indicative of a wave of terrorist violence. A February 2012 report by the Triangle Center on Terrorism and Homeland Security shows a total of 193 prosecutions of American Muslims for violent terrorist plots since 9/11, an average of just under 20 per year.¹⁰ There were no deaths in the United States resulting from terrorism by American Muslims last year.¹¹ According to the report, after a spike in 2009, terrorist plots decreased in both 2010 and 2011.¹² As the Triangle Center report explains:

“Threats remain: violent plots have not dwindled to zero, and revolutionary Islamist organizations overseas continue to call for Muslim Americans to engage in violence.

⁴Pew Research Ctr., *Muslim Americans: No Signs of Growth in Alienation or Support for Extremism* 30 (August 2011) [hereinafter “Pew Poll”], available at <http://www.people-press.org/files/2011/08/muslim-american-report.pdf>.

⁵Gallup Ctr. for Muslim Studies, *Religious Perceptions in America: With an In-Depth Analysis of U.S. Attitudes Toward Muslims and Islam* 4 [hereinafter “Gallup Poll”], available at <http://www.gallup.com/se/148805/Muslim-Americans-Faith-Freedom-Future.aspx>.

⁶Gallup Poll, *supra* note 5, at 31.

⁷Pew Poll, *supra* note 4, at 4; Gallup Poll, *supra* note 5, at 32.

⁸Gallup Poll, *supra* note 5, at 32.

⁹Brian Michael Jenkins, Rand Corp., *Would Be Warriors: Incidents of Jihadist Terrorist Radicalization In The United States Since September 11, 2001* 5 (2010), available at http://www.rand.org/pubs/occasional_papers/2010/RAND_OP292.pdf.

¹⁰Charles Kurzman, Triangle Ctr. on Terrorism and Homeland Sec., *Muslim-American Terrorism in the Decade Since 9/11* 1 (2012), available at http://sanford.duke.edu/centers/tcths/documents/Kurzman_Muslim-American_Terrorism_in_the_Decade_Since_9_11.pdf.

¹¹Adam Serwer, *House GOP to Hold Hearings on Its Hearings on Muslim Radicals in the US*, Mother Jones, <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2012/06/peter-king-muslim-hearings-about-hearings> (last visited June 18, 2012).

¹²Kurzman, *supra* note 10, at 2.

However, the number of Muslim Americans who have responded to these calls continues to be tiny, when compared with the population of more than 2 million Muslims in the United States and when compared with the total level of violence in the United States, which was on track to register 14,000 murders in 2011.¹³

Empirical research is borne out by the evaluations of law enforcement professionals who deal with these issues on a day-to-day basis. In testimony before this very committee last month, National Counterterrorism Center Director Michael Leiter said that the prevalence of violent extremists in American Muslim communities was “absolutely tiny . . . a minute percentage” of American Muslims.¹⁴ And, as Ranking Member Thompson noted in an op-ed last year, local law enforcement agencies that were asked to identify terrorist groups in their jurisdictions placed Muslim extremists fairly low on the list, behind Neo-Nazis, environmental extremists, and anti-tax groups.¹⁵

In contrast to the empirical research and law enforcement experts, the voices expressing concern about radicalization have relied on anecdotes and subjective impressions. These anecdotes and expressions are powerful and understandably give us pause, but they are not substitutes for sound, fact-based analysis.

USING RELIGION AS A PROXY FOR TERRORISM

Violence and crime—whether inspired by an ideology or not—are properly a subject for Government concern. But these hearings are not focused on violence or crime. Rather, they focus on how American Muslim beliefs (the “ideological” aspect of radicalization) threaten our National security. They perpetuate the notion that it is what American Muslims believe that leads to terrorism. This view is encapsulated in the “religious conveyor belt” theory, which posits that there is a consistent path that leads American Muslims who harbor grievances against our society or who suffer from a personal crisis to become more religious, then to adopt “radical” beliefs, and finally to commit acts of terrorism.¹⁶

But, as the Brennan Center’s report, *Rethinking Radicalization*, demonstrates, the process by which people turn to violence is exceedingly complex—a fact that is recognized by social scientists, psychologists, counterterrorism experts, security agencies, and the Department of Defense.¹⁷ An in-depth empirical study by the United Kingdom’s security service (MI5), for example, found there was no typical profile of the British terrorist and that the process by which people came to embrace violence was complex. It emphasized that there is no single pathway to extremism and that all those studied “had taken strikingly different journeys to violent extremist activity.”¹⁸ Fourteen years of research conducted at the Rand Corporation similarly suggests that “no single pathway towards terrorism exists, making it somewhat difficult to identify overarching patterns in how and why individuals are susceptible to terrorist recruitment.”¹⁹ The 2010 report by the U.S. Department of Defense on Fort Hood likewise emphasized that it is notoriously difficult to predict violent behavior of any sort. “Identifying potentially dangerous people before they act is difficult. Examinations after the fact show that people who commit violence usually have one or more risk factors for violence. Few people in the population who have risk factors, however, actually [commit violent acts].”²⁰

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) are the Federal Government’s lead agencies to combat radicalization. These expert agencies have made public statements that recognize

¹³ Id.

¹⁴ *Understanding the Homeland Threat Landscape—Considerations for the 112th Congress: Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Homeland Sec.*, 112th Cong. 52–53 (2011) (testimony of Michael Leiter, Director, National Counterterrorism Center), available at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-112hhrg72212/pdf/CHRG-112hhrg72212.pdf>.

¹⁵ Bennie Thompson, *Homegrown Terrorists Are Not Just Muslims*, Politico, <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0111/48239.html> (last visited June 18, 2012).

¹⁶ See Faiza Patel, Brennan Ctr. For Justice, *Rethinking Radicalization 14–18* (2011), available at http://brennan.3cdn.net/f737600b433d98d25e_6pm6beukt.pdf.

¹⁷ Id. at 8–10.

¹⁸ While the analysis itself is not available, a major British newspaper, the *Guardian*, reported extensively on its contents. See Alan Travis, *The Making of an Extremist*, *Guardian*, Aug. 20, 2008, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2008/aug/20/uksecurity.terrorism>.

¹⁹ *Violent Extremism: How Are People Moved from Constitutionally-Protected Thought to Acts of Terrorism?: Hearing Before the Subcomm. on Intelligence, Info. Sharing, and Terrorism Risk Assessment of H. Comm. on Homeland Sec.*, 111th Cong. 3 (2009) (testimony of Kim Cragin, RAND Corp.), available at <http://hsc-democrats.house.gov/SiteDocuments/20091215100448-24149.pdf>.

²⁰ Report of the Dept. of Defense Independent Review, *Protecting The Force: Lessons From Fort Hood*, App. D (Jan. 2010), available at http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/DOD-ProtectingTheForce-Web_Security_HR_13jan10.pdf.

the complexity of the radicalization process. DHS Secretary Jane Napolitano has acknowledged that “there is much we do not know about how individuals come to adopt violent extremist beliefs.”²¹ In 2010, a group of law enforcement and community leaders advising Secretary Napolitano noted that the “current level of understanding regarding the sociology of ‘radicalization’ and ‘extremism’ is still immature,” and rejected the notion that there are overt signs of radicalization.²² The NCTC, for its part, has specifically repudiated the view that there is a “model that can predict” whether a person will radicalize, mobilize, and commit violence.²³

In fact, the religiosity-terrorism connection is refuted by empirical research. The British MI5 Study, for example, found that “[f]ar from being religious zealots, a large number of those involved in terrorism do not practise their faith regularly. Many lack religious literacy and could actually be regarded as religious novices.”²⁴ Another researcher’s review of five hundred cases found that “a lack of religious literacy and education appears to be a common feature among those that are drawn to [terrorist] groups.”²⁵ Indeed, there is evidence that “a well-established religious identity actually protects against violent radicalization.”²⁶

Despite this wealth of empirical and social science research finding no connection between religiosity and a propensity for terrorist violence, and despite the evidence that support for terrorism and actual involvement in terrorist activity are extremely rare among American Muslims, these hearings continue to unfairly focus on one faith and one community. This focus belies the promise of our Constitution that all Americans, regardless of race, religion, or ethnicity, will be treated equally by our Government. Looking at facts, rather than relying on assumptions and stereotypes, will allow us to put the threat of terrorism in the proper perspective and put an end to unfounded insinuations about American Muslim communities.

IMPACT OF HEARINGS ON AMERICAN MUSLIMS

The committee’s hearings are also counterproductive. They drive a wedge between American Muslims who have traditionally been staunch allies in fighting terrorism and law enforcement agencies. Starting in the days immediately after the September 11 attacks, American Muslims have unreservedly condemned terrorism.²⁷ They have provided information on about 35 percent of the terrorist plots that have been foiled in the last decade.²⁸ Top law enforcement officials have stressed over and over again that the cooperation of American Muslims is critical to our ability to fight terrorism.²⁹ The Attorney General of the United States has characterized

²¹ *Nine Years After 9/11: Confronting the Terrorist Threat to the Homeland: Hearing Before the S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. & Gov’tal Affairs, 111th Cong.*, 8 (2010) (statement for the record by Janet A. Napolitano, Secretary, U.S. Dept of Homeland Sec.), available at <http://www.hsgac.senate.gov/download/2010-09-22-napolitano-testimony-revised>.

²² Homeland Sec. Advisory Council, Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Working Group 5–6 (2010), available at http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/hscac_cve_working_group_recommendations.pdf.

²³ Nat’l Counterterrorism Ctr., Radicalization and Mobilization Dynamics Framework, <http://www.nctc.gov/site/technical/radicalization.html> (last visited June 18, 2012).

²⁴ See Alan Travis, *MI5 Report Challenges Views on Terrorism in Britain*, *Guardian*, Aug. 20, 2008, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2008/aug/20/uksecurity.terrorism1>.

²⁵ Tufyal Choudhury, Dept. For Communities and Local Gov’t, *The Role of Muslim Identity Politics in Radicalization (A Study In Progress)* 21 (2007) (emphasis added), available at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/452628.pdf>.

²⁶ *Id.*

²⁷ One prominent organization, the Islamic Society of North America, published a statement against terrorism that was signed by 45 Islamic organizations and mosques, 44 academics, 8 think tanks, and a number of other groups. Islamic Society of North America, *Against Terrorism and Religious Extremism: Muslim Position and Responsibilities*, (2005), available at <http://www.isna.net/assets/FCNA/AT-Fatwa.pdf>. Another group maintains a website that includes a number of American Muslim statements condemning terrorism. *Statement by Muslim Individuals and Groups Condemning Terrorist Attacks*, [religioustolerance.org, http://www.religioustolerance.org/islfatwa.htm](http://www.religioustolerance.org/islfatwa.htm) (last visited June 18, 2012).

²⁸ See, e.g., Kurzman, *supra* note 10, at 7; Kevin Strom Et Al., *Inst. for Homeland Sec. Solutions, Building on Clues: Examining Successes and Failures in Detecting U.S. Terrorist Plots, 1999–2009* 19 (2010), available at http://sites.duke.edu/ihss/files/2011/12/Building_on_Clues_Strom.pdf.

²⁹ *Eight Years After 9/11: Confronting the Terrorist Threat to the Homeland: Hearing Before the S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. and Gov’tal Affairs, 111th Cong.*, 6 (2009) (statement for the record by Robert S. Mueller, III, Dir., Fed. Bureau of Investigation) (“[T]he FBI understands that protecting America requires the cooperation and understanding of the public. The FBI has an extensive outreach program to Muslim, South Asian, and Sikh communities to address concerns and develop trust about the FBI and Federal efforts to protect the Homeland.”), available at <http://www.hsgac.senate.gov/download/2009-09-30-mueller-testimony>.

their cooperation as “absolutely essential in identifying, and preventing, terrorist threats.”³⁰ As the head of the country’s second-largest police department, Sheriff Leroy Baca, testified before this committee:

“It is counterproductive to building trust when individuals or groups claim that Islam supports terrorism . . . Police leaders must have the trust and understanding of all communities who are represented in their jurisdictions. The Muslim Community is no less or more important than others . . . Simply put, police need public participation, and to accomplish that, strategies such as public-trust policing need to be a priority in our Nation.”³¹

It is not only the notion that Muslims are all potential terrorists that alienates the American Muslim community. It is also the notion of “cooperation” that several witnesses at these hearings seem to embrace. Even those Muslim Americans who are admittedly law-abiding citizens are essentially being told that they are responsible for any Muslim terrorists in their midst, simply because they share a religion. Moreover, because the “religious conveyor belt” theory interprets signs of religiosity as potential indicators of a terrorist trajectory, Muslims in this country increasingly are being asked to report on the religious beliefs and behaviors of their friends and colleagues.³² Understandably, American Muslims who are more than willing to provide information about potential criminal activity, and who have in fact done so routinely since 9/11, are offended by the idea that they must share information about their prayers and religious observances with the Government.

The hearings also drive a wedge between Muslims and their fellow Americans. When Members of Congress hold hearings about the “radicalization” of American Muslims and expressly place an entire community under the spotlight, it sends the message to all Americans that the Government views this community as a security threat. And the public appears to be receiving this message loud and clear.

Since 2010, we have seen a rapid acceleration in divisive anti-Muslim sentiment, rhetoric, and activities. Recent polling shows that anti-Muslim sentiment is increasing among the American public. A 2011 survey found that 45 percent of Americans believe that the values of Islam are at odds with the American way of life.³³ Another study reports that a majority of Americans (53 percent) say their opinion of Islam is unfavorable, and a startling 43 percent admit to feeling at least “a little” prejudice toward Muslims (more than twice the number who say the same about Christians, Jews, or Buddhists).³⁴

These negative opinions play out in how American Muslims are treated. Recently released FBI statistics show that in 2010, anti-Islamic hate crimes in the United States rose by almost 50 percent over the previous year.³⁵ Data from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) show dramatic increases in complaints of anti-Muslim bias in the workplace.³⁶ Muslims are approximately 2 percent of the American population, yet, according to the most recent data, complaints about anti-Muslim bias accounted for 25 percent of the total number of complaints received by the EEOC.³⁷

Perhaps nowhere are anti-Muslim biases more evident than in the increased hostility towards mosques and Islamic centers. The protests against plans to build a

³⁰ Eric Holder, U.S. Att’y Gen., Speech at Muslim Advocates’ Annual Dinner (Dec. 10, 2010), available at <http://www.justice.gov/iso/opa/ag/speeches/2010/ag-speech-1012191.html>.

³¹ *Compilation of Hearings on Islamist Radicalization—Volume I: Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Homeland Sec., 112th Cong. 73–74* (2011) (testimony of Leroy Baca, Sheriff, Los Angeles County), available at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-112hhrg72541/pdf/CHRG-112hhrg72541.pdf>.

³² See Patel, *supra* note 16, at 18, 22.

³³ Robert P. Jones & Daniel Cox, Public Religion Research Inst. Old Alignments, Emerging Fault Lines: Religion in the 2010 Election And Beyond 17 (2010), available at <http://publicreligion.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/2010-Post-election-American-Values-Survey-Report.pdf>.

³⁴ Abu Dhabi Gallup Center, Religious Perceptions in America: With an In-Depth Analysis of U.S. Attitudes Toward Muslims and Islam 7 (2009), available at http://www.gallup.com/file/se/ms/153434/WorldReligion_Report_en-US_final.pdf.

³⁵ Compare *Hate Crime Statistics 2010*, Fed. Bureau of Investigation, available at <http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/hate-crime/2010/tables/table-1-incidents-offenses-victims-and-known-offenders-by-bias-motivation-2010.xls> (last visited June 19, 2012) with *Hate Crime Statistics 2009*, Fed. Bureau of Investigation, available at http://www2.fbi.gov/ucr/hc2009/data/table_01.html (last visited June 19, 2012).

³⁶ U.S. Dep’t of Justice, *Confronting Discrimination in the Post-9/11 Era: Challenges and Opportunities Ten Years Later* 9 (2011), available at http://www.justice.gov/crt/publications/post911/post911summit_report_2012-04.pdf.

³⁷ Muslim Advocates, *Losing Liberty: The State of Freedom 10 Years After the Patriot Act 30* (2011), available at http://www.muslimadvocates.org/Losing_Liberty_The_State_of_Freedom_10_Years_After_the_PATRIOT_Act.pdf.

Muslim community center near the site of the World Trade Center in New York are well-known. But they are only the tip of the iceberg. From Murfreesboro, Tennessee, to Bridgewater, New Jersey, the efforts of Muslims to find a place to come together to pray have faced significant obstacles. The Murfreesboro mosque faced a lawsuit alleging that it was not entitled to the protection of the Federal law that ensures localities do not discriminate against houses of worship. The reason: Islam is not a religion entitled to protection.³⁸ In Bridgewater, New Jersey, the Muslim community searched for years for a site to establish a mosque. They found and purchased a site and worked with township officials to develop a plan for the Al Falah mosque. But after vocal protests from the community, the municipality rushed through changes to its zoning laws effectively preventing the building of the mosque.³⁹

The Justice Department's analysis of cases under the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA), the Federal law that ensures that localities do not discriminate against houses of worship, shows that while Muslims make up only three-fifths of a percent of the American population, some 7 percent of the RLUIPA cases investigated by the Justice Department involved mosques.⁴⁰ The report found that "nearly a decade after the attacks of September 11, 2001, Muslim Americans continue to struggle for acceptance in many communities, and still face discrimination." Indeed, the report indicated that this type of discrimination was on the rise, noting that almost half of the matters involving possible discrimination against Muslims that it had monitored since September 11 were opened during or after May 2010.⁴¹

Some Members of Congress appear to recognize the faulty premises underlying these hearings, as well as their negative effects on our security and on our relations with American Muslims, and have spoken out against them. I want to take a moment to commend them, particularly Ranking Member Thompson, for their tireless efforts to ensure that Muslims are treated as part of the fabric of American life. I am here today to ask others on this committee and in this Congress to follow these members' lead and to reject the flawed and divisive approach represented by this committee's recent hearings.

CONCLUSION

When anti-Muslim sentiment was displayed in the immediate aftermath of September 11, it might have been understood (although not excused) as a reaction to the devastation of those attacks. More than a decade later, such biases must be examined in the context of Government actions that perpetuate fear of American Muslims. These hearings send the message that Muslims pose an inherent threat to our country. That message has been heard, and its consequences are borne by American Muslims as they go about their everyday lives. But that message is not based on a rational evaluation of the threat facing us or how it should be addressed.

Our National security is a serious matter and requires us to look at facts rather than rely on assumptions. The facts tell us that terrorism by American Muslims in the name of Islam is real threat but not a widely prevalent one. The facts tell us that American Muslims are happy to be in this country and condemn terrorism and al-Qaeda by enormous margins. The facts tell us that it is not possible to draw a straight line from espousing "radical" ideas to committing a terrorist attack and that being a religious Muslim does not make one more or less likely to become a terrorist.

We also know what works to combat terrorism. Research shows that more than 80 percent of plots were solved through rigorous, old-fashioned police work, and that is what we should be stressing.⁴² We should investigate individual behavior that suggests potential criminality, not entire religious communities. Empirical research, as well as the expert opinion of law enforcement officials from around the country, shows that American Muslims are vital partners in preventing terrorism. We should build on these relationships of trust to foster true partnerships, not tear them down by casting suspicion on an entire community.

³⁸ Amended Complaint at 8–9 *Estes v. Rutherford County Regional Planning Commission*, No. 10–cv–1443 (Chancery Ct. for Rutherford County at Murfreesboro), 2010, available at <http://www.tennessee.com/assets/pdf/DN164188917.PDF>.

³⁹ First Amended Complaint at 2–5, *Al-Falah Ctr. v. Bridgewater*, No. 3:11–cv–02397–JAP–LHG (D.N.J. May 18, 2011) available at <http://brennan.3cdn.net/5c247a3d1e2be02ce8-f1m6bowv6.pdf>.

⁴⁰ U.S. Dep't of Justice, Report on the Tenth Anniversary of the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act 6 (2010), available at http://www.justice.gov/crt/rluipa_report_092210.pdf.

⁴¹ *Id.* at 12.

⁴² Strom, *supra* note 28, at 12.

And let us not forget that all Americans—Muslims, Jews, Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, and atheists alike—are committed to the security of our country and our country will be safest when we all work together toward this goal.

Chairman KING. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Dr. Jasser, in your prepared statement—page 9—you state, “Fear of political correctness has been bolstered by leading Muslim brotherhood legacy groups in America who trumpet grievances at the expense of counter-radicalization strategies.” Can you elaborate on that?

Dr. JASSER. Yes, sir. Thank you, Chairman.

I think the really important issue is that, if you are going to address a problem, there is only a certain amount of bandwidth the United States has to addressing each issue we have that we are concerned about. When you look at the Muslim issue, if you will, or radicalization, what happens is, if you label anybody that addresses this as an Islamophobe or a bigot, it stifles free speech. It prevents us from dealing with the very issue that we need to.

Yet, it is interesting—Ms. Patel was actually quoting statistics on hate crimes, connecting it to our discussion here with no evidence to show there is any connection at all to any of that. If anything, I would tell you that the environment in the United States in which we are unable to discuss this, in which all Americans see our Muslims that are claiming victimization, that don’t want to address the issue, as actually being in denial—I think that type of movement is actually more responsible for creating a climate of fear, rather than if Americans actually saw us taking ownership as Ms. Nomani mentioned.

Actually, would—Americans would realize that we are the most important tool—the most important asset in treating the problem. But what happens is, she was—Ms. Patel was refusing to accept the conveyor belt concept. Well, if there isn’t a conveyor belt, then I guess terrorists self-combust immediately and become terrorists on the spot overnight.

As I mention in my first testimony, Nidal Hasan did not get radicalized overnight; and that, ultimately, we as Muslims need to lead the effort to try to address that. But many of us that do, get labeled in many ways as being anti-Muslim. My family was horrified to see me labeled by groups, such as the Muslim Public Affairs Council, or CAIR, as being anti-Muslim. There has been slander thrown around about me, when in fact, I have helped build a number of mosques around the country. I have been very involved in my faith community. But when you take on Islamism, they want to make you pay a price for that because they have a lot of self-interest in preventing America from looking at Islamism.

Chairman KING. Thank you, Doctor.

Ms. Nomani, did you see any increase in hate crimes or any anti-Muslim activity after these hearings began?

Ms. NOMANI. Well, from my—from my vantage point, what I believe has happened, is that Americans are very frustrated with Muslims. I don’t believe that it is about anger. I come from West Virginia, where—talk about stereotypes, so we would expect some of the most intolerant ideas, right, about Muslims or others from other countries. We grew up there and I felt only like a mountaineer in that State.

I believe that throughout this country, what has happened is that people are really frustrated with this culture of denial. That as long as you say to CNN—Major Nidal Hasan was not a Muslim—or the hijackers were not practicing Islam—you are denying a truth inside of our community of an ideology that has very much corrupted peoples' minds. I think that leads to frustration.

I was on the streets of New York City during the protest to the Ground Zero mosque, as it is being called. I don't believe it is as much hate as it is frustration. It is a frustration with a community that is not owning its own problems.

Chairman KING. Thank you.

If I could ask Ms. Patel—you mentioned—sort of implied that somehow this committee is focusing on the Muslim community and we are off on our own or this is the wrong approach to take.

In the testimony that was being submitted by the Department of Homeland Security today by John Cohen, as I read it, he says—“Today, the Department of Homeland Security operates with the understanding that, as it relates to domestic violent extremism, we face the greatest terrorist risks from those extremists who have been—either been recruited by al-Qaeda or its affiliates or inspired by their ideology. This threat is real, as evidenced by the multiple recent thwarted attacks of domestic violent extremists inspired by al-Qaeda's ideology.” Now, ipso facto, they are Muslims.

So what the Director of—what the person—the spokesman of Homeland Security is saying is, the leading threat to this country today comes from supporters of al-Qaeda. Supporters of al-Qaeda are Muslims. So somehow to suggest that there is not a correlation between terrorist threats and people of the Muslim faith, as small a minority as that may be, I think it is totally erroneous.

Also, for instance, you mention that Muslims are only 1 percent of the population. Yet when Eric Holder gave his numbers, 90 percent of the terrorist crimes are carried out by 1 percent of the population. Does it say that that is not a real threat that we should focus on?

Then you talk about hate crimes. Well, there are five times as many anti-Semitic incidents every year as anti-Muslim. The populations are roughly proportionate. So I would just think that you would be—not that I am giving you advice—but to acknowledge, yes, there is a problem.

We can dispute the extent of the problem. We can dispute exactly how it should be addressed. But somehow to deny that there is any correlation between certain people of the Muslim faith and the greatest terrorist threat facing this country today just defies—it defies credulity. It just does not add up at all and I think it just weakens your case.

Certainly, you can answer.

Ms. PATEL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

America faces a number of threats today. Terrorism in the name of Islam is certainly one of them. I certainly would not say that there is anything wrong with Congress looking at such an important issue.

What I say, though, is that Congress should look at this issue on the basis of empirical evidence. On the basis of the research that has been done, all of that research shows that the idea of a reli-

gious conveyor belt that leads a person directly from embracing a religion to becoming a radical to becoming a terrorist simply does not serve as a way to predict violence.

We can use a model like that to understand past cases of violence, but we cannot statistically use a model like that to focus on how other people are going to conduct violence. That is something that has been included in all social science studies, including from the Department of Defense—

Chairman KING. I don't think—excuse me—I don't think anyone is saying that because you are a Muslim, you are going to be a terrorist. What we are saying is, that the leading terrorist threat today comes from certain people who are Muslims. That to me is the reality we have to face.

That is not saying "all" any more than anyone said "all" Italians are in the Mafia, or "all" Irish are in the Westies. You don't say that, but that is where they look. The FBI went to the Italian salsa clubs. They went to the Irish bars in the west side of Manhattan. But now when they are looking for the Russian mob, they go to Brighton Beach and Coney Island. That is just good police work.

Ms. PATEL. Oh, I am sorry. I just—

Chairman KING. Actually—actually, my time has expired, so I—I am sorry. I will—the Ranking Member is recognized.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much. Ms. Patel, obviously, you have hit some chords with the committee. I have never seen a witness take on another Member's testimony and not answer the question that he was asked, but if that is how he chose to use his time, so be it.

Let me take on the next paragraph of Mr. Cohen's statement, so we can put it into the record. Mr. Cohen said, "However, we also know that violent extremism can be inspired by various religious, political, or other ideological beliefs. Many communities in rural counties Nation-wide face such threats. For example, violent sovereign citizen extremists have engaged in violence against State and local law enforcement." So there are all kinds of things operating here in this country, not just people of a particular faith.

Ms. Patel, I will give you an opportunity to respond to Dr. Jasser's take off on what you said.

Mr. THOMPSON. Microphone.

Chairman KING. Ms. Patel, microphone, please.

Ms. PATEL. Sorry. I, too, am a novice.

I think Dr. Jasser was suggesting that there must be a religious conveyor belt that leads a person to become more religious and then subsequently more violent and then to commit an act of terrorism, because terrorism doesn't happen overnight.

In fact, if you look at the studies of terrorism, and I refer you to the one—the 2007 study by the NYPD—it actually points out that the decision-making process for becoming a terrorist can actually be quite quick, or it can be quite long. That is precisely the point that it is not a process in the sense that you can go from Point A to Point B to Point C. Of course, terrorists who are acting in the name of Islam have radical ideology. That is the very understanding of the crime of terrorism. It is based on an ideological premise, so you are always going to find that when you look at populations of convicted or indicted terrorists.

But the point is that you cannot look at ideology as a predictor of violence. That is something that, you know, doesn't necessarily relate to the post-9/11 context. That is a principle that has been established by social science researchers going back to the beginning of this century. So I would stand by my critique of the religious conveyor belt theory.

Thank you.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

Dr. Ahmed, you referenced that you see a number of individuals from the New York Police Department in your practice. Are you under any contract with the City of New York or the Police Department?

Dr. AHMED. Absolutely none. I am an employee of Winthrop-University Hospital and I have declared that I have no affiliations.

Mr. THOMPSON. So there is no connection?

Dr. AHMED. No, but I am required to be a health care provider for the World Trade Center first responders—

Mr. THOMPSON. Sure—

Dr. AHMED [continuing]. Who number 6,000 on Long Island—2,500 of whom come to my hospital.

Mr. THOMPSON. Well—I have been in the neighborhood and I appreciate the—the work that you have done.

You are not an American citizen. Is that correct?

Dr. AHMED. That is correct. I am a permanent resident in the United States.

Mr. THOMPSON. Yes. I am trying to get—so you don't have any kind of security clearance or anything? Your information is based on your research?

Dr. AHMED. My research is based on a 12-year career of teaching and training and mentoring individuals across the Muslim world. It is also based on a 43-year history of being a Muslim by birth; by being a person who has completed the Hajj, and observes all five pillars of Islam; by being a part of a very elite program. If you are free to look at it—the Templeton-Cambridge Journalism Fellowship Program. By personally investing my own time and my own resources in traveling to remote areas in Pakistan to meet militant child operatives.

You are quite correct to identify that I have no fiscal, no political, and no other affiliations in this, other than I have a responsibility to expose what is masquerading as Islam.

Mr. THOMPSON. Well, and again, we thank you for your service—

Dr. AHMED. I—and thank you for the question, too—

Mr. THOMPSON. Well, Ms.—excuse me—excuse me—well, you have clarified it, but I want to close it by saying, you don't have a security clearance. You have not been briefed by intelligence officials in any capacity as an intelligence person. So what you are giving is your own review of what you have done over the years. That has value, but it also requires, for some of us, the fact that you are here as a private citizen, and not anything else. You don't have to comment. Thank you.

Chairman KING. Thank you. I would just say we invited Dr. Ahmed as a private citizen, so—

The gentleman from California, Mr. Lungren, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LUNGREN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am—I am just kind of bewildered, frankly, by some of the questions and comments of my colleagues here, that somehow your testimony isn't valid because you don't have a security clearance. I don't know—the longer I am here, the—I guess the less I am surprised by what I hear at times.

Ms. Patel, in your report—"Rethinking Radicalization"—you report to the Council on American Islamic Relations, condemn the FBI's use of surveillance measures, particularly of mosques predicated on the idea that Muslims present security concerns minus any suspicion of criminal activity.

I am informed that the lead plaintiff of the case of California Muslims represented by CAIR and the ACLU in the civil case is Imam Yassir Fazaga of the Orange County Islamic Foundation. Allegedly, the FBI sent an informant to his mosque to determine if anything improper was taking place there and CAIR found that to be objectionable.

Although I am no longer from that area, I am familiar, since I lived for 40-some years in that area. The newspaper of record in that area is the *Long Beach Press Telegram*. On October 30, 2002, it reported that the imam stated the following at a public meeting—"He hailed as freedom fighters those Palestinians whom the West media—Western media label as suicide bombers. He asserted that few casualties of the suicide bombers are innocent victims, quote—No one is an innocent civilian. These victims are collateral damage. And as a result of the freedom fighters, waves of Jews are leaving Israel. That is a great success for the Palestinians. He said, 'Palestinians danced in the streets after the September 11 attacks, because they know that U.S.-made helicopters, U.S. ammunitions are killing their relatives and neighbors.'"

Giving those remarks in a public setting, do you think it was improper for the FBI to utilize an informant to at least report on what the imam was saying in his mosque? Is that inappropriate behavior by law enforcement as suggested by CAIR and as referenced in your report?

Ms. PATEL. I think when law enforcement has information that leads it to believe that people are advocating violence, then they have every right to go into a mosque.

Mr. LUNGREN. Well, if—so if you would take, as correct, those comments—I don't know if they are correct—but as reported in the *Press Telegram*—do you believe that that would be a sufficient basis for the FBI to permit an informant to go to the mosque to observe what the imam is saying?

Ms. PATEL. I actually don't know whether that would be allowed under the current FBI rules.

Mr. LUNGREN. I didn't ask under the FBI rules. I am saying you have criticized in your report law enforcement—at least, you have identified CAIR's criticism of law enforcement. So that is a specific instance involving a specific plaintiff in a case, and those are the facts that are presented. So I am asking for your opinion since you have offered your opinion here as to what you consider as appropriate conduct.

Ms. PATEL. As I said, sir, I think that if law enforcement has information that it believes that there is either criminal activity or the likelihood of criminal activity or that somebody is violating—sorry—advocating violence, that they have—certainly have every right to go inside a religious institution. The fact that it is a mosque doesn't insulate it from law enforcement scrutiny.

Mr. LUNGREN. All right.

Ms. Nomani, you indicated in your—your written testimony of evidence of radicalization of the Quran by some. You give an indication of a copy of the Quran published by the government of Saudi Arabia, speaking of the first chapter of the Quran—stating, “Show us the straight way, the way of those on whom thou has bestowed thy grace, those whose portions not wrath, and those who go not astray.” That is the original chapter. But yet the copy published by the government of Saudi Arabia says, or published by the King Fahd Complex for the printing of the Holy Quran in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, says, “Guide us on the straight way, the way of those on whom you have bestowed your grace, not the way of those who earned your anger, such as Jews, nor those who went astray such as Christians.”

Is that the kind of thing you are talking about, where a radical view or reinterpretation of the Quran tends to focus, in that case, hatred toward certain other groups—Jews and Christians? Is that the point of your written testimony?

Ms. NOMANI. Yes, sir. That exactly is. I brought that Quran with me, because I wanted it to serve as a symbolic reminder to me of the ideology of Islam—this interpretation of Islam that is wreaking havoc on our world. To not identify the extremism associated with it—with the religion, to me, is naive. It creates a deeper problem inside of our community because then we don't tackle the problem as it is.

This Quran was imported from Saudi Arabia to my hometown mosque in West Virginia. I plucked it from the bookcase and I plucked it not far from the book called, “Woman in the Shade of Islam,” that says that we can reinterpret another verse to sanction domestic violence against women.

So what I believe does happen is people take the theology, just like they have in every faith, and they go down that slippery slope toward violence. We have to include a conversation about Islam then when we talk about the extremism that comes from it, because it is the ideology that fuels that violence.

Chairman KING. The time of the gentleman has expired. The gentleman from Louisiana, Mr. Richmond, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RICHMOND. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, I guess I will—in an attempt to help my bewildered, puzzled colleague, sometimes people hear what they want to hear, as opposed to what was said.

I think that Dr. Ahmed and the question with Mr. Thompson—what I heard was that he was showing that her testimony was based on her vast experience and the remarkable work that she has done around the world over the years. Sometimes it helps so that people understand whether testimony is coming from the intelligence community or whether it is coming from life experiences.

I don't think that the fact that it comes from life experiences diminishes her testimony, nor do I think that the Ranking Member was trying to diminish her testimony, as opposed to just clarifying where it came from. So I—I hope that helps with the bewilderment.

But the other thing I would point out—and Mr. Chairman, when you talk about peoples' reaction and objection to the hearings, or the hearing on the hearings, you said in your opening that 90 percent of the attacks came from Muslims or radicalized people, but the problem we see is that we are only talking about the 90 percent. It is the 10 percent that we are not focusing on that keeps me up at night also.

So the question becomes, as we talk about Muslims and we talked about Somalia for a minute, the question becomes: Do we talk about radicalization in global, in terms of all radicalization in the United States—everyone who poses a threat?

The other thing I would just add and, Dr. Jasser, I would seek your opinion on it, and maybe Ms. Patel—is that the initial concept of the hearing I thought was disingenuous or overlooked the fact that the Muslim community are very active participants in our fight against terror. If the numbers are right that I have—if 52 out of the 140 tips come from the Muslim community, then that is over 37 percent in a time where, especially in minority communities, you have this code of silence.

So I don't think that we have properly identified and recognized that the Muslim is absolutely a partner in our fight against terror. Do you want to comment on that?

Dr. JASSER. Yes. Absolutely. Thank you. As I mentioned, I could not agree with you more and that is why I cited so many Muslims that reached out to us after your hearings, as saying, thank you for providing alternative voices. As I said, you can't solve theological problems within a religion unless you are from that faith.

So this issue, though, however, is that the—the dialogue that making any linkage between religious radical—religious interpretations and that radicalism targets the whole population stifles any reform. What I would tell you is, absolutely, the reporting of violence—I would—and as I said in my first testimony, every Muslim I know would report a terrorist act of violence if they saw it about to happen. But that is the final step. That is a whack-a-mole program.

If you want to treat the problem, you have to show that we have actually motivated and stimulated Muslims to begin reform programs that counter the ideas that radicalize—the supremacism that other witnesses have also talked about. That has yet to really happen. Anybody that says it is happening, I think is either in denial or—or naive to say that we have begun to address, to reinterpret, to provide books on the shelves in mosques and elsewhere that counter these ideas. The bookshelves are far too empty and there is not enough stimulus in this country to counter these ideas. That is what I think your hearings bring to the discussion.

Mr. RICHMOND. Ms. Patel.

Ms. PATEL. Thank you. I think in terms of the extent of violence by American Muslims versus other groups, as Ranking Member Thompson pointed out, there is a lot of evidence that there are

other groups that are out there who are also interested in committing violence against our country.

The statistics that I have seen put the extent of terrorism by American Muslims domestically focused at between 40 and 57 percent. There is always a difference in studies as to how they count terrorism cases, so you always come up with different numbers. I think that the Department of Justice's statistics, for example, are very inclusive, and include things like extreme—like immigration violations. So I just want to put that out there.

Turning to this idea of cooperation, I think there is no question, but that American Muslims will report any suspicion of terrorist activity. When you ask them to support something more nebulous, like extremism within their community, that is when you run into problems, because how do you actually define that? Does the fact that a woman is asked to cover her mosque—sorry—her head when she covers a mosque, extremism? To some people, it may appear the case. To others, it may not.

But that is the kind of information that you cannot expect a community to be reporting on. It is just too nebulous.

Thank you.

Chairman KING. The time of the gentleman has expired. The gentleman from Texas—

Mr. RICHMOND. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was just going to close with the fact that I think that I would ask that we just not have blinders on and focus on just the Muslim community when you in your testimony said that you thought it was responsible for 90 percent. There is 10 percent still out there. I think we owe it to the American people to focus on them also.

Chairman KING. I would say, in response to that, if you yield, is that this committee was set up primarily in response to 9/11. We do have other committees. Obviously, we have subcommittees who do look at these other issues.

Having said that, when the Department of Homeland Security says the main threat is from groups linked with al-Qaeda and when there does not appear to be a consensus that, as we see from your witness today, that we should be looking at the Muslim community, then I think these hearings are essential.

If we had unanimity—yes, there is a real problem in the community, and we should address it—then we would not have the need for these hearings. The reason we have to have the hearings is, to me, the denial of a reality. That is why I thought it was important to have these hearings.

Not to minimize in any way the others, where—terrorists in this country or American Nazis or Ku Klux Klan or whatever. But the fact is, this committee—I look upon it, since it was set up in the aftermath of 9/11, as was the Department of Homeland Security, to combat Islamic extremists, first; then also, to—obviously, other issues are pertinent, but I think the Judiciary Committee is well suited for the other. But not to say, we aren't going to look the way on it at all.

Gentleman from Texas, Mr. McCaul.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You know, al-Qaeda's stated goal is to bring down the infidel in Western civilization. I was the chief of counterterrorism in the Jus-

tice Department. It is clear the hijackers came from a certain background. We can't deny the fact that they were Muslim. Major Hasan, just north of my district in Fort Hood, was radicalized by Awlaki out of Yemen, right next to my district—killed 13 soldiers. I went to the funeral. I saw the boots—the combat boots and the rifles. This is real. It is real stuff.

Ms. Patel, for you to say that these hearings do not rest on firm factual basis, I would say, you talk to those families. When you say they adopt—we adopt a view of radicalization that treats religious belief as a precursor to terrorism, I would argue that we have to look at the obvious—that there is a religious component to this. It doesn't reflect the vast majority of Muslims. I agree. The vast majority are good, law-abiding citizens. But there are those within the United States—the enemy within—that do want to do us harm and bring down this Nation and kill our soldiers and kill innocent civilians, like Daniel Pearl, who was slayed, as you very dramatically, Ms. Nomani, testified to.

Ninety percent, as the Chairman said, of these acts are committed by 1 percent of the population. So I understand your statistics. But when you look at the overall picture, I strongly disagree with your testimony. I find it somewhat offensive to the victims.

I don't know if you have any comment to that.

Ms. PATEL. I think the one comment I would make is that, you know, I live in this country. I live and work in New York City, right by Ground Zero. I have two kids. They go to school every day. They take the subway. I am a mother. I think about their safety. I, too, worry about terrorism. I, too, am not unsympathetic to people whose families died because of violence and terrorism, of course not.

But I think that the best way to keep our country safe is to use evidence to drive counterterrorism policy. When I look at the studies and what they show me, they show me that using religiosity or using ideology as a predictor for who is going to become a terrorist and who is not simply doesn't work—

Mr. MCCAUL. Can I—can I just stop you on that? Because I think ideology is important. I think the moderate Muslim is the most effective weapon we have against radical Islam. I think we can defeat them on the battlefield. We have. But we can't kill it. I mean, it is an ideology—it is a struggle for ideology. That, at the end of the day, are we going to win or lose this?

Someone said the war on terror is over. That presumes that radical Islam is over. I would argue that radical Islam is, unfortunately, alive and well. It is an ideological struggle that if we don't win this, it will bring down Western civilization.

I want—I would like to get the other panelists' viewpoint on how do we win this war on ideology? Are we in fact—are we in fact winning it?

Ms. NOMANI. Well, sir. I believe that since—the United Kingdom, the government of the United Kingdom, has directly now confronted this real phenomenon that you are talking about—that we also have nonviolent extremism. It is the rhetoric that Dr. Jasser is talking about that is in our mosques. It is the theology that is being exported from the government of Saudi Arabia into our country.

This is a very difficult conversation to be had, I know, because the government of Saudi Arabia is an ally. But I will tell you that as a woman inside of my faith, one of the hardest parts about practicing my faith is the interpretation of Islam that comes out of Saudi Arabia and tells me in my mosques here in America that I have to sit behind a wall. That I have to sit in the basement—maybe sometimes I don't even get a room.

So from mosques from Seattle to Los Angeles to Washington, DC, and the upper eastside, I have been thrown out of those mosques because I have dared to believe something that the civil rights movement taught me, which is separate is not equal. Yet, it is the theology that comes out of Saudi Arabia that practices—that makes that a practice in the United States, and I would argue, becomes a dangerous precursor for violent extremism. It is not definitely a certain indicator, but once you go down that slippery slope of interpretation, it becomes dangerous.

Mr. McCAUL. I see my time has expired. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman KING. The gentleman's time has expired. The gentlelady from California, Ms. Richardson, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I would like to ask that the following reports from the Triangle Center and the Center for American Progress* be entered into the record.

Chairman KING. Without objection.

[The information follows:]

DOCUMENT SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

STATEMENT OF CHARLES KURZMAN, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA, CHAPEL HILL

FEBRUARY 8, 2012

MUSLIM-AMERICAN TERRORISM IN THE DECADE SINCE 9/11

This is the third annual report on Muslim-American terrorism suspects and perpetrators published by the Triangle Center on Terrorism and Homeland Security. The first report, co-authored by David Schanzer, Charles Kurzman, and Ebrahim Moosa in early 2010, also examined efforts by Muslim Americans to prevent radicalization. The second report, authored by Charles Kurzman and issued in early 2011, also examined the source of the initial tips that brought these cases to the attention of law-enforcement authorities. This third report, authored by Charles Kurzman and issued in early 2012, focuses on cases of support for terrorism, in addition to violent plots. These reports, and the data on which they are based, are available at <http://kurzman.unc.edu/muslim-american-terrorism>.

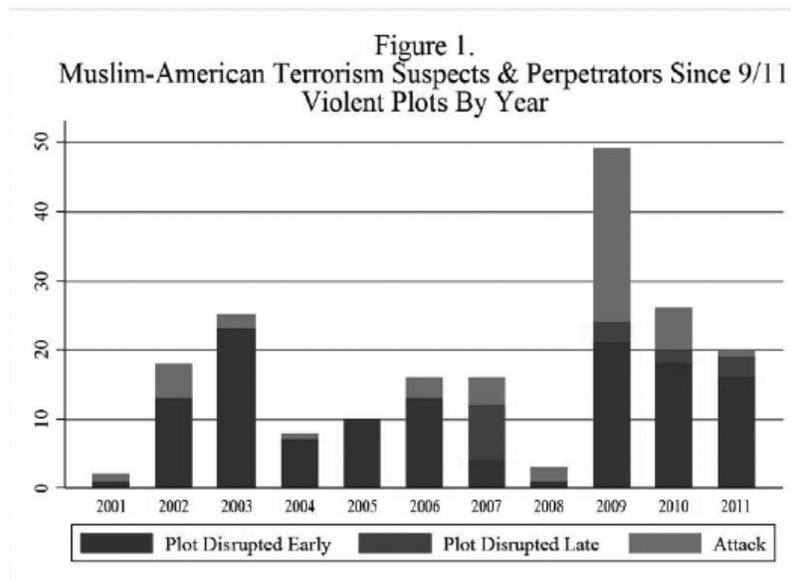
MUSLIM-AMERICAN TERRORISM DOWN IN 2011

Twenty Muslim Americans were indicted for violent terrorist plots in 2011, down from 26 the year before, bringing the total since 9/11 to 193, or just under 20 per year (see Figure 1). This number is not negligible—small numbers of Muslim Americans continue to radicalize each year and plot violence. However, the rate of radicalization is far less than many feared in the aftermath of 9/11. In early 2003, for example, Robert Mueller, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, told Congress that “FBI investigations have revealed militant Islamics [sic] in the US.

*Document has been retained in committee files and is available at www.americanprogress.org/issues/religion/report/2011/08/26/10165/fear-inc/.

We strongly suspect that several hundred of these extremists are linked to al-Qaeda.”¹ Fortunately, we have not seen violence on this scale.

The scale of homegrown Muslim-American terrorism in 2011 does not appear to have corroborated the warnings issued by Government officials early in the year. In March 2011, Mueller testified to Congress that this threat had become even more complex and difficult to combat, as “we are seeing an increase in the sources of terrorism, a wider array of terrorist targets, and an evolution in terrorist tactics and means of communication.”² Janet Napolitano, Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, echoed Mueller’s concern in her 2011 “State of America’s Homeland Security Address”: “the terrorist threat facing our country has evolved significantly in the last 10 years—and continues to evolve—so that, in some ways, the threat facing us is at its most heightened state since those attacks.”³ Congressman Peter King, Chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security in the U.S. House of Representatives, held four hearings in 2011 to alert Americans to the “the extent of Muslim-American radicalization by al-Qaeda in their communities today and how terrible it is, the impact it has on families, how extensive it is, and also that the main victims of this are Muslim Americans themselves.”⁴



¹ Charles Kurzman, *The Missing Martyrs* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 13.

² Robert Mueller, testimony Before the Judiciary Committee, U.S. House of Representatives, March 16, 2011.

³ Janet Napolitano, “Understanding the Homeland Threat Landscape—Considerations for the 112th Congress,” testimony before the Committee on Homeland Security, U.S. House of Representatives, February 9, 2011. Two weeks earlier, by contrast, Napolitano commented that “our homeland is more secure than it was 10 years ago, and, indeed, more secure than it was 2 years ago.” “State of America’s Homeland Security Address,” George Washington University, January 27, 2011. For a discussion of these diverging assessments, see Charles Kurzman, David Schanzer, and Ebrahim Moosa, “Muslim American Terrorism Since 9/11: Why So Rare?” *The Muslim World*, July 2011, pages 464–483.

⁴ CNN, March 10, 2011.

FIGURE 2.—MUSLIM-AMERICAN TERRORISM SUSPECTS AND PERPETRATORS, VIOLENT PLOTS, 2011

Name	Location	Plot or Alleged Plot	Disrupted	Status of Case
Emerson Begolly	Mayport, PA	Arrested for biting 2 FBI agents	Early	Trial pending.
Roger Stockham	San Diego, CA	Plot to attack Shia mosque in Michigan	Late	Trial pending.
Alwar Pouryan	Phoenix, AZ	Selling weapons to Taliban in Romania	Early	Trial pending.
Khalid Ali-M Aldawsari	Lubbock, TX	Buying chemicals for weapon	Early	Trial pending.
Ahmed Ferhani	New York, NY	Plot to bomb synagogues, churches, and Empire State Building.	Early	Trial pending.
Mohamed Mamdouh	New York, NY	Plot to bomb synagogues, churches, and Empire State Building.	Early	Trial pending.
Joseph Jeffrey Brice	Clarkston, WA	Testing explosives	Late	Trial pending.
Jesse Curtis Morton	New York, NY	Threatening "South Park" creators	Early	Trial pending.
Waad Ramadan Alwan	Bowling Green, [sic]	Plot to send weapons and money to Iraqi insurgents.	Early	Trial pending.
Shareef Hammadi	Bowling Green, [sic]	Plot to send weapons and money to Iraqi insurgents.	Early	Trial pending.
Yonathan Melaku	Washington, DC	Shooting at military buildings in Virginia	No	Trial pending.
Abu Khalid Abdul-Latif	Seattle, WA	Plot to attack military office in Seattle	Early	Trial pending.
Wali Mujahidh	Los Angeles, CA	Plot to attack military office in Seattle	Early	Trial pending.
Mohammad Hassan Khalid	Baltimore, MD	"Jihad Jane" plot on Swedish cartoonist	Early	Trial pending.
Nasser Jason Abdo	Killeen, TX	Buying gunpowder for attack on Fort Hood	Late	Trial pending.
Agron Hasbajrami	New York, NY	Travel to Pakistan to join terrorist group	Early	Trial pending.
Rezwan Ferdous	Ashland, MA	Plot to attack D.C. with remote-control aircraft.	Early	Trial pending.
Mansour Arbabsiar	Austin, TX	Plot to assassinate Saudi ambassador in D.C.	Early	Trial pending.
Jose Pimentel	New York, NY	Building pipe bomb to attack mailboxes, banks, [sic].	Early	Trial pending.
Craig Baxam	Laurel, MD	Travel to Kenya to join al-Shabaab in Somalia	Early	Trial pending.

These and similar warnings have braced Americans for a possible upsurge in Muslim-American terrorism, which has not occurred. Instead, terrorist plots have decreased in each of the past 2 years, since the spike of cases in 2009. Threats remain: Violent plots have not dwindled to zero, and revolutionary Islamist organizations overseas continue to call for Muslim Americans to engage in violence. However, the number of Muslim Americans who have responded to these calls continues to be tiny, when compared with the population of more than 2 million Muslims in the United States⁵ and when compared with the total level of violence in the United States, which was on track to register 14,000 murders in 2011.⁶

Of the 20 Muslim Americans accused of violent terrorist plots in 2011 (Figure 2), only one, Yonathan Melaku, was charged with carrying out an attack, firing shots at military buildings in northern Virginia (Figure 3). Nobody was injured. This figure represents a significant decrease from 2010, when six Muslim Americans carried out terrorist attacks, five of them joining militants in Somalia and Yemen and one carrying out a domestic attack: Faizal Shahzad's attempted car-bomb near Times Square in New York City, which would have killed hundreds of people, perhaps more than a thousand, if the bomb had been constructed properly.⁷

Another three individuals were arrested in 2011 after gathering explosives: Roger Stockham, who was arrested with fireworks in his car trunk after bragging to a bartender that he intended to blow up a Shia Muslim mosque in Michigan; Joseph Jeffrey Brice, who injured himself testing explosives near a highway in eastern Washington; and Naser Jason Abdo, who bought explosives for an alleged plot to attack Fort Hood in Texas. The other 16 suspects—none have been convicted yet—were arrested at an early stage in their plots.

Two suspects in 2011 received terrorist training abroad, down from eight in 2010 and 28 in 2009: Waad Ramadan Alwan and Shareef Hammadi, who were arrested in Kentucky for plotting to send weapons and money to Iraqi insurgents they allegedly served with before coming to the United States in 2009.

In terms of the potential for casualties, the bulk of the suspects in 2011 appeared to have been limited in competence. The first terrorism-related arrest of a Muslim American in 2011, for example, involved Emerson Begolly, a 21-year-old former white supremacist who converted to Islam and posted violent-sounding material on the internet. When his mother tricked him into meeting with FBI agents outside a fast-food restaurant, he got into a tussle and bit them. The second case of the year involved Roger Stockham, who stopped at a bar on the way to his attack and bragged to the bartender about his hostility toward Shia Muslims and his plan to attack a local Shia mosque. The bartender, an Arab-American, called the police. The third case involved Alwar Pouryan, an Iranian-American who allegedly conspired with a Jewish Israeli-American, Oded Orbach, to sell weapons in Romania to an agent of the Taliban, who was actually an undercover agent of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency. The fourth case involved a Saudi student in Texas, Khalid Aldawsari, who tried to buy a large amount of chemicals over the internet from a company in North Carolina. The company called the FBI. These and other cases do not appear to be the actions of sophisticated, well-trained Islamist revolutionaries.

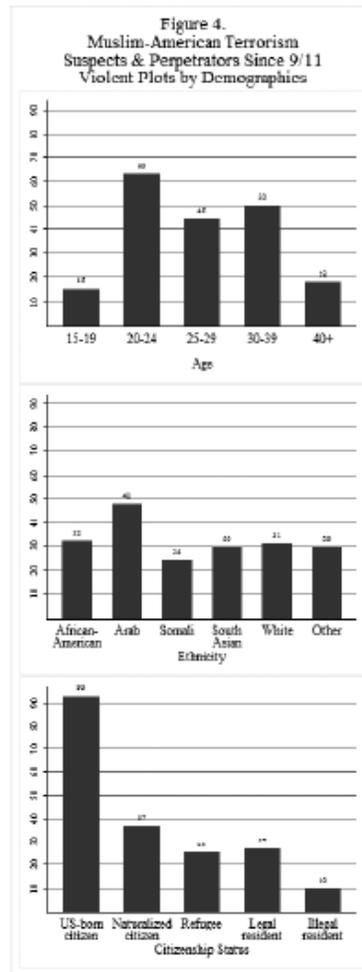
⁵Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, "Mapping the Global Muslim Population," October 2009.

⁶Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Preliminary Semiannual Uniform Crime Report, January–June, 2011."

⁷Charles Kurzman, "Muslim-American Terrorism Since 9/11: An Accounting," Triangle Center on Terrorism and Homeland Security, February 2, 2011.

FIGURE 3. MUSLIM-AMERICAN DOMESTIC TERRORIST ATTACKS SINCE 9/11

Name	Year	Plot	Fatalities
Hesham Hadayet	2002	Shot Israeli airline personnel, Los Angeles, California	2 (plus himself).
Charles Bishop	2002	Flew plane into office tower, Tampa, Florida	0 (plus himself).
John Allen Muhammad	2002	"Beltway Snipers," metropolitan Washington, DC area	11.
Lee Boyd Malvo	2002	"Beltway Snipers," metropolitan Washington, DC area	11.
Mohammed Taheri-Azar	2006	Ran over students with rented SUV, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.	0.
Naveed Haq	2006	Shot workers at Jewish center, Seattle, Washington	1.
Sulejmen Talovic	2007	Shot people at shopping center, Salt Lake City, Utah	5 (plus himself).
Tahmeed Ahmad	2007	Attacked military police at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Florida.	0.
Abdulahakim Muhammad	2009	Shooting at military recruitment center, Little Rock, Arkansas.	1.
Nidal Hasan	2009	Fort Hood shooting, Texas	13.
Faisal Shahzad	2010	Times Square car-bomb, New York City	0.
Yonathan Melaku	2011	Allegedly shot at military buildings in northern Virginia	0.



As in previous years, 2011's Muslim-American terrorism suspects did not fit any particular demographic profile (Figure 4). Thirty percent were age 30 and older, as compared with 35 percent of all cases since 9/11. Seventy percent were U.S. citizens, as compared with 68 percent of all cases since 9/11. The suspects came from a variety of ethnic backgrounds—30 percent Arab, 25 percent white, and 15 percent African-American. Forty percent were converts, as compared with 35 percent of all cases since 9/11.

One demographic difference in 2011's cases was the absence of Somali-Americans, as compared with three in 2010, 18 in 2009, and three in the years 2003–2008. Public concern over Somali-American radicalization continued to echo throughout the year, including a Congressional hearing on the subject,⁸ but there were no new cases of Somali-American terrorism in 2011.

Muslim Americans continued to be a source of initial tips alerting law-enforcement authorities to violent terrorist plots. Muslim Americans turned in 2 of 14 indi-

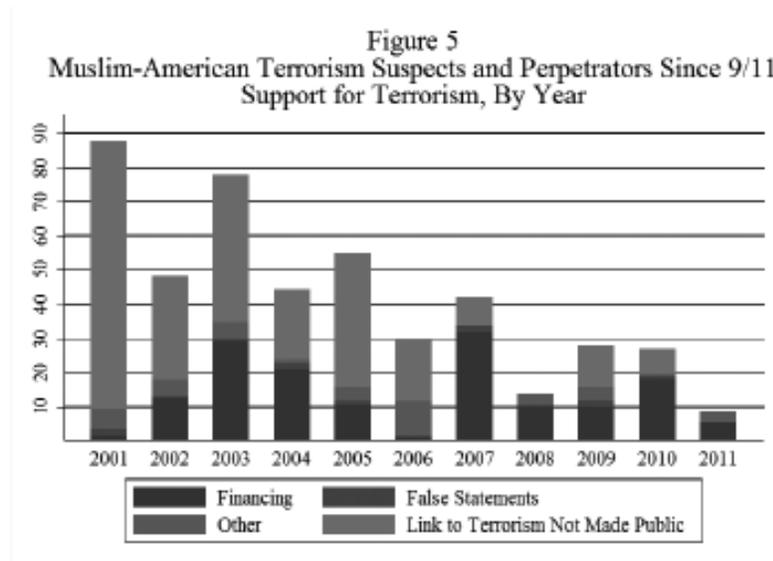
⁸Committee on Homeland Security, U.S. House of Representatives, "Hearing on Al Shabaab: Recruitment and Radicalization within the Muslim-American Community and the Threat to the Homeland," July 27, 2011.

viduals in 2011 whose initial tip could be identified, bringing the total to 52 of 140 since 9/11.

One of 2011's 20 suspects had prison experience: Abu Khalid Abdul-Latif, who was arrested for plotting to attack a military induction center. Abdul-Latif was incarcerated in 2002–2004 for robbery and assault. Since 9/11, fewer than one-tenth of suspects and perpetrators (17 of 193) had been incarcerated, 14 in American prisons and three overseas. Prison does not seem to be a major source of Islamic radicalization.⁹ An unusually large ratio of suspects in 2011 (4 of 20) had military experience. Since 9/11, fewer than one-tenth of suspects and perpetrators (15 of 193) had served in the United States military.

SUPPORT FOR TERRORISM

In addition to the decline in violent plots, the number of Muslim Americans indicted for support of terrorism—financing, false statements, and other connections with terrorist plots and organizations, aside from violent plots—fell from 27 individuals in 2010 to 8 in 2011, bringing the total to 462 since 9/11 (Figure 5).



These statistics, analyzed here for the first time, include 256 Muslim Americans whose cases were classified as “terrorism-related” in a 2010 report by the U.S. Department of Justice, but who were not charged with terrorism-related offenses, and whose connection to terrorism was not made public.¹⁰ Some of these cases seem somewhat removed from actual terrorist threats—for example, Zameer Nooralla Mohamed, who was convicted for making a hoax call to the FBI claiming that four acquaintances, including an ex-girlfriend and a colleague who owed him money, were planning an attack. In other cases, the Government may have chosen to prosecute a lesser crime rather than make terrorism-related intelligence public.

In cases where the connection to terrorism is publicly known, 151 individuals were prosecuted for financing terrorist plots or organizations; 12 individuals were accused of making false statements during terrorism investigations; and 43 individuals had other connections with terrorism, such as producing a video for a foreign terrorist organization, sending cassette tapes or raincoats to members of a terrorist organization, or personal associations with members of terrorist organizations.

⁹Bert Useem, testimony before the Committee on Homeland Security, U.S. House of Representatives, “Hearing on the Threat of Muslim-American Radicalization in U.S. Prisons,” June 15, 2011.

¹⁰Department of Justice, Introduction to National Security Division Statistics on Unsealed International Terrorism and Terrorism-Related Convictions (2010). This list is based on convictions, rather than indictments, and there may be more cases, especially in recent years, that have not yet been resolved.

These statistics were supplemented with information from the Terrorist Trial Report Card produced by New York University School of Law's Center on Law and Security, which generously made its dataset available for this project;¹¹ the Investigative Project on Terrorism, which lists terrorism-related court cases;¹² and *Mother Jones* magazine's on-line dataset of terrorism investigations.¹³

The decline in prosecutions of Muslim Americans for support of terrorism over the past decade is particularly notable in view of the heightened scrutiny that terrorism financing now receives from law enforcement agencies, which "have established an increasingly difficult environment within which terrorist financiers can operate undetected," and "have made the concealment and transfer of terrorism related funds more difficult," according to Congressional testimony by the acting assistant director of the FBI's Counterterrorism Division.¹⁴

In recent years, terrorist financing cases have involved smaller amounts of money (Figure 6). Of the 16 cases involving more than \$1 million, only five occurred in the last 4 years, and none in 2011. By contrast, most cases in the past 4 years—13 of 23 cases in which the estimated value of the financing was made public, and all four cases in 2011—involved less than \$100,000. The scale of the financing is not known for six cases. (Note that Figure 6 counts cases, while previous charts counted individuals.)

The number of Muslim Americans indicted for support for terrorism is more than double the number indicted for violent plots—perhaps not surprising, since it would appear to be far less of a commitment to engage in financing than to engage in violence. Nonetheless, this finding underscores the relatively low level of radicalization among Muslim Americans.¹⁵

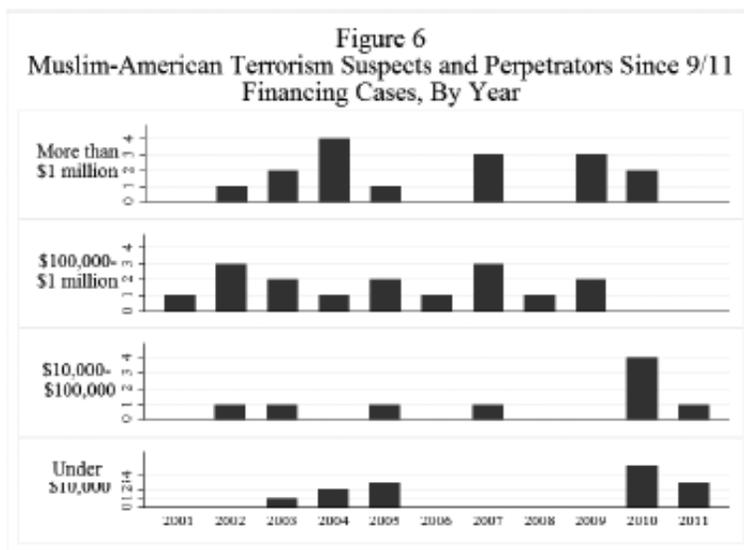
¹¹Center on Law and Security, New York University School of Law, Terrorist Trial Report Card: September 11, 2001–September 11, 2011, <http://www.lawandsecurity.org/Portals/0/Documents/TTRC%20Ten%20Year%20Issue.pdf>.

¹²The Investigative Project on Terrorism, <http://investigativeproject.org>.

¹³Trevor Aaronson, "The Informants," *Mother Jones*, August/September 2011; dataset available at <http://motherjones.com/fbi-terrorist>.

¹⁴Ralph S. Boelter, Acting Assistant Director, Counterterrorism Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation, testimony before the Subcommittee on Crime and Terrorism, Judiciary Committee, U.S. Senate, September 21, 2011.

¹⁵These findings contradict the conclusion of a recent study of Muslim-American terrorism by the New America Foundation and Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Public Policy, Post-9/11 Jihadist Terrorism Cases Involving U.S. Citizens and Residents, 2011. That study included 11 cases of terrorism financing in 2010, in addition to violent plots, but counted only violent plots in previous years, skewing the trend data and giving the false impression that terrorism was on the rise.



CONCLUSION

Almost 200 Muslim Americans have been involved in violent plots of terrorism over this decade, and more than 400 Muslim Americans have been indicted or convicted for supporting terrorism. In 2011, the numbers dropped in both categories, and the severity of the cases also appeared to lessen: Muslim-American terrorist plots led to no fatalities in the United States, and the year's four indictments for terrorist financing indictments involved relatively small amounts of money.

As in previous years, non-Muslims were also involved in domestic terrorism, proving once again that Muslims do not have a monopoly on violence. This study has not attempted to analyze those cases.

The limited scale of Muslim-American terrorism in 2011 runs counter to the fears that many Americans shared in the days and months after 9/11, that domestic Muslim-American terrorism would escalate. The spike in terrorism cases in 2009 renewed these concerns, as have repeated warnings from U.S. Government officials about a possible surge in homegrown Islamic terrorism. The predicted surge has not materialized.

Repeated alerts by Government officials may be issued as a precaution, even when the underlying threat is uncertain. Officials may be concerned about how they would look if an attack did take place and subsequent investigations showed that officials had failed to warn the public. But a by-product of these alerts is a sense of heightened tension that is out of proportion to the actual number of terrorist attacks in the United States since 9/11.

This study's findings challenge Americans to be vigilant against the threat of home-grown terrorism while maintaining a responsible sense of proportion.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Thank you, sir.

Then I would like to defer about 20–30 seconds to Mr. Richmond for a follow-up. Then I will reclaim my time.

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Chairman, just referring back to the John Cohen letter that many of us cited earlier, I will just read this simply paragraph. "We also know that violent extremism can be inspired by various religious, political, or other ideological beliefs. Many communities in rural counties Nation-wide face such threats. For example, violent sovereign citizen extremists have engaged in

violence against State and local law enforcement. Recognizing this, DHS has designed a countering violent extremism approach that applies to all forms of violent extremism, regardless of ideology.”

I would just suggest that we should also follow that same approach.

Chairman KING. The gentlelady from California.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Thank you, sir. Reclaiming my time.

I would like to know—just clarify some comments that were made earlier. You know, as a Member on this Homeland Security Committee, I think it is appropriate to ask a person’s qualifications because, after all, we as Members of Congress and our staff must have security clearances to participate in discussions and to hear information. So the fact that we would want to know, is there any validity or, you know, real facts or reasons behind some of the things that are being provided to us, I don’t think is an unreasonable question and a request.

I would like to further say that, you know, this committee—we are not a talk show. This isn’t Oprah. This isn’t entertainment. This isn’t radio. This is the United States Congress. So I would just ask, and Mr. King, I am trying to speak in all due respect to you, I would just ask that in the future, if we are going to have a U.S. Congressional hearing, which in my mind is a big thing, I believe that, at least some of the panelists should be people who have the authority, who receive the regular information to give us the most accurate helpful information as possible that we can blend in with other community thoughts. But I think, otherwise, to me, this is similar to like a community town hall or something like that, that I don’t think rises to the level of the United States Congress.

Chairman KING. Well, I cannot disagree with you. It is a question, I guess, of who or what rises to the level of the U.S. Congress. But the fact is, that—

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Chairman, I didn’t—

Chairman KING. Oh, you asked me a question, I thought you were going to give me the courtesy to answer. You weren’t asking a question?

Ms. RICHARDSON. No, I wasn’t—

Chairman KING. Okay. Fine. Good.

Ms. RICHARDSON. But go ahead. Go ahead. I just want to make sure I don’t lose my time.

Chairman KING. No, it is your time then. I will tell you later.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I—with all due respect, again, I am not looking to pick a fight here, but what I am saying is—for me as a Member on this committee, I don’t mind people’s personal thoughts and their opinions, but what I think it should also be couple with, is professionals who do this work, who have this information and—

Chairman KING. Well, if the gentlelady would yield on that then. I will give you the time at the end. Whatever I take, I will yield back to you at the end.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Sure. Go ahead then.

Chairman KING. First of all, the purpose of this hearing was to hear from the community. If the gentlelady is interested in getting classified information or security-based information, we have brief-

ings all the time. We have—we have briefings in the SCIF that are made available to all Members.

The fact of this hearing—the purpose of this hearing is to connect with real people, people who are citizens. I don't think we have such an elitist attitude that we are only going to hear from people who have security clearances.

The fact is that we are talking about people who are in the trenches—people who live real lives, who are out there, who are not coming here as bureaucrats, not coming here as Government elite, but they are coming here as real people. To me, that is what the Congress of the United States is about—to hearing—to hear from people—to represent the people.

You only represent the people by hearing from them, not by listening to bureaucrats. They give us information. We get great information. The CIA, the FBI, NCTC, Homeland Security—they give us very excellent briefings. Many of the Members—I haven't seen you with many of them. But I know we do have them and we get them. They give the most detailed classified, top-secret information. I would suggest you go to a few of those and then blend it into what you hear from real people. The clock was stopped, so you have 1 minute and 49 seconds.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Chairman, I am offended by your reference to me at classified briefings. I will provide to you my record. I think it is very inappropriate for you to say in a public forum—

Chairman KING. I would say that it is more inappropriate for you to somehow compare this to Oprah Winfrey, when we have real people who have given of their time to come in to testify before us. Perhaps they are at risk themselves coming in here, giving of their time, and be willing to share their experiences with us.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Chairman, I did not yield. Are you going to put my time back—

Chairman KING. You get 11 seconds. Actually, the clock stopped.

Ms. RICHARDSON. It stopped after you talked—

Chairman KING. Then you get—okay, you will get 1 minute and 38 seconds.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Chairman, if you go back to my comments, my objection is not—and I am thankful for the testimony that we have before us. My suggestion or my request as a member of your committee was that you would consider in the future if we have hearings such as this, that you would also have a witness that could provide accurate testimony to also what is being heard in the community to make sure that we decisionmakers can make the best possible decisions. That was my simple request.

Let me go onto Mr. Jasser and actually the other members who are here. Of the folks who are here who are testifying, other than being a Muslim, is there any specialized knowledge or expertise on terrorism and law enforcement that you have before this committee?

Dr. JASSER. Ten years of a non-profit foundation that is been working in this area and published in multiple journals and magazines and academic journals in the country for 10 years, madam. Not to mention—by the way, I do have a security clearance, top-secret, which has been of no value in this work, but I do have one.

But you—to identify that somehow actually, I think you are feeding into tribalism concepts, that somehow the tribal leaders——

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Jasser——

Dr. JASSER [continuing]. Of our community——

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Jasser——

Dr. JASSER [continuing]. Needs to be the ones to speak. Yes, madam?

Ms. RICHARDSON. Excuse me. Excuse me. I asked a simple question. Do you have specialized knowledge or expertise in terrorism and law enforcement? Yes or no.

Dr. JASSER. Terrorism and law enforcement? No, madam.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Thank you. The next witness.

Ms. NOMANI. Yes, for the last 10 years, ever since my friend Danny's murder, I have been, as a journalist——

Ms. RICHARDSON. No, madam.

Ms. NOMANI [continuing]. Investigating——

Ms. RICHARDSON [continuing]. My question is——

Ms. NOMANI [continuing]. I have been investigating——

Ms. RICHARDSON [continuing]. Do you have——

Ms. NOMANI [continuing]. Yes, I am answering your question——

Ms. RICHARDSON [continuing]. Specialized knowledge or expertise——

Ms. NOMANI [continuing]. Yes——

Ms. RICHARDSON [continuing]. In terrorism and law enforcement? Yes or no?

Ms. NOMANI. Yes, so I have had specialized knowledge related to domestic terrorism and international terrorism. For the last 4 years, I have been a trainer to the U.S. Military on issues of terrorism and violence inside of our Muslim community.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam.

Dr. AHMED. I thank you for your question. I have lived the Islamist narrative in Saudi Arabia, also in Pakistan. I did detailed research for my book, which is now 6 years post-publication. I would consider that credentials. I am not credentialed by the U.S. Government.

Ms. RICHARDSON. And, madam. The last——

Ms. PATEL. Thank you. My credentials are simply that I have researched in this field for the last 4 years.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Thank you.

Chairman KING. I would just add that I think Ms. Patel is an ideal witness. I am not questioning your qualification—you are extremely qualified to be here today. I mean that sincerely, based on your experience. Whether we agree or disagree, you certainly are extremely qualified.

Gentleman from Minnesota, Mr. Cravaack.

Mr. CRAVAACK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Patel, you are the Minority witness. Are you not?

Ms. PATEL. That sounds sort of spooky, but yes.

Mr. CRAVAACK. Okay. I just wanted to make sure that all—we do have a Minority witness, so it is not a stacked deck, in that, you can speak from the other.

Okay, Ms. Patel, I appreciate your opportunity of being here today. In your prepared statement on page 1, you discuss the hearings and assert that they, meaning the committee's hearings,

“adopt a view of radicalization that treats religious beliefs as a precursor to terrorism.”

I must reemphasize in some of the conversation we have had here today, it is particularly troubling to me actually, that these hearings have persistently asserted that it is a violent Islamic extremist ideology promoted by al-Qaeda and not—but let me reemphasize that—not the religion of Islam that is driving the radicalization to homegrown terrorist activity. To confuse this fact and blur the lines between the Islamic extremist ideology and the religion of Islam is playing into the terrorist propaganda promulgated by al-Qaeda to justify the narrative.

I therefore ask you, Ms. Patel, are you familiar with the ideology of Islamic extremism? If so, are you capable of differentiating between the Islamic extremism ideology being promoted by al-Qaeda and the religion of Islam?

Ms. PATEL. Thank you for that question, sir. I think what I am trying to say, and maybe it is not exactly eloquent, is that when you look at theories of radicalization, which have been discussed in these committee’s hearings several times, and you look at how they paint the trajectory of how somebody goes from being religious to becoming radical to embracing violence to committing violence, the signs of radicalization that are identified by these theories are by and large Muslim religious behavior.

So they would point to things such as growing a beard, which some men think is required in Islam; to giving up smoking and drinking, again something that is contrary to Islamic precepts; to giving up hip-hop clothing—that is another one that is been identified; to going to the mosque more frequently. So these are the kinds of things that suggest to me that when you start looking at radicalization, and even if what you are really looking at is political radicalization, you are going to land up looking at religiosity. That is what we have seen has been happening.

Thank you.

Mr. CRAVAACK. I appreciate those comments, madam. But besides from the mosque, you could also say the Amish will do the same thing.

So you know, I was talking to Dr. Ahmed and discussing her very diverse and unique background; and my background as well, being in the military and being an airline pilot, being able to travel all over the world. Ninety-five percent of this world just wants a safe place to put their head down at night and to raise their children and hopefully, make them better than themselves. That is the 95 percent.

It is the radical portion, no matter what—we are not even talking whether it be radical Islam, radical anything. That is the portion that we are talking about. So let us be distinctively clear on what we are talking about here—radicalization of Islam, not Islam itself.

Do you understand that by alleging that our investigation into the threat from radicalization to terrorist activity is an attack on Islam itself and that you are fostering al-Qaeda’s terrorist narrative? Do you understand that?

Ms. PATEL. Sir, as I explained, when looking at radicalization, all of the theories that have been put forward look at signs of reli-

giosity. When you start looking at religiosity as a precursor for terrorism, I think you are going down the wrong path.

Mr. CRAVAACK. Well, again, madam, you know, when we talk about religiosity, as you say, the same things that you have just said about growing a beard—and in other words, going to a mosque, and creating a certain lifestyle, could be said the same as the Amish, where they are the most peaceful people around. Nobody is really looking at them, as being possible terrorists.

So again, in your prepared statement on page 2, you state, “The second, equally faulty assumption of these hearings is that someone who is particularly devout in his or her Islamic faith, as you have said, is well on the way to becoming a terrorist.”

These hearings have never asserted that a devout Muslim is on their way of becoming a terrorist. Never has anyone ever said that in this—in this—in this body. Quite the contrary, in fact, they have emphasized that many of the individuals radicalized were recent converts who were susceptible to terrorist narrative. We have heard from many, like Melvin Bledsoe, about his son, a convert to Islam who was radicalized; or Mr. Bihi, whose young and impressionable nephew was—

Chairman KING. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CRAVAACK. I—I yield back, sir. Thank you.

Chairman KING. Thank you. The gentlelady from California, Ms. Hahn, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. HAHN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member. It is very interesting to sit in these hearings and listen to—to all the testimony. You know, I think, you know, for most of us, we all want to figure out how we get to the core of the threats that are against our homeland. Whoever it is, wherever they come from, what their background is, what their religion is—certainly radical ideology in all forms of religion is troubling to me—is very troubling to me.

There are radical Christians that I find troubling in how they have used the Bible to promote a particular behavior, which I disagree with. I was raised in a church that actually didn’t allow women to speak. They took one verse in the Bible—“Women shall remain silent”—and they used that as a way to keep women from rising to any sort of position in the church. That didn’t go over, well, big with me.

So there are people that will take any form of their religion and take it to an extremism of behavior of violence that all of us I think want to root out and come against and find ways to prevent. You know, I think what I have gotten from all of the testimonies is really—it comes down to relationships. It comes down to our friends, our neighbors, those we work with. It is trying to understand when it begins to turn, when this religion or this theology begins to go in the wrong direction. How do we stop it? How do we find it? How do we prevent it? How do we provide alternate teachings for all of the faiths that I think we come with?

I was interested in reading Sheriff Baca’s testimony, who was here before and talked about the success that we are finding. I am from Los Angeles, so he is my county sheriff. I am interested in his efforts to create these relationships, these dialogues in Los Angeles County with the Muslim community and how important it is, as he

testified, in fighting future threats. Talking about the Muslim community, who has been shoulder-to-shoulder with him in preventing threats and finding them out, in offering solutions to law enforcement in how we might prevent them.

So Ms. Patel and others, you are welcome to answer this: What do you think is the best way to foster these relationships? In your assessment, what is the greatest threat in this country and abroad in the divisiveness and the isolation of the relationships with the Muslim community?

Ms. PATEL. Thank you. I am really glad you brought up Sheriff Baca, because I do think that he is a model of the way that a law enforcement official can deal with the Muslim community. He has built really strong, non-securitized relationships with the Muslim community. I think that is a really important point.

The L.A. County Sheriff's Office Muslim Outreach Unit isn't about collecting intelligence. You know, it isn't about counterterrorism. It is simply about reaching out to that community in the same way that they reach out to other communities. It is part of a community-policing program that allows the police to understand communities, to understand their concerns, and to work with them to build strategies. I think that that model has been very helpful.

You know, we have seen, for example, that in, not just in Los Angeles County, but also from the LAPD, that they have been very responsive to concerns that communities have brought before them—for example, with respect to the suspicious activity reporting system, which the LAPD just agreed to reform about 3 weeks ago. So you see that there are sincere efforts to build relationships and the community response.

I think that one thing that would serve as a disincentive to community cooperation is if they perceive that cooperation to be about their faith rather than criminal activity. That is why when we talk about radicalization and having people report on radicalization, it makes me nervous.

Dr. JASSER. If I may—if I may add. I think it is interesting. On the one hand, we are either supposed to be law enforcement or terror experts. Or if we represent the community, we have to fit into a pigeonhole that somehow we are apologists for the entire representation of the faith.

Yet, what I think many of us are here for is that we do have our roots in the community, that we do love our faith, but we realize that the greatest threat, as you asked, is actually a theo-political ideology that we need to counter, because that Islamist threat is hijacking my faith.

I worry about the impact of that threat upon my children in all of the different avenues. Law enforcement and terror experts cannot fix that. You could bring them here for the next 100 years and they will not counter that. While we Muslims can counter that—that conveyor belt towards radicalization and we have the opportunity, once we have a consensus again—

Chairman KING. The time of the gentlelady has expired.

Ms. HAHN. Thank you.

Chairman KING. Thank you. The gentleman from Florida, Mr. Bilirakis, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you very much. I appreciate it. Thank you for caring about your faith and your community and your fellow American citizens. I really appreciate your testimony today.

Dr. Jasser and Ms. Nomani and Ms. Ahmed, each of you spoke of your concerns regarding the growth and extremism of Islam within the United States. I share your concerns about this trend. I wanted to ask you how you think we should balance this with an individual's right to worship as they choose. What, in your opinion, is the critical distinction between more conservative Islamic religious practices and those activities that subsequently lead to radicalization and violent extremism activities?

Now, I know that Ms. Patel may have covered this. I had to step out for a second, but if you could respond to that.

How can we find the balance that protects an individual's right to worship as they choose, but ensure that our communities are safe and secure? How can we support the moderate Muslim community so they can—as an alternative path to the radicalization? These hearings have been terrific, very productive, but what can we do? These have been—it is been very informative, but what can we do in addition to these hearings?

Ms. NOMANI. Well, I believe that Ms. Patel has a valid point that religiosity doesn't necessarily equal extremism. That, in fact, the Amish indicators, you know, are very much parallel to the ones of religiosity in a Muslim man. But what I think we—why we have to have this conversation and why we need to continue to educate ourselves about what terrorism and extremist ideology looks like is so that we can make those distinctions.

I believe that, you know, we need to include religion in our threat assessment, because we need to identify very clearly how those indicators related to interpretation express themselves. So that doesn't mean, because a guy wears his pants up high, that he is a terrorist. He may be practicing a tradition of the Prophet Mohammed that he thinks makes him much more religious. Or because he grows his beard a certain length, it doesn't make him an extremist.

But what we can do is figure out what it is in terms of his ideas about the Jews, the Christians, the West, and other elements, you know, become indicators for terrorism. That is why I believe that our administration's policy of excluding Islam from that conversation is, quite frankly, naive, and very shortsighted.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Dr. Jasser.

Dr. JASSER. Yes, thank you for the question, Mr. Bilirakis. You know, I think ultimately what is important and what you can do is to begin to foster platforms—engagement on this issue.

Just as in the Cold War, we finally came as a Nation to a consensus that communism was a threat. We didn't have to fire any bullets against the Soviets directly to finally move towards building think tanks and filtering our military and others for those ideological infiltrators.

Similarly, Islamism—I watched the hearings on military assessment that—that you all did. I think if you look at Nasir Abdul, for example, the fact that the Secretary—the Assistant Secretary of the Army gave him conscientious objection status, I find to be offensive as a Muslim.

So many Muslims serve proudly, but yet we allowed this individual that turned out to be a terrorist to use his religion to hide behind an excuse to serve this country. I think ultimately what happened, was because of political correctness, our own army could not identify the threat. The Fort Hood report itself does not identify any of the ideologies it should have. Until we can, we can't come to a consensus that Islamism is a threat. That is why you need Muslims that are doing this reform work to lead the movement to separate Islam from Islamism.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. I couldn't agree more. Anyone else on the panel want to address this? Yes, please.

Dr. AHMED. Yes. Thank you for the question. I think perhaps one of the most important roles that you can help us, is to have a conversation where we take away the shield of Islam from those who subscribe to Islamist ideologies, whether non-violent or violent. In fact, the two are deeply connected.

The non-violent mechanisms do involve subscription to beliefs that are counter to democracy that involve supremacism and often deeply rooted in anti-Semitism. These have no place in Islam. There is no way to describe them without talking about the values of Islam or searching for enclaves within collections of Muslim people, whether they are in Pakistan or whether they are in the United States or anywhere else in the world.

As to your point about how to protect a Muslim's right to worship, let me tell you, as a Muslim, I am more free to worship here than any other Muslim-majority nation that I have ever been to. Our rights are not at risk. This is not a civil rights issue, which many people are beginning to make. We must remind individuals who are American or not as to how those freedoms are protected. That is being lost in the debate. Just because we are scrutinizing an area for a problem, doesn't mean anybody's civil liberties have been intruded upon.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you very much.

Ms. Patel, I don't know if you want—I know you—

Chairman KING. The time of the gentleman—

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman KING. Ms. Patel has the opportunity to answer. Sure.

Ms. PATEL. Just real quick.

Chairman KING. Microphone.

Ms. PATEL. Still learning. Just real quick. I think that the comments from my co-witnesses, I guess, sort of illustrate the problem, which is that what we are talking about here—what they are talking about is, you know, how do you distinguish different Islamic ideologies. How do you strip Islam from political Islam?

You know, those are important conversations. I certainly wouldn't want to quell them. But I am not sure the Government has a role in—in those conversations—the Government has a role in talking about which version of Islam is good and which version of Islam is bad. Government's role comes when you come to violence, when a particular ideology, regardless of what it is, is going to impinge on society—is going to affect public safety. That is where Government has its most legitimate role. That is where I would encourage you all to focus.

Thank you.

Chairman KING. Actually, the time has expired. Does Ranking Member have a unanimous consent request, so we don't forget to insert the testimony of Mr. Cohen?

Mr. THOMPSON. Yes. For Mr. Cohen's testimony that has been referred to by a number of Members, we would like to include it in the record of this hearing.

Chairman KING. Without objection. So ordered.
[The information follows:]

STATEMENT OF JOHN COHEN, PRINCIPAL DEPUTY COUNTERTERRORISM COORDINATOR AND SENIOR ADVISOR TO THE SECRETARY, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

JUNE 20, 2012

Chairman King, Ranking Member Thompson, and Distinguished Members of the Committee: My name is John Cohen, I currently serve as the Principal Deputy Counterterrorism Coordinator and Senior Advisor to the Secretary at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The Secretary has designated me as the DHS lead for countering violent extremism (CVE) and my responsibilities include coordinating all of the Department's efforts associated with CVE.

I am pleased to submit this testimony for the record, and I thank the committee for your strong support of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and our efforts to counter violent extremism. We look forward to continuing to work with the committee on this effort.

The Department has responsibility for implementing a range of CVE initiatives outlined in the administration's National *CVE Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) for Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States*. This role includes leveraging the Department's analytic, research, and information capabilities, engaging State and local authorities and communities to bolster pre-existing local partnerships, and supporting State, local, Tribal, and territorial law enforcement and communities through training, community policing practices, and grants. DHS works closely to coordinate and collaborate on these efforts with the National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC), the Department of Justice (DOJ), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and other interagency and community partners.

Within the context of U.S.-based violent extremism, we know that foreign terrorist groups affiliated with al-Qaeda, and individual extremists, are actively seeking to recruit or inspire Westerners to carry out attacks against western and U.S. targets. They are seeking to recruit and inspire individuals living in communities within the United States via social media, through personal interaction, and through the publication of magazines.

Today, the Department operates with the understanding that as it relates to domestic violent extremism we face the greatest terrorist risk from those extremists who have either been recruited by al-Qaeda or its affiliates or inspired by their ideology. This threat is real, as evidenced by the multiple recent thwarted attacks of domestic violent extremists inspired by al-Qaeda's ideology, to include the arrest of Naser Jason Abdo at Fort Hood in July, 2011 and the arrest of Amine el-Khalifi in February 2012 in Washington, DC.

However, we also know that violent extremism can be inspired by various religious, political, or other ideological beliefs. Many communities and rural counties Nation-wide face such threats. For example, violent Sovereign Citizen Extremists have engaged in violence against State and local law enforcement. Recognizing this, DHS has designed a CVE approach that applies to all forms of violent extremism, regardless of ideology. We have conducted significant analysis and research on multiple types of threats, in order to equip law enforcement with the capacity to detect and mitigate all forms of violent extremism.

In order to address these various threats, the Department is working with its Federal, State, local, Tribal, and territorial partners to fully integrate CVE awareness into the daily activities of law enforcement and local communities Nation-wide by building upon pre-existing partnerships and their existing practices, such as community policing, that have proven to be successful for decades. Specifically, DHS has made substantial progress in CVE in three key areas:

1. Better understanding the phenomenon of violent extremism through extensive analysis and research on the behaviors and indicators of violent extremism;

2. Enhancing operational partnerships with local communities, State and local law enforcement, and international partners; and
3. Supporting community policing efforts through curriculum development, training, and grant prioritization.

A major part of our effort to counter violent extremism also involves working directly with community members and advocacy groups. It is important to note that the vast majority of Muslim-Americans living in the United States do not subscribe to violent extremist ideologies and are actively working with local authorities, the FBI, DOJ, and DHS to protect their local communities from violence. These partnerships with community members are vital to our security, as evidenced by the fact that of the 86 foiled terrorist plots against the United States between 1999–2009, almost half of the plots were thwarted with help and participation from communities.¹

BETTER UNDERSTANDING THE PHENOMENON OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM

DHS has conducted extensive analysis and research to better understand the threat of violent extremism. This analysis and research is being shared with Federal, State, and local authorities, fusion centers, local communities, and international law enforcement partners like Europol to empower, support, and equip them with the knowledge to better detect and identify potential behaviors associated with violent extremism to prevent violent crime in their communities. All of this information is also being integrated into all of the Department's CVE training for Federal, State, local, and correctional facility law enforcement.

The Department has developed a number of case studies on known or suspected violent extremists that identify behaviors associated with violent extremism. The DHS Office for Intelligence and Analysis (I&A) has produced over 20 reports since 2009 on violent extremism. For example, in 2011 I&A developed an in-depth study that looks at the common behaviors associated with 62 cases of al-Qaeda-inspired violent extremists. DHS has also produced numerous unclassified homeland security reference aids analyzing domestic violent extremist groups, including violent Anarchist Extremists,² violent Racist Skinhead Extremists,³ and violent Sovereign Citizen Extremists.⁴

DHS I&A is also working with analysts at Europol to finalize a joint case study on the 2011 Norway terrorist attacks. It examines the behaviors that led to the attacks and analyzes Anders Breivik's manifesto. This case study will be shared with U.S. and European Union (EU) partners in order to provide an understanding of the behaviors that led to these attacks and provide information that may help prevent future incidents.

In addition, the DHS Science & Technology Directorate (S&T) is currently working closely with academic partners and DHS research centers of excellence, such as the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) at the University of Maryland, to finalize a study that focuses on how social experiences may have impacted the involvement of some Minneapolis-St. Paul Somali-American youth in violent extremism, how risk and protective factors impact young males' vulnerability to violent extremism recruitment, and how community members can intervene to prevent violent crime. In the next several months, S&T will also be conducting a series of focus groups with State and Local law enforcement and fusion center personnel at 20 different locations to better identify their CVE information and training needs.

¹“Building on Clues: Examining Successes and Failures in Detecting U.S. Terrorist Plots, 1999–2009,” *Institute for Homeland Security Solutions*, October 2010.

²DHS defines Anarchists Extremists as “Groups or individuals who facilitate or engage in acts of violence as a means of changing the government and society in support of the belief that all forms of capitalism and corporate globalization should be opposed and that governing institutions are unnecessary and harmful to society.”

³DHS defines Racist Skinhead Extremists as “Groups or individuals who facilitate, support, or engage in acts of violence directed towards the Federal Government, ethnic minorities, or Jewish persons in support of their belief that Caucasians are intellectually and morally superior to other races and their perception that the government is controlled by Jewish persons.”

⁴DHS defines Sovereign Citizen Extremists as “Groups or individuals who facilitate or engage in acts of violence directed at public officials, financial institutions, and government facilities in support of their belief that the legitimacy of U.S. citizenship should be rejected; almost all forms of established government, authority, and institutions are illegitimate; and that they are immune to Federal, State, and local laws.”

ENHANCING OPERATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AND BEST PRACTICES WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES, STATE AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT, AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

It is our belief that communities are part of the solution to countering violent extremism, and as such, DHS has worked and is continuing to work with local communities, including the Muslim-American community. The Secretary's Homeland Security Advisory Council (HSAC) Countering Violent Extremism Working Group included National and local community leaders from the Muslim-American community. The HSAC CVE Working Group recommendations to enhance information-driven, community-oriented policing efforts were directly incorporated into the current DHS approach to CVE. In addition, the Department most recently worked with a broad spectrum of faith-based, including Muslim-American, organizations under the HSAC Faith-based Security and Communications Advisory Committee to learn how DHS can best support information sharing, resilience, and threat awareness efforts within the faith-based community.

DHS has also made significant advancements in operational CVE exchanges with international partners. We have international CVE partnerships with the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Germany, Canada, Belgium, Spain, Denmark, and Australia, as well as partnerships with international law enforcement organizations such as Europol. For the past year, DHS, Europol, and E.U. partners have exchanged information on U.S.- and E.U.-based fusion center best practices, CVE training standards, and research and case studies, including a joint case study on the 2011 Norway attacks. These exchanges help us support State and Local law enforcement by equipping them with up-to-date analysis on the behaviors and indicators of violent extremism, so they can prevent potential future violent extremist incidents from occurring in their communities. DHS is also currently working with our Canadian law enforcement partners to collaborate and partner on CVE curriculum development for front-line officers and police academies. This collaboration is at its nascent stages but we are aiming to form an operationally-focused partnership between U.S. and Canadian law enforcement that will result in Nation-wide U.S. and Canadian delivery of CVE training and sharing of best practices. The Department is also aiming to expand CVE engagement with Australia. For example, DHS just signed a U.S.-Australia Joint Statement on Countering Transnational Crime, Terrorism, and Violent Extremism in Canberra in May 2012. Furthermore, DHS has coordinated with the Department of State to train field-based U.S. Government officials, both domestically and internationally, on how to engage and partner with local communities to build community resilience against terrorist recruitment and radicalization to violence. This training has encouraged interagency relationship-building and ensures that U.S. Government officials operating in the CVE sphere, both domestically and at our embassies abroad, promote a consistent CVE message while offering the opportunity for an exchange of good practices.

The Department has also significantly expanded outreach to communities that may be targeted for recruitment by violent extremists and promote a greater awareness of Federal resources, programs, and security measures available to communities. For example, the DHS Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) has held over 72 roundtable events Nation-wide since 2011, which have helped to address grievances, increase awareness of CVE resources, and build partnerships between State and local law enforcement, local government, and community stakeholders.

To further strengthen the partnership with law enforcement, DHS, the White House, NCTC, DOJ, and the FBI hosted 50 State, local, and Tribal law enforcement officials at the White House on January 18, 2012, to inform the Federal Government on how we can better support their local CVE efforts. Secretary Napolitano, Attorney General Holder, FBI Executive Assistant Director Giuliano, and Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Brennan participated. The feedback received in this workshop supported the Department's continued commitment to including CVE language in fiscal year 2012 grant guidance and the current development of on-line CVE training for officers Nation-wide. We are also working with law enforcement organizations, including the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), the Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA), the Major County Sheriffs Association (MCSA), and the National Sheriffs Association (NSA), to implement CVE efforts and protect communities from violence. For example, following up on this White House event, DHS participated in a DOJ-hosted meeting at the IACP on May 3-4, 2012 with State and local law enforcement officials and subject matter experts to discuss CVE training, how State and local law enforcement are implementing CVE efforts locally, and how violent extremists use the internet and social media to convene, recruit, and conspire. This meeting supports the development of a DOJ/Office of Community-Oriented Policing Services guide-

book on how community policing methods can be utilized to counter violent extremism.

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY POLICING EFFORTS THROUGH CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING, AND GRANT PRIORITIZATION

DHS is in the final stages of developing and implementing CVE training for Federal, State, local, and correctional facility law enforcement, as well as a training block for State police academies. The key goal of the training is to help law enforcement recognize the behaviors associated with violent extremist activity and distinguish between those behaviors that are potentially related to crime and those that are Constitutionally-protected or part of a religious or cultural practice.

As part of our effort to develop operationally accurate and appropriate training, DHS is working with the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), MCCA, and the National Consortium for Advance Policing (NCAP) to complete a continuing education CVE curriculum for frontline and executive State and local law enforcement. The first pilot was held on January 26, 2012 in San Diego and future pilots are being planned; the curriculum will be finalized by the end of 2012. In 2013, in collaboration with police associations and State and local partners, our goal is to implement this curriculum Nation-wide; the MCCA has already passed a motion to adopt and implement this curriculum. DHS is also working with the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) to develop an internet-based CVE curriculum for State police academies, which will be introduced into academies before the end of 2012.

DHS is also working with the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) to deliver a CVE curriculum for Federal law enforcement that will be integrated into existing training for new recruits. FLETC introduced this Federal curriculum to their trainers on February 16, 2012, and future training pilots are being planned in the next several months. In collaboration with the Interagency Threat Assessment Coordination Group (ITACG), Bureau of Prisons (BOP), and National Joint Terrorism Task Force (NJTTF), the Department is also working to implement CVE awareness training for front-line correctional facility, probation, and parole officers at the State and local level. Training was piloted on March 28, 2012 in the Maryland State Police Academy and is now undergoing revision as a result of feedback received from the pilot; the curriculum will be finalized this summer. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is also developing a curriculum for rural correctional facility management.

Additionally, CRCL has provided training on religious and cultural practices and an understanding of Constitutionally-protected activity for over 3,000 State and local law enforcement and fusion center personnel. CRCL is educating them on cultural and behavioral norms of how best to understand and engage communities that may be targeted for violent extremist recruitment. This CRCL training has been integrated into all of the CVE training efforts.

Developing this training is a priority because inappropriate and inaccurate training undermines community partnerships that are critical to preventing crime and negatively impacts efforts of law enforcement to identify legitimate behaviors and indicators of violent extremism.

In response to reports of operationally inaccurate training, DHS released *CVE Training Guidance and Best Practices* to all State and local partners and grantees as part of DHS' grant guidance policy on October 7, 2011. We are also working closely with interagency partners, and law enforcement associations, such as the MCCA and senior law enforcement officials Nation-wide to improve CVE training standards. In January, 2012, the MCCA adopted a motion to ensure that all CVE training is operationally appropriate and accurate. The Department is also working to develop an accreditation process for CVE trainers and develop a train-the-trainer program by fiscal year 2013.

DHS has also expanded fiscal year 2012 grant guidance to include funding for CVE training, partnerships with local communities, and local CVE engagement in support of the SIP. The Department also co-chairs a working group on CVE Training with NCTC that helps ensure that training best practices are created and shared throughout the interagency.

To conclude, the Department has made substantial CVE progress over the past 2 years to help protect our communities from violent extremism. DHS has significantly improved our understanding of violent extremism through extensive analysis and research on the behaviors associated with violent extremism; enhanced operational partnerships with local communities, law enforcement, and international partners; and increased support for State, local, Tribal, and territorial law enforcement through CVE training and grant prioritization.

At DHS, we believe that local authorities and community members are best able to identify those individuals or groups residing within their communities exhibiting dangerous behaviors—and intervene—before they commit an act of violence. Everyone has a role to play in the safety and security of our Nation, and time and again we have seen the advantage of public vigilance and cooperation, through information-sharing, community-oriented policing, and citizen awareness. DHS will continue to support pre-existing partnerships between local authorities and communities, and their efforts to develop and implement information driven community-based solutions to counter violent extremism and violent crime regardless of ideology. I respectfully request that my statement be made part of the official hearing record. Again, I thank the committee for its support of the Department and its interest in this subject. The Department would be honored to respond to any questions for the record.

Chairman KING. Also, I would like to submit to the record a report compiled by the Majority staff on the committee's findings. If unanimous consent, that will be included in the record.

Without objection. So ordered.

[The information follows:]

THE RADICALIZATION OF MUSLIM-AMERICANS: THE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY'S INVESTIGATION OF THE CONTINUING THREAT

JUNE 20, 2012

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

America before September 11, 2001 failed to recognize the enormity of the threat posed by the foreign terror group al-Qaeda or adequately confront it head-on, despite warnings including the bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993 by those who ideologically and tactically aligned themselves with Osama bin Laden. Even 8 years after bin Laden's attacks on innocents in New York, Pennsylvania, and Washington, our Government failed again to realize that al-Qaeda affiliates in Yemen and Pakistan were capable of—and almost succeeded in carrying out—strikes on U.S. soil. We cannot ever assume our Government is all-knowing or always right; scrutiny of counterterrorism priorities is a core duty of the Committee on Homeland Security's Constitutional oversight duties. To that end, the committee held four investigative hearings since 2011 to examine the threat of violent radicalization emanating from within the Muslim-American community, where a small but potentially lethal percentage of that population has plotted severe mass casualty attacks against our homeland.

This is no phantom threat. It shares no equivalency with threats posed by other domestic terrorists who have no foreign ties or any demonstrated capability of organizing themselves for spectacular attacks inside the homeland. In late 2010, Attorney General Eric Holder said there had been 126 homegrown plots, threats, and attacks since 2009—the year homegrown radicalized jihadis attacked military heroes at Fort Hood and in Little Rock. Since we began our investigation into the radicalization threat from within the Muslim-American community, many more violent Islamist extremists have been intercepted attempting to kill their fellow Americans.

Homegrown radicalization is now the vanguard of al-Qaeda's strategy to continue attacking the United States and its allies. The evidence comes from core al-Qaeda's tapes released from Pakistan, its Yemen affiliate's on-line *Inspire* home-grown terror how-to publication created by two American jihadis, and from Somalia's al-Qaeda affiliate al-Shabaab Mujahideen, who released a tape last fall by a suicide bomber from Minneapolis who urged: "My brothers and sisters, do jihad in America . . . anywhere you find [infidels], fight them and be firm against them."

Each investigative hearing by the committee's Majority uncovered significant findings that illuminated an uncomfortable reality: Radicalization inside the Muslim-American community has often been ignored by many of that community's leaders, who have not always reported suspicious activity and have even obstructed law enforcement. In cities such as San Diego and Minneapolis, some imams participated in or facilitated recruiting and fundraising inside mosques. Facts collected by the committee from open and classified Government briefings, terror experts and confidential sources, and from witnesses called to testify by the Majority—including four former senior law enforcement officials, four Muslim community activists, three relatives of terrorists or terror victims, two senior administration officials and one former Special Operations commander who is a terrorism expert—offer Congress,

the Executive Branch, and the public irrefutable proof of the extent of the radicalization threat.

The committee's investigative efforts have forced a long-overdue open debate about the growing issue of radicalization leading to violent Islamist extremism—which is the No. 1 terrorist threat to this Nation. Additionally, the committee's hearings have liberated and empowered Muslim Americans who had been intimidated by leaders in their own communities and who are now able to come forward and address this issue.

COMMITTEE FINDINGS

Hearing No. 1: "The Extent of Radicalization in the American Muslim Community and That Community's Response."

- Finding No. 1: The Radicalization of Muslim Americans Constitutes a Real and Serious Homeland Security Threat
- Finding No. 2: There Is Not Enough Muslim-American Community Cooperation with Law Enforcement
- Finding No. 3: There is a Need to Confront the Islamist Ideology Driving Radicalization

Hearing No. 2: "The Threat of Muslim-American Radicalization in U.S. Prisons."

- Finding No. 4: The Radicalization of Prison Inmates to an Extremist Form of Islam Is a Significant Problem, Which Can Often Manifest Once Radicalized Prisoners Are Released
- Finding No. 5: The Radicalization of Prison Inmates Is Often Precipitated by the Presence of Radical Clergy or Extremist Materials Within the Prison

Hearing No. 3: "Al-Shabaab: Recruitment and Radicalization Within the Muslim-American Community and the Threat to the Homeland."

- Finding No. 6: There are Direct Ties Between Al-Shabaab and al-Qaeda and its Affiliates, and Al-Shabaab Recruits Are Often Indoctrinated Into al-Qaeda's Ideology and Network
- Finding No. 7: More Than 40 Muslim-Americans Radicalized and Recruited by Al-Shabaab May Pose a Direct Threat to the National Security of the United States and Its Allies
- Finding No. 8: The Committee's Hearings on the Radicalization of Muslim Americans Have Empowered Muslims to Effectively Address this Issue

Hearing No. 4: "Home-grown Terrorism: The Threat To Military Communities Inside the United States."

- Finding No. 9: The Terrorist Threat to Military Communities Is Severe and On the Rise
- Finding No. 10: The "Insider" Threat to Military Communities Is a Significant and Potentially Devastating Development
- Finding No. 11: Political Correctness Continues to Stifle the Military's Ability to Effectively Understand and Counter the Threat
- Finding No. 12: The Administration Chose Political Correctness Over Accurately Labeling and Identifying Certain Terrorist Attacks Appropriately, Thereby Denying Purple Hearts Medals to Killed and Wounded Troops in Domestic Terror Attacks

AN EXAMINATION OF THE THREAT OF DOMESTIC RADICALIZATION

Although almost 11 years have passed since the horrific terrorist attacks on September 11, we must not forget that the threat posed by al-Qaeda and its affiliates remains as deadly and paramount as ever. While successful counterterrorism operations removed the menace of Osama bin Laden and Anwar al-Awlaki from being a direct operational terror threat to the U.S. homeland, their ideological legacies and unwavering resolve to attack the United States and its Western allies live on.

As a result of the Allied invasion of Afghanistan and subsequent global counterterrorism operations, core al-Qaeda's primary safe haven in Pakistan is under siege and its leadership decimated, severely hindering its ability to carry out large-scale attacks on the U.S. homeland and other Western nations. Al-Qaeda and affiliates such as al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) have been forced to transform their strategy and operational tactics. A key focus of this new doctrine is based on recruiting and radicalizing Westerners and United States persons capable of perpetrating attacks within their home countries. The threat no longer emanates solely from remote al-Qaeda operatives coordinating attacks from halfway across the world, but rather from radicalized individuals residing within the U.S. homeland who are now ready to engage in terrorist activities in their own communities. This

strategy shift presents a daunting challenge to the counterterrorism, intelligence, and law enforcement communities within the United States and for our allies. The emergence of influential, English-speaking al-Qaeda representatives such as (now-dead) Anwar al-Awlaki has enhanced al-Qaeda's ability to successfully implement its strategy of targeting Americans and Westerners for recruitment.

Al-Qaeda and its affiliates are using various tools to target and radicalize recruits in the West, including propaganda statements, audios, videos and on-line "magazines." In July 2010, the Yemen-based AQAP launched the first in its series of slick, on-line, English propaganda magazines, *Inspire*. To date, AQAP has produced nine issues of *Inspire*.

Inspire targets American and Western European audiences in an effort to reach aspiring terrorists. It is essentially a "how-to" for would-be terrorists cloaked in pop-culture packaging, and resembles most mainstream publications in structure: including letters from the editor, articles from well-known al-Qaeda leaders, high-resolution graphics, and a "how-to" section. The magazine was a dangerous step in AQAP's strategy to recruit and radicalize Americans and Western Europeans, and has been found in the possession of some terror suspects.

The increasing frequency of Muslim Americans becoming radicalized is an alarming trend and a great concern for U.S. National security. Attorney General Eric Holder said in a late 2010 media interview that 126 people had been indicted for terrorist-related activity, including 50 U.S. citizens.¹ As Times Square bomber Faisal Shahzad stated in his October 2010 appearance before the Southern District Court of New York: "Brace yourselves, because the war with Muslims has just begun. Consider me only the first droplet of the flood that will follow me."²

COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

On February 9, 2011, then-National Counterterrorism Center Director Michael Leiter testified before the committee that ". . . AQAP remains intent on conducting additional attacks targeting the Homeland and U.S. interests overseas and will continue propaganda efforts designed to inspire like-minded individuals to conduct attacks in their home countries."³

At the same hearing, Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano testified that the threat level today is as high as it has been since 9/11 because of increased radicalization in the United States.

The Committee on Homeland Security has a responsibility to ensure that it examines the most prescient and critical threats facing the United States. Under this mandate, Chairman King convened a series of investigative hearings examining the radicalization of Muslim Americans. While the initial announcement of these hearings generated controversy and opposition, committee leadership remained steadfast that this series of radicalization investigations is a critical facet of the main responsibility of this committee: Protect America from a terrorist attack. The Department of Homeland Security and the Committee on Homeland Security were formed in response to the al-Qaeda attacks of 9/11. Undoubtedly, Congressional investigation of Muslim-American radicalization was the logical response to the unquestionable fact that home-grown radicalization is part of al-Qaeda's strategy to continue attacking the United States and its allies.

Over the course of the series of investigative hearings, it became apparent that the majority of Americans support the committee probing this issue. In September 2011, a National poll released results showing that 63% of Americans supported the on-going radicalization hearings convened in March of last year and believe "they need to continue because they are providing information which is valuable and important to stop terrorism in the United States." Former 9/11 Commission Vice-Chair Lee Hamilton testified that, "The greatest current terrorist threat to the United States is from Islamist extremists," and that we also face "the addition of home-grown threats."

¹ Cloherty, Jack and Thomas, Pierre. "Attorney General's Blunt Warning on Terror Attacks," December 21, 2010, <http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/attorney-general-eric-holders-blunt-warning-terror-attacks/story?id=12444727>.

² "Times Sq. bomber's vile rant as he gets life in jail," *New York Post*, October 6, 2010, http://www.nypost.com/p/news/local/manhattan/proud_to_be_terrorist_-DBtc5U2eAYhWzacVpxK24K#ixzz1FEKywFDD.

³ Leiter, Michael, Testimony before the House Committee on Homeland Security, "Understanding the Homeland Threat Landscape—Considerations for the 112th Congress," February 9, 2011, www.nctc.gov/Transcript-HHSC_Understanding-the-Homeland-Threat.pdf.

COMMITTEE FINDINGS

As of June 2012, the Committee on Homeland Security had held four hearings that examined various aspects of the radicalization of Muslim Americans within the United States. Each hearing yielded significant findings, which shed considerable light on this critical issue. While the committee's overall radicalization investigation remains on-going, the evidence collected thus far provides substantial insight into the extent and threat of radicalization within the United States.

Hearing No. 1: "The Extent of Radicalization in the American Muslim Community and That Community's Response."

In March 2011, the committee convened its first investigative hearing looking into the rising threat of Muslim-American radicalization and that community's level of cooperation with law enforcement to counter the problem.

Finding No. 1: The Radicalization of Muslim Americans Constitutes a Real and Serious Homeland Security Threat

Despite the fact that homegrown violent Islamist extremism is a threat that has rapidly arisen since 2009—the year of the Fort Hood and Little Rock attacks on soldiers by radicalized Muslim Americans—many leaders refuse to fully acknowledge this problem or just how extensive this threat remains.

Witnesses at the first hearing addressed this issue and discussed the extensive nature of the threat of radicalization within the United States and reticence to fully acknowledge the problem. One of the witnesses, Mr. Melvin Bledsoe (the father of radicalized Little Rock recruiting center shooter Carlos Bledsoe), stated:

"It seems to me that the American people are sitting around and doing nothing about Islamic extremism, as if Carlos's story and the other stories told at these hearings aren't true. There is a big elephant in the room, but our society continues not to see it. This wrong is caused by political correctness. You can even call it political fear—yes, fear. Fear of stepping on a special minority population's toes, even as a segment of that population wants to stamp out America and everything we stand for."

Another witness, Dr. M. Zuhr Jasser (President and Founder of the American Islamic Forum for Democracy) asserted:

"The course of Muslim radicalization in the United States over the past 2 years makes it exceedingly difficult for anyone to assert with a straight face that in America we Muslims do not have a radicalization problem."

Finding No. 2: There Is Not Enough Muslim-American Community Cooperation With Law Enforcement

While the threat of domestic radicalization and home-grown terrorism has increased over the past few years, many within the Muslim community have expressed criticism of law enforcement's counterterrorism operations. Several Muslim organizations, such as the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), have repeatedly criticized law enforcement actions taken to stop potential terrorist activity. They accused the FBI of falsely entrapping Muslim Americans and recommended guidelines for Muslims who choose to cooperate with law enforcement and the FBI.

Witnesses at the hearing also discussed the Muslim-American community's lack of cooperation, and specifically the role that groups like CAIR play in discouraging Muslim Americans from cooperating with law enforcement. Dr. Jasser said:

"When we speak about 'cooperation of Muslims with law enforcement,' what is more important is the growing culture of driving Muslims away from cooperation, partnership, and identity with our Nation and its security forces. Our civil rights should be protected and defended, but the predominant message to our communities should be attachment, defense, and identification with America not alienation and separation.

"Too many so-called Muslim leadership groups in America, like the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) or Muslim Advocates, have specifically told Muslims across the Nation, for example, not to speak to the FBI or law enforcement unless they are accompanied by an attorney. Rather than thanking the FBI for ferreting out radicals within our community, they have criticized sting operations as being 'entrapment'—a claim that has not stood the test of anti-terrorism court cases since 9/11. Informants end up being showcased as bad apples and subjects of lawsuits rather than patriots."

Another witness, Mr. Abdirizak Bihi (the Director of Somali Education and Social Advocacy Center whose nephew Burhan Hassan was radicalized and recruited in Minneapolis to join al-Shabaab in Somalia, where he was ultimately killed) discussed this issue and how mosque leaders in Minneapolis encouraged its congregants—and the families of the missing young men who had fled to Somalia—not to cooperate with law enforcement. Bihi testified that when the families of the missing young men went to law enforcement for help, their mosque leaders disparaged them and claimed that they were lying about the disappearance of their children. Bihi stated:

“The mosque leadership continued to disseminate a strong message that there were no children missing, rather than we the families were tools and being used by infidels to try and destroy the mosque. As a result of this, the families united and started Saturday meetings that included outreaching to other community members that also had missing children. We learned from the mosque leadership’s tactics used to defame us that the community was the targeted audience, and we framed our outreach strategy to educate the community about the realities of what was happening to us. An intense outreach from both the mosque leadership and the family members started to unfold in the Somali-American community, where we were trying to convince the community that our children were taken, that we weren’t trying to destroy our own mosques (that we built), and that nobody can destroy a mosque. At the same time, the mosque leadership was sending the message to the families that had not yet spoken out, that:

- “if they speak up about their missing loved ones will end up in Guantanamo because nobody cares about Muslims;
- “they have a better chance of getting their children back into the country if they remain silent;
- “if they speak up, they will be morally responsible for having killed all the Muslims and destroyed all the mosques.”

Mr. Bihi also testified about the dangerous influence of powerful groups such as CAIR, who continue to discourage Muslim Americans from cooperating with law enforcement. He noted:

“Just as we continued to make progress in laying out the realities to our community, powerful organizations such as CAIR stepped into our community and stifled whatever progress we had made by trying to tell our Somali-American community not to cooperate with law enforcement. CAIR held meetings for some members of the community and told them not to talk to the FBI, which was a slap in the face for the Somali-American Muslim mothers who were knocking on doors day and night with pictures of their missing children and asking for the community to talk to law enforcement about what they know of the missing kids. It was a slap in the face for community activists who had invested time and personal resources to educate the community about forging a good relationship with law enforcement in order to stop the radicalization and recruitment of our children. We held three different demonstrations against CAIR, in order to get them to leave us alone so we can solve our community’s problems, since we don’t know CAIR and they don’t speak for us. We wanted to stop them from dividing our community by stepping into issues that don’t belong to them.”

Finding No. 3: There Is A Need To Confront The Islamist Ideology Driving Radicalization

Despite the growing problem of Islamist radicalization within the United States, many appear reticent to publicly acknowledge the ideological driver behind al-Qaeda’s radicalization and recruitment of American citizens. However, witnesses at the hearing emphasized the need to address the ideological driver of radicalization of Muslim Americans, namely violent Islamist extremism. Dr. Jasser said:

“If the root cause of Muslim radicalization is Islamism (political Islam), what good is any effort at counterterrorism that decouples any suggestion of theology no matter how separatist from terror? How can law enforcement effectively do counter terrorism in our country without recognition that Political Islam and its narrative is the core ideology when, at its extreme, drives the general mindset of the violent extremists carrying out the attacks?

“ . . . Homeland Security, Government, media, and our general population are only focused on that final step when the jihadists seek violence against our homeland. But we will all be chasing our tails for centuries if that remains your focus. I implore you to walk it back and treat the problem at its root, at its jugular—the supremacism of political Islam.

“ . . . Our Nation’s attempts at counter-radicalization have proven so far ineffective because it has lacked a strategy and a forward ideology into Muslim communities. We have been so fixated on preventing the next attack that we have neglected to develop the tools necessary to defeat the ideology that drives the attack. It is malpractice for us to believe that by eschewing violence we solve the problem.”

Hearing No. 2: “The Threat of Muslim-American Radicalization in U.S. Prisons.”

In June 2011, the committee convened its second hearing, which examined the threat of Muslim-American radicalization within the United States prison system. The current problem of Muslim-American radicalization in U.S. prisons is significant and has been acknowledged by Executive Branch policymakers and legislators of both parties. Former Director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, Harley Lappin, testified to Congress that “inmates are particularly vulnerable to recruitment by terrorists,” and “we must guard against the spread of terrorism and extremist ideologies.”⁴

A number of cases since 9/11 have involved terrorists who converted to Islam or were radicalized to Islamism in American prisons, then subsequently attempted to launch terror strikes in the United States upon their release from custody. These radicalized terrorists have also carried out activities overseas. In January 2010, Senator John Kerry, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, released a report that stated: “Three dozen U.S. citizens who converted to Islam while in prison have traveled to Yemen, possibly for al-Qaeda training.”

Prison radicalization, unfortunately, is not unique to the United States. Recently, the British Home Secretary emphasized the growing threat of Islamist radicalization and unveiled its new counter-radicalization strategy to thwart terrorist recruitment behind bars. Just as home-grown al-Qaeda terrorist attacks in Britain—including the 2005 subway attacks in London, the 2006 liquid explosives plot to blow up American planes flying from Britain and the 2007 car bomb attack on the Glasgow Airport—were emulated several years later in the United States with the attempted New York subway bombings in September 2009, the Fort Hood murders in November 2009, and the attempted Times Square bombing in May 2010, we must assume the same with prison radicalization.

Finding No. 4: The Radicalization of Prison Inmates to an Extremist Form of Islam Is a Significant Problem, Which Can Often Manifest Once Radicalized Prisoners Are Released

Recent cases over the last few years including Richard Reid, Kevin James, Michael Finton, James Cromitie, and Jose Padilla have illustrated the danger of prison radicalization, which continues to constitute a serious threat.

One of the witnesses, Los Angeles Police Department Deputy Chief Michael P. Downing, who commands the department’s Counterterrorism and Special Operations Bureau, discussed this threat, noting:

“It is generally understood that the majority of prison converts assimilate back into what they were doing prior to going to prison, however, it is the exception cases that have and will continue to strike fear in the hearts of Americans. It was estimated that 17 to 20 percent of the prison population, or approximately 350,000 inmates comprise of Muslim inmates in 2003, and that 80% of the prisoners who convert while in prison, convert to Islam. It is further estimated that 35,000 inmates convert to Islam annually.

“ . . . There are several on-going cases whose story is yet to be told, however, the common denominator is conversion to a radical form of Islam while in prison.

“ . . . Just as isolated, and balkanized communities can become incubators of violent extremism, so too can prisons. If left unchecked prisons can and do become incubators of radicalization leading to violent extremism.”

Another of the witnesses, Mr. Patrick Dunleavy, retired Deputy Inspector of the Criminal Intelligence Division at New York State Department of Corrections and the author of “The Fertile Soil of Jihad: Prison’s Terrorism Connection,” noted:

“The prison population is vulnerable to radicalization by the same agents responsible for radicalizing Americans outside of the prison walls. Despite appearances, prison walls are porous. It is easy for outside influences to access those on the inside, and for inmates to reach from the inside out. As the former Deputy Inspector General of the Criminal Intelligence Division in the New York State Department

⁴*Terrorist Recruitment and Infiltration in the United States: Hearing Before the Subcomm. on Terrorism and Homeland Security of the S. Comm. on the Judiciary, 108th Cong. (2003)* (statement of Director Lappin).

of Corrections, I am aware that individuals and groups that subscribe to radical, and sometimes violent, ideology have made sustained efforts over several decades to target inmates for indoctrination. Some of these groups act as the certifying bodies responsible for hiring imams into the prison system, thus affording them continuous access to the prison population. In addition, the cycle of radicalization continues through post-release programs.”

While some have claimed that prisoners who are converted to a radical form of Islam do not pose a threat once they are released, Dunleavy discredited this notion by addressing the dangerous post-release activity a number of prisoners have engaged in, noting that:

“The task force investigation also found that although the initial exposure/conversion/indoctrination to extremist jihadi Islam may begin in prison, it often matures and deepens after release through the contacts on the outside that the inmate made while they were serving their sentences in prison. Among those contacts are transition programs, which offer former inmates assistance in finding housing or finding work. Most of the programs for Muslims transitioning out of the prison system are sponsored by mosques that are local to the prisons. Many of these mosques have extremist leanings and are known to adhere to Wahabbi ideology. In addition to the transition programs, many of the sponsoring mosques also have volunteers or formal programs to provide religious instruction inside the prisons. Thus, contact between the outreach program and the inmate has already been established by the time the prisoner is released. The prisoner is already familiar with the program’s personnel and ideology, and therefore their transition to the outside is facilitated by familiar hands.

“ . . . One of the influences in some of the homegrown terrorism cases has been the involvement, either directly or indirectly, of radical Islamist clergy. Since 9/11, the involvement of radical Islamist imams has been mentioned as a precipitating factor in the cases of Richard Reid, Jose Padilla, and others.

“In 2009 the ‘Newburgh Four’; James Cromitie, Laguerre Payen, David Williams, and Onta Williams, were arrested for plotting to bomb synagogues in New York City and shoot down military aircraft with stinger missiles. All had converted to a radical form of Islam while serving time for a variety of offenses. They did not know each other while they were incarcerated, but met each other after their release, while attending a local mosque connected to a prison ministry.

Finding No. 5: The Radicalization of Prison Inmates Is Often Precipitated by the Presence of Radical Clergy or Extremist Materials Within the Prison

Witnesses at the hearing discussed the pervasive nature of radical clergy and literature throughout the prison system, and its correlation with the radicalization of prison inmates.

Dunleavy addressed this issue, stating:

“ . . . It has been confirmed that radical Islam is present in the New York State prison system and also in the New York City jails. The apparatus by which this radical form of Islam was introduced into the system was identified as consisting of multiple components, including, clergy, religious volunteers, visitors, fellow inmates, and Islamic organizations from around the world that sent parcels and literature into the prisons.

“ . . . There is certainly no vetting of volunteers who provide religious instruction, and who, although not paid, wield considerable influence in the prison Muslim communities. Many such volunteers are former convicts.”

Deputy Chief Downing also discussed the threat of extremist literature being disseminated throughout the prison system, noting:

“Anwar al-Awlaki, a prominent United States born Islamic scholar of Yemeni descent and internet radicalizer is wanted by the United States for Terrorism prosecution. His radical literature has found its way into the prison system and has been used by known extremists to facilitate recruitment and radicalization activities within prisons.

“ . . . The spiritual philosopher of al-Qaeda, Sayyid Qutb, wrote the radical Islamist manifesto ‘Ma’alim fi al-Tariq’ (‘Milestones Along the Road’) while in an Egyptian prison. Copies of this document exist in the prison system and contribute to radicalization.”

Hearing No. 3: "Al-Shabaab: Recruitment and Radicalization Within the Muslim American Community and the Threat to the Homeland."

This investigative hearing examining Somalia-based terrorist organization al-Shabaab Mujahideen's on-going recruitment, radicalization, and training of Muslim Americans was the culmination of months of committee research into a looming threat.

Since 2006, a group of American citizens, including many—though not all—who were part of the Somali-American community, have been radicalized within the United States to terrorist activity often by Shabaab recruiters or sympathizers. A committee investigation found that more than 40 Americans have joined Shabaab in Somalia—al-Qaeda's top operational ally in East Africa—and more than 15 have been killed there, including five who were believed killed perpetrating suicide bombings. According to a committee review of Department of Justice (DOJ) prosecutions, there are dozens of cases of defendants charged in the United States in connection with Shabaab or other extremist organizations in Somalia, filed in States including Minnesota, California, New Jersey, Missouri, Alabama, Virginia, Illinois, New York, and Texas.

Reflecting a disturbing trend across global terrorist organizations such as al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), Shabaab leaders appear to be actively recruiting Americans, including a targeted recruitment of Americans who are not of Somali descent. In addition to Al-Shabaab's growing radicalization and recruitment of Americans, the group has also actively recruited a number of Canadian citizens. The Somali communities in Minneapolis and Toronto often maintain close ties, including familial relationships as well as cross-border commercial traffic.

The hearing also examined Shabaab's affiliation with al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and the homeland security implications. In addition to its connections with al-Qaeda senior leadership and its recent alignment publicized in a video by Osama bin Laden's successor Ayman al-Zawahiri, Shabaab has also developed alliances with several al-Qaeda affiliates, including Algeria's al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Yemen's AQAP. Shabaab's broadening cooperation with AQAP is particularly troubling considering the critical threat AQAP poses to the U.S. homeland and that organization's unwavering attempts to pursue an attack against us.

Finding No. 6: There Are Direct Ties Between Al-Shabaab and al-Qaeda and Its Affiliates, and Al-Shabaab Recruits Are Often Indoctrinated Into al-Qaeda's Ideology and Network

Witnesses at the hearing discussed Shabaab's ties to al-Qaeda and its affiliates, and the direct threat that such cooperation poses to the United States and its allies. One of the witnesses, Mr. Thomas Joscelyn, a Senior Fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, stated:

"There is extensive evidence that Shabaab's recruiting in the West is not limited to 'nationalistic' aims. While some recruits probably do travel to Somalia to take part in a 'local' (civil) war, there is always the potential for these same recruits to become indoctrinated in Shabaab's al-Qaeda-inspired ideology once they arrive there. Indeed, this has been al-Qaeda's strategy, to fold 'local' conflicts into an international jihad. Moreover, some Shabaab recruits are clearly radicalized before they even depart American soil.

". . . Shabaab's recruits in the West have received training from senior al-Qaeda operatives who are also members of Shabaab. Earlier this month, the Department of Justice agreed to a plea deal with a Minneapolis man named Omar Abdi Mohamed. According to a DOJ press release, Mohamed admitted that he helped Shabaab recruit Somali-Americans. The DOJ explains: 'Upon arriving in Somalia, the men resided in al-Shabaab safe-houses in Southern Somalia until constructing an al-Shabaab training camp, where they were trained. Senior members of al-Shabaab and a senior member of al-Qaeda in East Africa conducted the training.' That is, Shabaab's Minneapolis recruits were delivered to a senior al-Qaeda member for training."

Another witness who prosecuted many of the cases in Minneapolis regarding Shabaab recruitment and radicalization, Mr. William Anders Folk, a former Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Minnesota, discussed the role of al-Qaeda's underlying ideology in the radicalization of Shabaab's recruits, stating:

"In addition to recruiting by al-Shabaab as an organization and by individuals on behalf of al-Shabaab, religious figures such as Anwar al-Awlaki have provided potential recruits with ideological underpinnings for individuals to fight in Somalia on behalf of al-Shabaab. As has been publicly reported, al-Awlaki's 'Constants on the

Path to Jihad' has provided recruits and potential recruits with an ideological framework, however distorted and incorrect it may be, to fight on behalf of al-Shabaab in Somalia."

Finding No. 7: More Than 40 Muslim Americans Who Have Been Radicalized and Recruited by Al-Shabaab May Pose A Direct Threat to the National Security of the United States and Its Allies

More than 40 Americans and a number of Canadian citizens have joined Shabaab in Somalia. While many believe those individuals have been motivated solely to fight within Somalia, the dangerous possibility remains that they may in fact return to the United States or Canada, with the intention of perpetrating terrorist activity. One purported American suicide bomber in a "martyrdom" tape even urged fellow radicalized violent jihadis in the West to perpetrate stay-at-home terror attacks. One of the witnesses, Mr. Ahmed Hussen, the Canadian Somali Congress's National President, stated:

"It is very disturbing to us as Canadian citizens to see the children of those who fled the civil war in Somalia return to a country they barely know and contribute to its misery. There is an additional concern that these individuals would come back to threaten and harm Canada, the very country that has given us peace, security, and opportunity."

Folk also discussed the danger in Shabaab recruits returning to the United States, noting:

"It is impossible to predict with certainty what, if anything, and who, if anyone, will come to the United States after training and indoctrination by al-Shabaab. It is obvious, however, that individuals who are trained, indoctrinated and deployed in combat by al-Shabaab have learned how to carry out acts of lethal violence. Additionally, it is clear that the ideology espoused by al-Shabaab echoes that of al-Qaeda. This combination of ability and ideology illustrates the threat that is posed by even one al-Shabaab veteran residing in the United States. The ability to prevent or detect such a person from entering the United States or carrying-out any terrorist acts in the United States requires continued vigilance of the group's activities in Somalia, but also to ensure that supporters or sympathizers within the United States are targeted for investigation."

Finding No. 8: The Committee's Hearings on the Radicalization of Muslim Americans Have Empowered Muslims To Effectively Address This Issue

Despite criticism directed against the committee's careful and thorough investigative hearings, they have liberated and empowered Muslim Americans who had been intimidated by leaders in their own communities but are now able to come forward. This point was reinforced by the Canadian Somali Congress's Ahmed Hussen, who said:

"I would like to close by saying that these hearings are extremely important to us. They empower us, and they remove the stigma in our community that prevents us from talking about these issues that are really important to our community. These hearings are very empowering."

Hearing No. 4: "Homegrown Terrorism: The Threat To Military Communities Inside The United States."

The terrorist threat to U.S. military troops and their families within the United States is on the rise, which the historic Dec. 7, 2011 joint-investigative hearing on radicalization by the House Committee on Homeland Security and the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee probed comprehensively.

The only successful terror attacks on the homeland resulting in deaths since 9/11 have been against the military: At Fort Hood, where 13 soldiers and civilians were murdered in an active-shooter attack allegedly by Army Maj. Nidal Hasan, and at a Little Rock recruiting center, where Army Pvt. William Andrew Long was fatally shot point-blank by radicalized home-grown Islamist Carlos Bledsoe. The Fort Hood attack was not an anomaly; rather it was part of al-Qaeda's two-decade success at infiltrating the U.S. military for terrorism—an effort that is increasing in scope and threat.

Finding No. 9: The Terrorist Threat to Military Communities Is Severe and On the Rise

Military communities in the United States have become the most sought-after targets of violent Islamist extremists seeking to kill Americans in their homeland. Paul

Stockton, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Americas' Security Affairs, said in his prepared statement:

"The terrorist threat to our military communities is serious, and will remain so for years to come.

" . . . Over the last decade, a plurality of these domestic violent extremists chose to target the Department of Defense (DoD), making military communities the target of choice for home-grown terrorists. Fourteen of seventeen Americans killed in the homeland by domestic violent extremists have been DoD personnel.

" . . . The Department of Defense faces a special challenge in this regard. Al-Qaeda and its affiliates seek to inspire and instruct U.S. military personnel and other radicalized U.S. citizens to conduct 'lone actor' attacks on U.S. military targets. These adherents are, as Deputy National Security Advisor John Brennan has said, 'individuals, sometimes with little or no direct physical contact with al-Qaeda, who have succumbed to [al-Qaeda's] hateful ideology and who have engaged in, or facilitated, terrorist activities here in the United States . . . and we have seen the tragic results, with the murder of a military recruiter in Arkansas 2 years ago and the attack on our servicemen and women at Fort Hood."

Army Lt. Col. Reid L. Sawyer, the Director of the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, also emphasized this point:

"As the decade of conflict has evolved, the predominant target of choice for home-grown terrorists in the United States has become the U.S. military. Nearly 50 percent of all plots in the homeland since 9/11 (41 of 87 plots) considered targeting U.S. military personnel. In one sense, the military focus is perhaps an obvious choice by those aspiring to participate in the global jihad. To an al-Qaeda adherent, the U.S. military represents the manifestation of American foreign policy more so than any other target choice as the military—in al-Qaeda's narrative—is responsible for the oppression and humiliation of Muslims in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Yemen, among other locations.

" . . . For many home-grown terrorists, attacking the military may well represent a choice that is 'easier' to overcome in terms of the moral barriers of targeting symbols of U.S. foreign policy rather than the shopping mall, restaurants, or public spaces in which he or she may have frequented with his or her friends. The social distance between a terrorist's individual experiences and the military is in most cases far greater than that of other potential targets, making it easier to objectify military targets. Abdul-Latif, the perpetrator of the planned attack against the Seattle Military Entrance Processing Station captured this sentiment best: 'The key thing to remember here is, is we are not targeting anybody innocent—that means old people, women out of uniform, any children. Anything. Just people who wear the green for the kaffir Army, that's who we're going after.'

" . . . Finally, while any al-Qaeda-inspired attack within the United States is a high-profile event for both the violent extremists and the citizens of this Nation, successful attacks against the military in the homeland represent a particularly unique event."

Finding No. 10: The "Insider" Threat to Military Communities Is a Significant and Potentially Devastating Development

The attack in 2009 by Maj. Nidal Hasan, the Army psychiatrist who killed 13 and injured dozens during an attack on the Soldier Readiness Center at Fort Hood in Texas, illustrated the dangerous "insider" threat posed to military communities by individuals within the U.S. military who may have been radicalized by al-Qaeda ideology or propaganda. This threat, unfortunately, existed long before the attack for which Hasan stands accused.

Assistant Secretary Stockton said:

"Given the adversary's emphasis on recruiting U.S. military personnel to attack our communities from within, the Department has taken numerous actions to broaden its approach to force protection beyond its traditional focus on external threats.

Lt. Col. Sawyer also discussed this issue and how severe this particular threat is:

"Any examination of al-Qaeda's targeting of homeland military forces must include a discussion of what has colloquially become known as the insider threat. The effect of these actors on the military is perhaps more divisive and damaging than attacks against military targets staged by external actors. At the tactical level, insiders also have the potential to do more harm than external threats given their knowledge of installations, schedules, and ability to gain access to areas that would be restricted to civilians. At the organizational level, insider threats tear at the social fabric of

an organization and make people question the patriotism of those serving next to them. At the strategic level, these attacks provide al-Qaeda with immense propaganda value and, in one sense, these actors are the ultimate prize for al-Qaeda. The rejection of the values that their uniforms stood for and an abandonment of the oaths they swore validate al-Qaeda's narrative in a way that no other domestic, home-grown radicalized individual could hope to achieve."

Finding No. 11: Political Correctness Continues To Stifle the Military's Ability To Effectively Understand and Counter the Threat

Despite the growing problem of violent Islamist radicalization within the United States, many Government officials appear reticent to publicly acknowledge the ideological driver behind al-Qaeda's radicalization and recruitment of American citizens. The military's failure to identify and acknowledge the threat from Islamist extremism was tragically illustrated by the Fort Hood attacks and its failure to address Maj. Hasan's overt radicalization.

Assistant Secretary Stockton defended the military's persistent refusal to identify the Islamist ideology motivating the terrorist attacks, per the Obama administration's guidance:

"When it comes to defining the enemy, this administration wishes to avoid imprecise terminology that may cause confusion and may unjustifiably give credence to the falsehood—despite our best intentions—that we are waging a war on Islam."

Mr. Daris Long, the father of the late Army Pvt. William Andrew Long, who was shot and killed in a 2009 terrorist attack on a military recruiting center in Little Rock, Arkansas, said:

"My faith in Government is diminished. It invents euphemisms instead of using accurate language while the perpetrators speak freely using the very words deemed offensive to justify their actions. Clarity is absent. Little Rock is a drive-by and Fort Hood is just workplace violence: The truth is denied.

" . . . The political correctness exhibited by the Government over offending anyone in admitting the truth about Islamic extremism, masked alarm bells that were going off. Warnings were ignored, Maj. Nidal Hassan was able to openly praise the Little Rock shootings in front of fellow Army officers and then commit his own jihad.

" . . . The blatant masking and disregard of the facts not only endanger American citizens of non-Muslim faith but also those of Muslim heritage who do not adhere to the extremist beliefs demonstrated by a militant and political form of jihad."

Finding No. 12: The Administration Chose Political Correctness Over Accurately Labeling and Identifying Certain Terrorist Attacks Appropriately, Thereby Denying Purple Heart Medals to Troops Killed and Wounded in Domestic Terror Attacks

The June 2009 shooting by Carlos Bledsoe (aka Abdulhakim Muhammad, a U.S. citizen and Muslim convert who perpetrated the attack on the Army recruiting office in Little Rock) illustrated to other home-grown terrorists the potential of "soft target" military recruiting centers as valid targets. Bledsoe specifically targeted the U.S. military to avenge what he believed was its mistreatment of Muslims. He also had traveled to Yemen and was radicalized to al-Qaeda's violent Islamist extremist ideology.

However, despite his clear ties to terrorism and ideological motivations, Bledsoe was tried in a civilian State court rather than in U.S. District Court under Federal terrorism charges. In another glaring instance of al-Qaeda-inspired home-grown terrorism, the Government also neglected to indict Maj. Nidal Hasan on any terrorism-related charges, considering the case to be an example of "workplace violence" despite his reported email communications with AQAP operational leader, the since-slain American terrorist Anwar al-Awlaki.

The Army and Department of Defense subsequently denied to the killed and wounded of Little Rock and Fort Hood an honor bestowed on the military victims who perished or were wounded inside the Pentagon on 9/11: the Purple Heart medal.

Daris Long discussed this inconsistency and the need to identify and prosecute terror cases as such:

"In an attack that resulted in the first death and wounding of American soldiers on U.S. soil since 9/11 action by the Department of Justice is absent. Little Rock has morphed into nothing more than a 'drive-by' shooting. Abdulhakim Muhammad's jihad in America has been downplayed by the Federal Government

and the mainstream media causing irreparable change to the families involved as well as flat-out lying to the American people.

“ . . . I am convinced the Government’s position is to deny Little Rock was a terrorist attack. By not being open and transparent, despite promises to do so, to this administrations shame two soldiers have been abandoned on a battlefield in the advancement of a political agenda.

“ . . . November 5, 2009, an attack took place at Fort Hood. In each instance, a clear tie to Yemen, but still no Federal indictments. My take is that if you plan and/or fail in a terrorist attack, you will be charged, but if you kill in this country under the banner of jihad, we’re told it isn’t terrorism and Federal judicial response is neither confirmed nor denied.”

THE WAY FORWARD

While the committee’s investigative hearings examining Muslim-American radicalization clearly have had a significant and beneficial impact in forcing an open debate about the growing issue of radicalization within the United States, this problem is far from resolved.

According to the results of a 2011 Pew poll, 16% of American Muslims had a favorable or only somewhat unfavorable view of al-Qaeda. Further, 13% of American Muslims believed that suicide bombings or other violence against civilians, to defend Islam from its enemies, was often, sometimes or rarely justified. Pew stated that there were 2.7 million American Muslims. That means that there are approximately 440,000 American Muslims who view al-Qaeda as only a somewhat unfavorable organization, and 357,000 who believe that killing civilians in the name of Islam can in some cases be justified. These numbers are startling and exposed a dangerous disconnect between a number of American Muslims and the democratic values cherished by Western nations.

The radicalization of Muslim Americans by the violent Islamist extremist ideology promulgated by al-Qaeda and its affiliates is a problem that the United States cannot continue to simply ignore or deflect. Unfortunately, it appears that that within the United States, political correctness has prevented many from sufficiently acknowledging and tackling this dangerous problem. We continue to face an unwavering threat, and must be fully aware that home-grown radicalization is part of al-Qaeda’s strategy to continue attacking the United States.

Chairman KING. The gentleman from Michigan, Mr. Clarke, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have some questions here, primarily for Ms. Patel, to look at the impact that these hearings may have had on the cooperation of Muslim Americans with law enforcement, and on how these hearings may have set a tone that could further divide Muslim Americans from mainstream America.

I am going to ask those, but I just wish—I hope this is the last set of hearings on this issue. You know, Dr. Ahmed, you said something that—about the religious freedoms that are available in this country to practice your faith as you choose it. I completely agree with you—completely. I thank God I was born in this country; that my father, a devout Muslim, who immigrated to this country, that helped build one of the first mosques in Michigan, located in a country that provided me with the freedom to follow my faith.

Being a little boy in the mosque, and as certain as I was sitting there in the mosque, knowing in my heart that Christ is the Son of God, I could choose to be a Roman Catholic that I am today, a lay minister in my church. But I firmly believe that the tone of these hearings, singling out the Muslim American community in our attempt to combat terrorism—I believe it undermines those religious freedoms that we all cherish in this country.

I do believe it is a civil rights issue and here is why. This is my statement and then I will allow you to, Ms. Patel, to respond.

But in metropolitan Detroit, there was a religious center that was being constructed, and on it spray painted was a gun with a Christian cross, was the word “Mohmed,” which is a grossly misspelled reference to Mohammed. Then there were the words, “F.U.” The building that was under construction was not a mosque. It is a Sikh temple. Sikh—the same people that were murdered after 9/11.

These hearings are not an assault against Islam. It is an assault against all Americans, especially Asian Americans. I understand that. Being South Asian and black, I am constantly profiled here. There is not a week I walk through this Capital complex without being stopped for my ID. Why? Why? Come on, people.

You know, you want to cite the Quran as being the basis for some of these violent extremists. They can cite any holy book and take words out of context. It is not the words in the book that is the problem; it is the twisted human minds and the evil motives behind people that create this violence. Come on, let us stop attacking religion here.

Look, I know some of our intentions may be good; but overall, if we could stay focused on protecting Americans right now from physical harm, that is why I wanted to be on this committee. I need some resources to protect our drinking water system in Detroit from bioterrorist attack. That is what I want to talk about right now. Or how we can have a real cybersecurity bill that will protect my Ambassador Bridge from being dismantled—the busiest international border crossing in all of North America.

I, unfortunately, realize I have used up most of my time.

Ms. Patel, if you could just respond to the fact on your view on these hearings and the impact it may have had in possibly undermining that trust and cooperation between Muslim Americans and law enforcement that we totally need to help stop any of these potential terrorist attacks. I welcome your comments.

Ms. PATEL. I am not a law enforcement official, so I would go back to actually the testimony of Sheriff Baca at the first of these hearings, where he points out that, you know, an approach that is based on divisiveness and on singling out a particular religion is not helpful to law enforcement. We know Muslim Americans have been incredibly helpful to law enforcement. So I think we should make sure that we preserve that relationship in every way we can.

Thank you.

Dr. AHMED. May I add one comment?

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Dr. AHMED. Thank you. Thank you for your comment. I think it is a very important example that you have cited. As a Nation, whether we are citizens, whether we are experts, whether we are of faith or not, we lack faith literacy. These hearings are not an opportunity to promote Islamophobia in any way, shape, or form, or I would not be abandoning 18 American citizens, many of whom have served this country to be here with you today.

I do think that there is a tremendous lack of awareness amongst the Muslim community of what Islam actually is. It is undeniable that whatever roots of radicalization anyone pursues, Islam is used in the narrative. The narrative begins—there was once a golden

age of Islam. There was a fall from the golden age. In order to restore Muslims to glory, there must be a process towards violent radicalization. That is what Islamists use in their ideology.

That is, understanding that and dismantling that comes with help from all levels of society, including Muslims. It is not something that can be solved without examining Muslims in America or elsewhere in the wider country. In fact, Muslims ask for communities are particularly of concern; as I know from my native Britain; as we are seeing in France, I think even currently; or as I have lived in Saudi Arabia.

There is a whole spectrum of extremism. I have—on September 11, I was in Riyadh, treating patients—

Chairman KING. The time of the gentleman—

Dr. AHMED. My—my fellow Muslims—

Chairman KING. Dr. Ahmed, the time of the gentleman has expired. We have to—

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. The road to enlightenment, though, is not by holding more of these hearings. I yield back my time.

Chairman KING. Mr. Duncan. Mr. Duncan is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you—thanks for those words.

Communism, socialism, fascism, and Islamism—

Ms. CLARKE of New York. [Unintelligible.]

Chairman KING [continuing]. We will have order in the hearing room—

Mr. DUNCAN. Political ideologies.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. [Unintelligible.]

Chairman KING. Yes, I would ask the gentlelady from New York, the gentleman is speaking. He is entitled to courtesy. Thank you—

The gentleman from South Carolina is recognized.

Mr. DUNCAN. Political ideologies. I think it is very clear from Mr. Cravaack's line of questioning and others today that this hearing isn't about Islam, but rather it is about Islamists using institutions of Islam to propagate Islamism.

Ms. Patel talked about the radicalization of Muslims, but she talked about it in light of their fervent belief in Islam, much in the same way as an evangelical Christian and my belief in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior could be considered radical. But we are not talking about religion here today. We are talking about Islamism being propagated.

With all due respect to the Muslims here in the crowd today, the mosque, the cultural centers, and the small groups are being used to radicalize folks that believe in Islam in the belief of Islamism, a political ideology that is beyond, I believe, the religious teachings of Islam.

There is no doubt, there are 51 publicly-known thwarted Islamist-inspired terrorist plots since 9/11 in this country—51 Islamist-inspired terrorist acts that have been thwarted. That is what this hearing is about today. To sit here and listen to folks on the other side of the aisle try to berate us for addressing these issues and trying to make it sound like we are attacking Islam—it bothers me.

Ms. Nomani, in your testimony, you have some verses from the Quran at the beginning—"Oh you who believe stand our firmly for justice as witnesses to God, even if it may be against yourselves or your parents or your kin."

So I read those words and I think about the question I had for you today. Taking those words, how can the U.S. Government better empower our local Muslim communities to fight the radical imams and ideology that threaten your way of life and target your young people for Jihad? What can we do to better assist your efforts?

Before you answer, thank you for having the courage, all of you, to be here today. Because I know there could be persecution within your Muslim community for speaking out, so thank you for your answer.

Ms. NOMANI. Thank you so much and thank you for citing the verse that, to me, is the reason why I sit here before you. Because in fact, we do face the same challenges that anybody does in a community when you dare to challenge the status quo.

I think that one of the ways that we could actually try to help the community is by being compassionate, right, and being empathetic to the grievances that are legitimate in many ways. Many of the wounds that exist within the community—uncles in the community are the children of colonialism. They have felt these great foreign policy decisions that mean nothing to us in the current day. But I don't believe that that compassion and that empathy should make us pull our punches when it comes to accountability. That is where I feel we are doing this dance. You know, we are doing a dance around his very serious issue, trying to tap dance, basically, on what the problem is.

I am so glad you were able to go to the mosque as a little boy, because I wasn't, because the ideology that was imported said that I, as a girl, could not enter the mosque. So if we are actually honest about it, as policymakers, as individuals in the community, and yet, kind to the Muslim community, I would hope that we can encourage our Muslim community to get out of this culture of shame, where they think that any specific discussion about interpretation is then a condemnation of the entire faith.

We are a collectivist community, so we think that if you slam or criticize one part of the teachings or one person, like Major Nadir Hasan, it is a condemnation of everyone. That is where we as a community need to grow up, quite frankly. We as a community need to evolve and we need to basically be able to think with a rational mind and realize this criticism is about one interpretation and one group of people who I agree with you have very twisted minds and want to use religion for their purposes.

Chairman KING. The time of the gentleman has expired. The gentlelady from New York, Ms. Clarke, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to apologize to Mr. Duncan for speaking out during his—during his questioning of the witnesses.

Let me say this, that I am also going to register my objections to this series of hearings that we have had. I fail to see the ultimate goal of the hearing. I find that they further create a stigma-

tizing and ostracizing of the community from whom we wish to get cooperation—whom we wish to get desired cooperation from.

I was sitting here just thinking about this Nation's history. I remember when a—in just a reading history, there was a huge—huge terrorist attack. It happened in Hawaii in Pearl Harbor. As a result of that, our Nation reacted. The way we reacted was to intern all Japanese Americans. There is a member of this body that actually grew up in an internment camp.

So I am just concerned about unintended consequences. Be careful what you ask for. Be careful what you ask for. Our Nation has a history that we don't like to—that we don't like to connect often-times, but be careful what you ask for in America.

I firmly believe that this hearing will foster misconceptions about hate and prejudice towards American Muslim community. All Americans deserve civil right protections and the freedoms provided by the Constitution. The American Muslim and Arab America, South Asian American communities are a vital part of the solution to the problem of radicalization. I think many of you have stated that. Terrorists do not radicalize entire communities. They recruit individuals.

We need to improve communication and trust with Muslims in order to combat these recruiting tactics and mechanisms. If ultimately the goal of this hearing is to understand the Muslim American response, I think we need to identify the empirical research we have conducted in terms of canvassing America's very diverse Muslim community to determine what that so-called response should be.

So I would like to ask of our witnesses what specific tools would you suggest are the best ways for us to get at a cooperative response that would move this Nation forward, as opposed to the type of stigma-ostracizing and provocative way that we have been going about it thus far.

Dr. JASSER. If I may address that.

Chairman KING. Gentlelady—you?

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Yes—

Chairman KING. Any of them? Okay.

Dr. JASSER. Thank you, Congresswoman for that question. It is very important. I would tell you that a lot of things are how they are presented. I think if these hearings are presented as against Islam, that is how they will be interpreted. While if they are presented by—this is why it is so important to have Muslim witnesses—is that this is not against Islam. Many of us have had the greatest struggles in being expressed within the Muslim community, where we don't have this diverse discourse about the—the process of radicalization.

Some of the tools, for example—we have a Muslim liberty project that advocates for youth that we have now in 12 different States that come together to learn about the founding fathers that were able to separate church and state. As much as I think we are teaching them to separate mosque and state, and that that is the best way to counter-radicalize and inoculate them against radicalization, so that their identity can be tied to being American and never be separated as it was when Nadil Hasan and others.

I think that one of the comments to say that somehow the Government should never get into this separation between Islam and political Islam—I think is throwing up a white flag of surrender to a political ideology that attacks us. It is very important to engage that community and we have programs to do that.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Ms. Nomani.

Ms. NOMANI. Thank you for your thoughts on this on that question. I do believe that one of the ways from a communication perspective that we need to move forward, is that we recognize that there are these wounds inside of our Muslim community, just like there are in many minority communities. Yet then encourage the notion that this isn't a shaming process. You know, that this isn't intended to shame the community or condemn Islam, but that in fact, if we have honest, forthright conversations about extremist interpretation, it is to the benefit of the community, also. That is a tough conversation to have for any group—

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Dr. Ahmed.

Dr. AHMED. Thank you for your question. I think your question captured it perfectly. Having these hearings is not going to lead to the internment of Muslim Americans. It is exactly the lack of that kind of nuance which I draw to your attention, respectfully madam, that can damage the outcome of what could be something so positive. It is the lack of nuance in our academic conversations, in our political conversations, in our media that is missing and that has to be disabled. We need more complexity in the discussion.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Ms. Patel.

Ms. PATEL. Thank you, Madam. I think that the most important way for us to build the relationships between law enforcement and between Muslim Americans is to treat them as partners in the fight against terrorists—terrorism and terrorist, rather than cast suspicion on them. Muslim Americans have come forward again and again. Sheriff Baca has testified before this very committee that they have come forward often, you know, in difficult circumstances and at great personal cost to themselves, to give the police information that would allow them to foil terrorist plots.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. I thank you. My time is up.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman KING. The gentlelady's time has expired. The gentlelady from Texas, Ms. Jackson Lee is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Did Mr. Lungren go? I was off-key, Mr. Lungren. I wanted to defer to—I know that you are Ranker. Thank you very much for your courtesies. I saw you sitting there and I came in. Thank you, again. I thank the Ranking Member for his courtesies and to all the Members that are here, and as well, to the panel that is coming forward. My apologies for overlapping committee and I am delighted to have been able to come today.

I think that the title of the hearing, "The American Muslim Response to Hearings on Radicalization in Their Community," puts the witnesses in a very difficult posture. If I can recollect there are millions of Muslims in the United States coming from any number of Muslim backgrounds, countries; and therefore, it would be very difficult for me to perceive this hearing with all its good intentions

of capturing the accuracy of Muslim positions here in the United States.

I don't see a member of the Muslim student community as a witness and I am familiar with some episodes of infiltration of Muslim student organizations as I recollect in Ivy League settings, which I know parents send their children to school with the best hopes and dreams. Whether or not they would expect that they would have undercover operatives amongst those groups might be shocking.

I also come to this issue with a sense of history of my own community, and recognizing the frustrations of certain attitudes and certain laws here in the United States of America. We can tout the civil rights era and the emotions of that era, even our own colleague, John Lewis, speaks eloquently of that time. But we did not, as African Americans, have the full appreciation of our frustration and protests. Many of our leaders were under surveillance. One that we call the Dreamer was under surveillance. I know it firsthand, as a member of the select committee on assassinations, looking into the assassination of Dr. King and John F. Kennedy. There was something called, "Co-Intel." That is now in the history books. It was a dastardly intrusion onto men and women, who all they wanted was to be treated equally in this country.

We now live in a different era and that era, of course, deals with terrorism against our soil. It heightens the, if you will, credibility of targeting groups because we don't want the heinous tragedy of 9/11 to occur. Let me put on the record that the world died on 9/11—the World Trade Center. The numbers of people who were non-citizens, the numbers of people who were from different faith is enormous—I think that is the statement that should be made.

I want to make sure that we do not have another tragedy. So I believe this committee has one of the highest callings of the United States Congress to secure the homeland. But at the same time, I could sit uprightly in the Judiciary Committee and raise concerns about a provision or a law or amendments that cause fissure. Because I think intrusions that take away our civil liberties is exactly what the terrorists want.

I hold dear and I held it up in several hearings the Constitution. I hold it again. Frankly, until I can survey thousands of Muslims in mosques across America and hospitals across America on the front lines formerly of Iraq and Afghanistan, wearing our uniform, I can't feel comfortable with the testimony today, although I thank the witnesses for their best efforts.

I don't know what our hearings have done to the psychic of young Muslims in high schools, in middle schools. I don't know whether it has increased the tensions or not. I certainly think we have a responsibility of oversight.

So I would simply say this, Ms. Patel, as I hold this Constitution up, can you answer from the Brennan Justice Center's perspective, very briefly, what core have we penetrated? What core Constitutional rights have we pierced and how we can do better?

Ms. PATEL. Sorry, do you mean through these hearings? Or just generally in the—

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Generally, please.

Ms. PATEL. Okay. Well, I mean, I think with Muslim Americans, the issues relate primarily to the First Amendment freedom of speech, freedom of association, and freedom to worship. You know, there is a long line of Supreme Court cases that says that when Government surveils places, they do impinge upon our right of free speech and right to worship. So when you are talking about surveillance in mosques, there is obviously a potential for that violation.

There is also, you know, when you talk about targeting a particular race, a particular ethnicity, or a particular religion, you obviously have equal protection issues that come up in that situation. I think those are the two main areas. Those are certainly the areas that have been raised in the NYPD lawsuit that was mentioned by Chairman King earlier.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the Chairman for his indulgence and my time is out. I just simply want to say that, as a Homeland Security Committee, Mr. Chairman, I want us to focus on intelligence and behavior and I want us to hold dear the Constitution. As you recall, we all said after 9/11, we will fight the terrorist, but we will not destroy this valuable and wonderful and precious source of equality and justice and freedom for anyone in our Nation.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman KING. Thank you. That is what I have tried to do as Chairman. With that, we now recognize the former Member of the Committee, Mr. Green from Texas, for 5 minutes.

Mr. GREEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you and the Ranking Member for the preeminent privilege of being here today as an interloper.

As-salaam-alaikum.

Ms. PATEL. Walaikum-salaam.

Mr. GREEN. Isn't it wonderful that the grandson of a Christian minister can sit on the Homeland Security Committee and say as-salaam-alaikum.

[Laughter.]

Mr. GREEN. Dear brothers and sisters—and I say it, because I believe there is just one race, and that is the human race—I think we are all related. If we are not brothers and sisters, we are probably cousins, so—cousins.

Thank you all for appearing today. We have had some discussion about radicalization of religions—radicalization of religions. If you agree that radicalization exists within all religions to some extent, would you kindly extend a hand into the air. I would like to make a record. Let me just—keep your hand up for just a second—I am sorry. This—okay, let the record reflect that all of the hands were raised.

I want to get to the gravamen of the issue, the thing that causes a consternation among many persons on this committee. That is—by the way, we all love the country. We all love the First Amendment. We all love the first of the first, which is freedom of religion. We all do. No one on either side loves it any more, in my opinion. So let us get to the heart of what is going on.

I don't think that most people oppose hearings on radicalization. I do not—N-O-T—I do not oppose hearings on radicalization. I do oppose hearings that don't focus on the entirety of radicalization.

If you agree that we have Christians, as has been mentioned by more than one Member, Christians who become radicalized, that become a part of Islam, and they become radicalized, as it is being said, why not have a hearing on the radicalization of Christians?

How—don't you marvel at how a person born in this country—born into Christianity can become radicalized? Isn't there any curiosity as to what happens to cause a person who is born into Christianity to become a radical? There is just more to it than simply saying the radicalization of Islam or Islamism.

What happened to cause a woman who—you have all heard of G.I. Jane, correct? What happened—what happened to this woman—blue eyes, blonde hair, born in the United States of America—how did she get radicalized? Why is it that we won't have hearings on the totality of radicalization? Why don't we ask ourselves how is it that this is—this is happening to American citizens?

I am not opposed to the hearings. I just want to be fair. I want to be fair to Muslims. I want to be fair to people who practice Islam. To be fair, you have to go beyond just the radicalization of Islam. That is what we are not doing. I—I do think that it is a problem of perception—people who see the hearings and never hear about the hearing on the radicalization of Christianity have to ask themselves why is this missing? Why don't we go the next—to the next step and ask—how is it that a blue-eyed, blonde-haired, white female in the United States of America can become radicalized into a point of wanting to do harm to this country?

We don't have that type of hearing. That is the problem. That is why people express this trepidation. I would—I would just close with this. I am not Muslim, but apparently I look like I am.

[Laughter.]

Mr. GREEN. Because I have had people shout some very ugly things to me and associate me with Islam. I don't know what it feels like to be Muslim, but I do know what it feels like to look like a Muslim in the minds of some people and to be demeaned in a public venue.

So I thank you for your appearances today and I look forward to the day that we will have that hearing that deals with the radicalization of Christians in America.

Chairman KING. The time of the gentleman has expired. Does the gentleman from Mississippi seek recognition?

Mr. THOMPSON. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman KING. The gentleman is recognized.

Mr. THOMPSON. Dr. Jasser, when Mr. Congressman Richmond referenced credentials, you made reference to a top-secret clearance. I want to make sure we have it in the record. We checked it. We don't have an indication of that top-secret clearance. Can you provide it for the record of this committee?

Dr. JASSER. Yes. I was appointed to a commission earlier this year and I had been vetted through a clearance process for that, so I could provide that. But it wasn't asked of me for this hearing.

Mr. THOMPSON. So your testimony is that vetting gives you top-secret clearance.

Dr. JASSER. That is what I was told, sir.

Mr. THOMPSON. Okay. Well, if you will just provide it for the record of this hearing, we would appreciate it.

Dr. JASSER. Yes, sir.

Mr. THOMPSON. Ms. Nomani, you referenced serving as a trainer for the Department of Defense. Am I correct?

Ms. NOMANI. That is right, sir.

Mr. THOMPSON. Well, I want to make sure that our record is correct, also. Your truth in testimony does not indicate that you have worked in that capacity. Can you make that amendment to that testimony, so our record is complete?

Ms. NOMANI. Sure. I don't work as an employee to the Department of Defense.

Mr. THOMPSON. Well, you have a contract?

Ms. NOMANI. Right, but as a—not to the Department of Defense.

Mr. THOMPSON. So, what—as a trainer, who are you training?

Ms. NOMANI. The students are Department of Defense employees, but I will provide you the full details as you need them.

Mr. THOMPSON. Wait, now. Are these just students or are you doing this for the Department of Defense?

Ms. NOMANI. Well, I call them students, but they are—they are either soldiers that are deploying or individuals that are doing work on the Afghanistan-Pakistan region here in the United States.

Mr. THOMPSON. Yes, but who—who employed you to do that?

Ms. NOMANI. I work through a consultant company.

Mr. THOMPSON. So you—that works for the Department of Defense.

Ms. NOMANI. Exactly. Right.

Mr. THOMPSON. Well, we just want to make sure we record—

Ms. NOMANI. Sure.

Mr. THOMPSON [continuing]. Because you didn't say that.

Ms. NOMANI. Sure.

Mr. THOMPSON. All right. Please provide us in your truth in testimony statement—

Ms. NOMANI. No problem.

Mr. THOMPSON. I yield back.

Chairman KING. I want to thank all the witnesses today for their valuable testimony. The Members of the committee may have some additional questions, and we will ask all of you to respond to those questions in writing if you should get them. The hearing record will be held open for 10 days.

Without objection, the committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:27 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

QUESTIONS FROM RANKING MEMBER BENNIE G. THOMPSON FOR QANTA A.A. AHMED

Question 1a. Dr. Ahmed, one of the first things you tell the committee in your written testimony is that you are a British citizen. You are not an American Muslim. What qualifies you to be able to speak to the American Muslim response to these radicalization hearings?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

Question 1b. Please tell the committee about the experience you have had?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

Question 1c. Give us the statistical data you have collected that can illustrate that these hearings were effective.

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

QUESTIONS FROM RANKING MEMBER BENNIE G. THOMPSON FOR M. ZUHDI JASSER

Question 1a. According to your testimony, these hearings have brought an exponential growth in the number of Muslims who are willing to courageously step forward in support of American values. First of all, what does this mean?

Second, could you provide the committee with the statistical data you collected on these hearings?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

Question 1b. Could you tell us the companies that conducted the audit?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

Question 2. Dr. Jasser, on your organization's website, you state that "We will work to engage Muslim youth and empower them with the independence to question the ideas of imams, clerics, and so many 'tribal' leaders of Muslim communities unwilling to look toward reform and modernity." What exactly, and please be specific, has American Islamic Forum for Democracy done to reach out to Muslim youth?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

QUESTIONS FROM RANKING MEMBER BENNIE G. THOMPSON FOR ASRA Q. NOMANI

Question 1. Ms. Nomani, during your testimony, you stated that you have trained members of the U.S. military and other Government employees. Please provide the committee with the date and time of your training sessions. Also, provide the name of the sessions and the materials that you used. Also, provide the agency with which you have contracts either now or in the past. Also, if you are a contractor or subcontractor, provide the name of your company.

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

Question 2a. Ms. Nomani, according to your testimony, you said American Muslims need to own up to the problem of radicalization and extremism in our communities by being honest about your problems and you also said that Muslims need to be a part of the solutions. Now, I have heard from law enforcement, in this hearing room, on the record, that Muslims have been a part of the solution by reporting suspicious activity and taking steps forward in their community. Now, what data do you have to refute these statements made by law enforcement under oath?

What verifiable data do you have that illustrates that the series of hearings this committee has had has been helpful?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

Question 2b. What law enforcement or counter-terrorism training have you had that speaks to the contrary?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

QUESTIONS FROM RANKING MEMBER BENNIE G. THOMPSON FOR FAIZA PATEL

Question 1. Both sides of the aisle want to make sure this country is safe from another attack like the ones on September 11. I am concerned about the chilling effect this series of hearings has had on cooperation between the Muslim community and law enforcement. These hearings may not get any more Muslims to come forward to cooperate with law enforcement. They may make Muslims who are already wary of our intentions even less likely to reach out to a Government that appears intent on stereotyping and vilifying their community. Do you have any thoughts on this?

Answer. Like Americans of all faiths, American Muslims want our country to be safe from terrorism. The record shows that the Muslim community has been a staunch ally in fighting terrorism, providing information on about 35 percent of the terrorist plots that have been foiled in the past decade. Top law enforcement officials have stressed over and over again that the cooperation of the Muslim community is critical to our ability to fight terrorism. This valuable cooperation may be endangered when American Muslims are treated as potential terrorists rather than as partners.

Question 2a. You have authored a report on radicalization. Why is understanding the sources of radicalization relevant?

What effect does the radicalization myth have on the Government's response to terrorism and intelligence-gathering tools?

Question 2b. Based on your knowledge of the hearings this committee has had on radicalization, what are we missing?

Answer. Over the past decade, various Government agencies have attempted to develop theories of "radicalization," which can be defined as the process by which individuals turn to ideologically-inspired violence. The hope is that by studying and understanding radicalization, we will be able to identify homegrown terrorists before they strike.

Unfortunately, the process by which an individual turns to violence is far from predictable. Social science research (including studies by security agencies, academics, and social scientists) suggests that there is no profile of the type of person who becomes a terrorist. To the contrary, the process by which a person embraces violence is fluid, making it nearly impossible to predict who will move from espousing "radical" views to committing violent acts.

Despite this wealth of research, certain law enforcement agencies—including the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the New York City Police Department—have embraced what can be described as a "religious conveyor belt" theory of radicalization. This theory posits that radicalization runs a predictable course whereby American Muslims who harbor grievances against our society or who suffer from a personal crisis become more religious, then adopt "radical" beliefs, and finally commit acts of terrorism. According to this theory, there are recognizable markers of this process. These markers include normal Muslim religious behaviors such as frequent attendance at a mosque, growing a beard, giving up cigarettes and alcohol, wearing traditional Islamic garb, and becoming involved in social activism and community issues.

This theory forms the backdrop against which agencies like the FBI and the NYPD have formulated their counter-terrorism strategy. The belief that certain Muslim religious behaviors can be signs of incipient terrorism supports a heavy emphasis on monitoring American Muslim communities. Both the NYPD and the FBI have placed informants in mosques to report on what Imams and worshippers are saying. The NYPD has mapped Muslim communities both inside and outside its jurisdiction, and has sent so-called "rakers" to keep tabs on the patrons of cafes, clubs, barber shops, and other establishments in Muslim neighborhoods. There is considerable evidence that some FBI field offices have engaged in similar community mapping.

The tactics supported by the religious conveyor belt theory have significant negative consequences. They chill American Muslims' rights to freedom of speech, association, and religion. Moreover, they undermine efforts to build relationships of trust with American Muslim communities, thus jeopardizing the broader counterterrorism agenda. It is not only the notion that Muslims are all potential terrorists that alienates the American Muslim community. It is also the notion—suggested by the religious conveyor belt theory—that they should report on the religious beliefs and behaviors of their friends and colleagues. Understandably, American Muslims who are more than willing to provide information about potential criminal activity, and who have in fact done so routinely since 9/11, are offended by the idea that they must share information about their prayers and religious observances with the Government.

In my view, this committee's hearings on radicalization could have benefitted from a more scientific and empirical approach to the issue. Rather than relying on an anecdotal approach to an assumed threat of radicalization, the committee could draw upon expertise in the Federal Government and among social scientists to consider whether, and to what extent, the radicalization of American Muslims poses a threat to our security.

