[H.A.S.C. No. 111–7]

STRATEGIES FOR COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMIST IDEOLOGIES

HEARING

BEFORE THE

TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS AND CAPABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

HEARING HELD
FEBRUARY 12, 2009

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

55–050 WASHINGTON : 2010

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512–1800; DC area (202) 512–1800
Fax: (202) 512–2104 Mail: Stop IDCC, Washington, DC 20402–0001

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STRATEGIES FOR COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMIST IDEOLOGIES

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS AND CAPABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE,
Washington, DC, Thursday, February 12, 2009.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 1:46 p.m., in room 2212, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Adam Smith (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ADAM SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM WASHINGTON, CHAIRMAN, TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS AND CAPABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. SMITH. I am going to go ahead and call the meeting quickly to order and adjourn it, unfortunately. We have three votes that were just called. We could probably get a couple of minutes in before we have to leave, but I don't think that would be very helpful. So what we are going to have to do is we are going to have to adjourn. We will be back as quickly as we can, which, honestly, will be about 45 minutes.

So I wish I could offer you something other than to say wait if you can, we would appreciate it, and certainly for our witnesses we appreciate your indulgence on that. It is just the way the schedule worked out. We should have a pretty clear block of time once we get these votes done, is my understanding.

So we stand adjourned, and we will be back.

[Recess.]

Mr. SMITH. Thank you. We will now reconvene and we were actually right about the 45-minute break. That doesn't happen often, so I am glad that worked out.

I want to thank the panel today for joining us and the members. I will make a very, very brief opening statement, and then we want to turn it over to the ranking member, Mr. Miller, and then take the testimony from our witnesses.

We are joined this morning by Mr. Raymond Ibrahim, who is the Associate Director for the Middle East Forum and also author of The Al Qaeda Reader, and Mr. Michael Doran, who is the Visiting Professor from the Wagner School of Public Service at New York University and the former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Support for Public Diplomacy). We appreciate both of you being here today.

The purpose of the hearing is to get a little bit of a broader understanding of the terrorism threat, specifically from al Qa'ida and accompanying ideologies. What this committee's prime focus is on

is on counterterrorism. We do a lot of work at the Special Operations Command, which is the lead command in fighting the war on terror, and we try to take as comprehensive an approach as possible.

There are obviously lots of very small bits and pieces to what we do, giving Special Operations Command the proper support, and we also have some jurisdiction on cybersecurity and information technology (IT) issues, and we are very concerned about that, the broad defense threat reduction efforts of Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) and other agencies and also counterproliferation, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), and we drill down into each one of those specific topics in this subcommittee to figure out how we can be most helpful in those areas.

But overall what we have most tried to do under my leadership and under Mr. Thornberry's leadership when he was ranking member on the committee is try to take the comprehensive approach to try to truly understand what we are fighting and how to defeat it so we don't get stovepiped in little different pieces of it and not understanding the big picture.

The main purpose of this hearing is to help with that broader understanding of fighting, the threat from violent extremists. To understand, as the military knows better than anyone, we cannot win this simply by identifying all the terrorists in the world and then killing or incapacitating them. That will not work.

That is necessary in order to disrupt the existing networks and prevent attacks against us and other Western targets, but it will not ultimately defeat our foe. This is an ideological struggle, and we need to understand that ideology, and we need to confront it in a comprehensive way that includes far more soft power than hard power, and that is what we are hoping to learn from our two witnesses today, is to get a little bit more background on what the ideology is that we are fighting and what the best way to confront it is, what we have done right, what we have done wrong, and what we need to do better.

So I very much look forward to the testimony and the questions. A final thing I will say is we will adhere to the five-minute rule, particularly on the questioning, something I learned. I paid you a compliment a moment ago, Mr. Thornberry, so you walked in a second too late, but you can ask people about it later.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Smith can be found in the Appendix on page 41.]

Mr. SMITH. We have a small group of people here, but I find, nonetheless, the Q&A flows better if members are mindful of a time limit. So, most members, you will have more than one opportunity. As far as witnesses are concerned, we do have a clock. In general, I like to keep the statements in the less than ten-minute area. I find the dialogue works better.

I believe Mr. Ibrahim has asked for the time on our clock, and it only has five minutes on it. So we will wait five minutes and then start the five-minute clock and give you some idea when the ten minutes are up and then we will go into Q&A.

With that, I will welcome the committee's ranking member, Mr. Miller, I very much look forward to working with him. I enjoyed working with him on the Armed Services Committee.

Again, I just wanted to say what an outstanding job Mr. Thornberry did as ranking member during the last two years. You do have very big shoes to fill.

Mr. MILLER. Okay, okay, okay. We know the former ranking member was a good guy.

Mr. SMITH. We are confident you will fill them. With that, I will turn it over to Mr. Miller.

STATEMENT OF HON. JEFF MILLER, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM FLORIDA, RANKING MEMBER, TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS AND CAPABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. MILLER. Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasure to be back on this subcommittee. I do look forward to continuing the good works of the past years. I have a full statement I would like entered into the record, but because of the time that we have lost with votes, I would like to go ahead and hear the statements. So thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Miller can be found in the Appendix on page 42.]

Mr. SMITH. Great. Thank you. Mr. Ibrahim, the floor is yours.

STATEMENT OF RAYMOND IBRAHIM, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, MIDDLE EAST FORUM AND AUTHOR OF THE AL QAEDA READER

Mr. IBRAHIM. Mr. Chairman, what I would like to address today specifically, well, is many-fold, and the first thing is ultimately the consideration about how one can go about implementing a strategy to counter radical Islam and its ideologies. The fact is it is necessary, I think, to go back and recognize the abysmal failure that has permeated, more or less, all approaches, both, I think, governmental and otherwise.

And that, I think, roots back to the academic world and academia where, of course, many of the future analysts and thinkers come from, which is to be expected, in that the academic world has tended to all but ignore Islamic theology, Islamic doctrine, Islamic history, or to minimize it and overlook it and, instead, presents what is more intelligible to the Western world view, which is, I think, somewhat normal for all humans. They end up projecting what they believe are norms to other peoples.

And so in academia, for example, where I come from, you cannot discuss this—you know, if when we talk about terrorism and radical ideologies, to actually go back and try to demonstrate that there is some sort of body of doctrine that supports it, is usually completely—it can be anathema in certain circles and you can lose your position—and there are actually entire books written about this.

Now, why that is, and is it, you know, because of political correctness and people are in search of tenure is not the point. So what I am saying is ultimately there needs to be kind of a revolutionizing to the academic approach to understanding terrorism and appreciating the Islamic doctrines that make the backbone.

And in connection, what has been happening is—and this is what I mean by people in the West or Americans tend to project to their world view is the following concept:

Wherever you go, ultimately you will be told that Islamic radicals, al Qa'ida, all that they are doing is ultimately rooted in political grievances, and they themselves will say that, specifically when they are addressing Western audiences and Americans.

They will say, we are attacking you because—and the list can go on and on, from of course the usual Israel and Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan—but you will even see other accusations such as Osama bin Laden telling Americans who are attacking you because you failed to sign the Kyoto Protocol or because you exploit women and things of that nature.

Now, the logic behind radical Muslims and radical Islamism in general in doing that is that they are smart enough and they are aware to know that by using the language of political grievance they will strike a chord with Westerners and Americans who will immediately assume, yes, this is what it is all about. These people are angry, and they are articulating their frustration through an Islamist paradigm because that is all they know, but fundamentally, if all these political grievances are ameliorated this will all go away.

Now the problem with that, and this struck me immediately when I was working on my book and translating The Al Qaeda Reader, is even though I was aware of all their political statements to the West via Al Jazeera and other mediums demonstrating this, which is them saying you started the fight, you are doing this and now we are fighting you back, when you look at the writings that they send to fellow Muslims, which discusses this animosity, all of these political grievances disappear and all you are left with is essentially what Islamic law demands. And it doesn't matter anymore if the U.S. does this or the U.S. does that.

And when you start studying Islamic law, and by Islamic law I am not talking about what Osama bin Laden has interpreted, I am talking there is an entire body and canon of Islamic law, also known as Sharia, which is very well codified and which has existed centuries before Osama bin Laden came on the scene.

So to give you an example, according to Islamic law or the Islamic world view, the entire world is separated into two divisions. On the one hand, you have what in Arabic is called Dar al Islam, which means the abode of Islam or the abode of peace, and that is the good guys. This is where Sharia dominates and this is where Muslims thrive.

On the other hand, what you have is the abode of war, and that is where we live, essentially, anywhere in this world where there is a majority of non-Muslims, aka/infidels, who live and Sharia law is not governing them.

Now, when I say this a lot of people say, well, this sounds ridiculous, but the fact is this is as well codified in Islamic law as any of the Five Pillars of Islam. So a lot of people will tell you Islam, praying and fasting, going on the Hajj and giving charity, these are not open to debate.

The fact is, jihad, in order to spread Islamic authority and Islamic rule, is in the same category. It is not open to debate. It is considered an obligation on the entire Muslim body.

Now, what I am talking about now is law, is doctrine. I am not here to say that every Muslim wants to do this, every Muslim is

actively trying to subvert the West and trying to implement Sharia, and so I always make a distinction between what the law says and what people do. What people do is irrelevant and what they believe in or if they want to overlook that or they want to reform it, that is one thing. But that also brings a point that if this is the law, if this is the codified world view, no matter how many Muslims are, quote, unquote, moderate or how many overlook it, I believe there will always be a significant few who do uphold this world view.

And then when you really look at numbers, even if we were to say, I mean, given the benefit of the doubt, that 20 percent of the Islamic world are radical, are the sorts who would implement this hostile world view, that is not very reassuring because the nature of the war, terrorism, which now no longer requires numbers and force, because, as we have seen, 19 men were able to create horrific damages on 9/11.

So that is the problem. It is not necessarily which Islam is right. The fact is the traditional form of Islam is such that there are very many intolerant positions vis-a-vis non-Muslims, and this is a problem when people use the language of al Qa'ida and radical Muslims have hijacked Islam. That is simply not true because what they are doing is they are implementing it.

Now, it is true they may try to distort things. They may engage in sophistry which goes a long way, and I will give you an example. So I just got done saying according to the Islamic world view there is this concept where Muslims must always go on the jihad, on the offensive. So radical Muslims will then come in and say look, this is how it is. Now how much more is to be expected of us if we are now defending ourselves in Palestine or in Iraq or in Afghanistan? And that kind of argument ends up mobilizing lots of Muslims because they see the logic, on the one hand, far from actually going on the offensive which, I might add is seen as an altruistic thing. Muslims don't believe when they go on jihad in order to subjugate infidel lands, they don't see that as, you know, unjust. They see that as pure altruism because we are bringing the light of truth and Islam to the infidels.

I say all of this, not by conjecture, but by reading extensively Arabic books that demonstrate this, and the logic is sound from their perspective.

So ultimately what I am saying is it is necessary to begin taking the doctrine seriously, not just being content with saying, well, Muslims are doing this because they are angry because of Israel or because of this. And one consideration to keep in mind that I think dispels that point of view is that a lot of people in this world are disgruntled and oppressed, but you don't see this sort of behavior from other places.

You won't see a Cuban living in a Communist regime driving in a truck and saying, you know, Jesus is great and killing people, or you don't see Chinese in oppressive Communist China also retaliating in this way. So I think there is reason to take seriously these doctrines. And once they take these doctrines seriously and methodically begin to understand them and incorporate them, I believe a more appropriate strategy will come into being. Because to sit and say we are combating terrorism in and of itself, anthropomorphizing a word like "terrorism" as if it is a person or

a concept or even an ideology, when in fact it is just a method, doesn't help us.

And so we know, for example, Sun Tzu, to go back to a classical war doctrine, said "Know your enemy," and that is very important. But, unfortunately, here it seems that the U.S. is having problems even acknowledging who the enemy is.

And to give you a few examples, maybe you are familiar with the words "matter debate," where there was a memo circulated around the government trying to advise writers and thinkers and analysts not to use Islamic-laden words such as "Sharia" or "mujahid" or even "jihad" and instead just use the generic "terrorist."

I think that completely handicaps any kind of approach to trying to formulate a strategy, because you are in effect, by limiting and censoring your language, you have limited knowledge in and of itself because there is—language and knowledge are obviously linked.

And also I read recently, and it is one thing, as I know in the academic, the civilian academic world to have encountered what I am discussing, which is this total lack of appreciation for Islamic doctrine, but it seems to have begun to infiltrate even the military. For example, I was reading at the U.S. War College that one of their members or faculty members wrote essentially an apology for Hamas saying that they are villainized and misunderstood when in fact if you study Hamas and see what they say, they are a complete jihadi organization which upholds all of those things that I have delineated, including the offensive aspect towards the world. And they often say, forget about Israel, but ultimately there should—Sharia law needs to eventually, according to our beliefs, be spread around the world. So in a nutshell that is what it comes down to.

I believe that we need to start taking more seriously what they say, their epistemology, their background, their world view, which is so obvious. And this is the irony, it is everywhere you look, there it is. It is not like they hide it so much.

When I worked for the Library of Congress, for example, I worked in the Middle Eastern Division and so I had access to thousands of Arabic books. It seems to me any one of those books that I would read would give you a better insight into their mind than the average American book that comes out, because the American book comes out, once again, colored by a Western philosophy which all but ignores doctrine and theology.

And I think I am up.

Mr. SMITH. Okay. We will certainly explore a lot of those themes in our questions.

Mr. IBRAHIM. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Ibrahim can be found in the Appendix on page 44.]

Mr. SMITH. We appreciate your testimony.

Mr. Doran.

STATEMENT OF DR. MICHAEL DORAN, VISITING PROFESSOR, WAGNER SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY, AND FORMER DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY)

Dr. DORAN. Mr. Smith, Ranking Member Miller, former Ranking Member Thornberry, thanks very much for having me again.

Your letter of invitation asked me to look at—come up with a number of recommendations for a whole of government approach, and I was very excited to see that.

I am working now at NYU. I started my job there on the 20th of January. Before that I served at the National Security Council (NSC) as the Senior Director for the Near East and North Africa and the Department of Defense as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Support to Public Diplomacy and as a Senior Adviser to the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Jim Glassman, at the State Department. And this multi-agency experience I had has made me focus like a laser on this issue on the whole of government approach.

I think your question is absolutely the key question that we face. We can't really put together—we can't really put together—or we can have all the greatest strategies in the world on paper, but until we are organized to deliver it strategically we are going to find ourselves falling all over ourselves.

So I have written a lengthy statement, which I will submit for the record, and I will keep my introductory comments here very, very short.

I basically discuss in this statement where we could put this what I call a strategic operational center for strategic communications. I think that countering violent extremism is part of a larger government enterprise, which I am calling strategic communications.

When you listen to the debates out there, there are basically three options that you hear. Option number one is to put it at the NSC. Option number two is to create a new kind of United States Information Agency (USIA) or something like it, and option number three is to keep it in—the lead for this in the Office of the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs or State "R".

In my statement, I come down in the end on the side of keeping it in the State Department because I think that the organization needs to be a strategic operational organization, and that kind of militates against putting it in the NSC. You need, absolutely, for strategic communications to work effectively, it has to have a lot of support from the President and from the White House. There needs to be somebody at the White House who is very much focused on it, but there also needs to be an operational center. And no matter how you think about this, you keep finding yourself coming up against the State Department. Nothing that we do abroad, outside of areas where we are in a hot war, nothing that we do abroad can be done without the support and concurrence of the State Department.

So I argue that we should put it there. But there is a problem there in that the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs is a weak under secretary. When they broke up

USIA, they took the remnants and they put it in the State Department, but they took away a lot of the autonomy that the organizations had. In the old USIA they could conceive and carry out public diplomacy strategies. Currently if the under secretary has the lead for countering violent extremism, if he is the commander of the overall effort, he has no troops in the field because all the public diplomacy officers in the field report to the ambassador, they are rated by the ambassador and by the regional bureau back at State, not by the undersecretary's office.

So we have given—in the Bush administration we gave the lead to the under secretary, but we didn't give him the resources and the authorities necessary to actually carry—conceive of a strategy and carry it out.

And the other factor that I discuss in there as well is the general mission of "R". Back—"R" was—USIA came to maturity during the Cold War. In that conflict with the Soviet Union, where we had a strategic rival that had a whole different social, political, economic way of life, the key issue for us was to brand America, was to show our way of life to the rest of the world in order to demonstrate its superiority.

That is basically what most of the programs, historically, in what is now "R" have done. So there is a general bias in the organization towards those kinds of activities that tell America's story.

The kind of conflict we are in now, where we don't have a peer competitor, strategic rival, where a lot of the debates that have strategic importance for us are not debates about America but debates about the identities of people, debates that look rather parochial from a distance but end up generating violence, it is no longer as important to tell America's story. Telling America's story is still extremely important, but there is a whole 'nother dimension there that we need to be investigating, and we need that organization, the strategic organization at the State Department, to be focused on that to a much greater extent than it has been.

Now, Jim Glassman, if you go back and you look at his statements, you will see that he got this completely. He started a number of different programs to try to move the organization in that direction, and he distinguished himself from all of his predecessors, the under secretaries that preceded him, in that he vigorously engaged with the Department of Defense and with other agencies that have a role in this strategic communications endeavor.

Just having them, just having the designated lead say I want to coordinate with the rest of you, I want us all to be on the same page and have the whole of government effort, had a hugely empowering impact on the different communities within the other agencies that are engaged in this.

I mean, if you look at the strategic communications communities in the different agencies you will see that they are all kind of comfortable in each one of their organizations, because in every organization it is always going to be the regional guys who are the heavyweights, and the people who are working on the communications piece are always kind of afterthoughts. So if you have a powerful proponent who has all of the government lead for this, who is saying I want to work with you, it has a way of elevating all of them.

I will stop there and we can take questions.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Doran can be found in the Appendix on page 58.]

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much. I have a lot of questions for both of you, but I am going to adhere to the five-minute rule as well. We will come back around.

I will start with Mr. Ibrahim, and I think you make an outstanding point, an understanding of the basis of this ideology, and al Qa'ida's ideology, is core to how we intend to defeat it, and we tend to brush over that.

There are two points I would like to explore, however. First of all, the reason I think that people brush over it, the reason in particular for that State Department memo that you mentioned, was because, you know, one thing we have long understood is the moment those who actively adhere to the ideology that al Qa'ida and others advance is a relatively small percentage of the Muslim population. You can disagree with that if you want, because you know better than I, but I think that is the case.

And what we are leery of, you know, is creating an approach to counter al Qa'ida that unites 1.3 billion Muslims against us. And I have learned from firsthand experience in talking about this issue that any time you link what bin Laden is doing to Islam, you offend—I have not met the Muslim who that does not offend. Maybe I will at some point, but I have not yet.

So the strategy is to try to separate al Qa'ida from the broader Islamic religion and not give them that imprimatur, if you will, to give them that stamp of legitimacy that elevates them in the Muslim world. So I am curious what you think about how we can sort of split that difficulty.

The second part of this, which seems to be connected, you seem to be saying that al Qa'ida is, in fact, representative of the entire Muslim world. That is what the Koran says, that is what it says that all Muslims should do, which is a big problem if that is the case. And I have read a little bit about this, certainly not as much as you have.

But within all religions there is always that tension between, you know, our job is to make everybody else in the world like us, a sort of growing reality in the modern world that that is simply, you know, a recipe for mass destruction and death, and so we can't adhere to it.

So new philosophies are developed. Certainly Christianity went through that to some extent when you look at the Inquisition and other things that happened where they began to accept that they could adhere to their faith and allow others to have a different one, and we have to be able to do that. We have to be able to find some way so that there is a bulk of Muslims who they could be very strict adherence to their faith and accept others.

And your testimony seems to imply that there is very little hope for that. In fact, that is just the way it is. There is no other way to interpret the Koran, and this is the only thing that is necessary for good Muslims.

The question would be, how can we explore their options, because there are moderate Muslims who don't adhere to that theory that everyone has to adopt their religion. Is there any wiggle room in

there in terms of how do we interpret that. And how do we do that and deal with the challenge of not uniting the Muslim world against us by condemning their entire religion and dumping them all into one category.

Mr. IBRAHIM. All right. Thank you, very good questions. I might start with the second one, actually.

I don't—I think one of the biggest intellectual difficulties many people have is they think there is al Qa'ida, which is a radical Islamic group, and then maybe Hamas or Hezbollah and mainstream functions. And that distinction is I think valid, but what needs to be understood is, I believe, for example, if al Qa'ida were to disappear tomorrow that is not going to make their ideology also disappear. Because their ideology, as I was saying, is ultimately traced back to all of these doctrinal world views that were codified centuries before. And that is why it is almost like, if you will permit, the Hydra monster that the mythical Hercules went and fought. Every time he chopped a head off, two more grew up.

Mr. SMITH. Granted, but a whole lot of Muslims haven't followed that stream of thought.

Mr. IBRAHIM. No. No, I understand.

Mr. SMITH. So there is hope there.

Mr. IBRAHIM. Yes. And this is the strategy that I would put forth, is that classical jurisprudence and doctrine is very clear-cut. In fact, in Sunni Islam, mainstream Islam, which 90 percent of Muslims adhere to, the way every—and this is why I always stress on this concept of epistemology, in that we can't even begin to understand how they formulate the world view. But according to Sharia, every action that any human being can do is classified as being obligatory or recommended or permissible or discouraged or forbidden.

Okay. Now, the concept of jihad, in Arabic the sabil Allah, in order to understand, this is one of the obligatory ones.

Mr. SMITH. If we make it very specific, the obligatory part that is the problematic part of that, is the obligation to force everybody else in the world to live under that law.

Mr. IBRAHIM. That is correct.

Mr. SMITH. It is your interpretation that is just black and white.

Mr. IBRAHIM. That is black and white. Now, having said that, I am not—I do not believe every Muslim believes that. But here is the problem, and this is why I think radicals have a better leg to stand on, because they are better textually grounded, better grounded in doctrine. The logic is the Koran is the verbatim word of God, for instance. The Koran says to Muslims, and so the Koran says go fight infidels until you subjugate them.

Mr. SMITH. You would give me the same look if you said that about the Bible, by the way, so that wasn't specific to the Koran.

Mr. IBRAHIM. Right.

Mr. SMITH. Go ahead.

Mr. IBRAHIM. And then there is the hadith, and this is even more important in certain respects than the Koran when it comes to articulating Islamic law, and that is even more clear-cut insofar as how Muslims are to do this.

Now, again, does your average Muslim want to do this? No, not necessarily, but this is the strength that the radicals have and that

is why they have a stronger voice because they can always go back and say well, this is what it says. Why aren't you doing it? When you start saying, well, I am trying to make it a better fit into the 21st century, I am trying to reform it, that is considered apostasy because God's word transcends time and space. And so if God said in the seventh century do X, Y and Z why now are you going back to say no, we want to change it.

Now, I know this sounds very dismal.

Mr. SMITH. I guess I have to cut myself off and let Mr. Miller——

Mr. IBRAHIM. Okay.

Mr. SMITH. I understand that. I think, you know, one of the things that all religions as they move into modernity have to accept is that it is a lot more flexible than that, that God contemplated a changing world, that he didn't lock in all of the stocks a long time ago. That is one of the keys, I think, to getting people——

Mr. IBRAHIM. That is fair, but tell that to a Muslim.

Mr. SMITH. We have to, we have to tell that to Christians too with great frequency, but I have to get to Mr. Miller. We can resume this later.

Mr. Miller.

Mr. MILLER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Carrying on, you know, Mr. Ibrahim, the power of rumors is very strong.

Mr. IBRAHIM. Power of rumors?

Mr. MILLER. Rumors.

Mr. IBRAHIM. Okay.

Mr. MILLER. In the Arab world in particular, and what I want to know, and in Iraq, I guess, in particular, what can we do to combat those rumors?

Mr. IBRAHIM. The rumors such as that the U.S. is here to obliterate Islam and things like that?

Mr. MILLER. Sure.

Mr. IBRAHIM. The thing is about the Arab world specifically—and I know this firsthand—is this is a lot of paranoia and conspiracy theories permeated. And so the concept to your average Arab that these people are here just to help us just because they are being altruistic is—might be problematic, especially because you have all these other groups like al Qa'ida who will go out of their way and exploit and say, no, that is not what they are doing. You know, they are doing this and this ultimately is better represented with Israel and the Zionists. Everything, maybe you are aware but things like the Protocols of the Elders of Zion and Mein Kampf are best sellers in the Arab world, that kind of thing.

So in a way if you give olive branches and make concessions, that might be seen in a good way or that might be seen as, well they have an ulterior motive, or by the more radical types that it will be seen as an admission of defeat. And, see, that is a different thing going back to the different world view. When you give in to certain peoples, they think you are weak and this is more evidence that we are right. And so it actually brings on a greater offensive from them.

Now, granted, again, I am talking about a select group of people, not everyone.

And the bottom line is a person can identify himself as a Muslim, and that doesn't mean that he believes in any of the things that I have just said, because that is like a person whom I think he is a Christian or a Jew or whatever, and he just has a very liberal interpretation.

But I am talking about the core people who fall into just following the straight black and white world view that Islam teaches, and I think this is the ultimate intellectual barrier for Westerners to understand.

Coming from the West, being that it is coming from a Christian heritage, whether Westerners today practice it or not, I think I have taken for granted the notion of separation of church and state, which actually has precedence in the New Testament when Jesus said, "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's, render unto God what is God's." A split. And I think that helped actually let the West develop this thing.

That is totally antithetical to the Islamic world. Islam is all about submitting. That is what the word means. What are you submitting to? You are submitting to the will of Allah, as has been articulated in the Koran, in the hadith, which are the words of Mohammed and his actions and deeds. And so to come and say we want to separate, you know, what Islam teaches, and that is the whole thing. Islam is very much caught up in very mundane things, you know. You are supposed to eat with a certain hand. You are supposed to, you know, not wear gold rings, and people take this seriously. And that is why we have to not condescend and think, you know, they are just reacting that way because they are angry and they are trying to fall back on something. Maybe some are but others take this literally because it has been going on for 1,400 years, and it is understood that this is how you implement true Islam. So, again, that goes back to the problem.

So trying to formulate a response, it is—I believe the best way is far from trying to tell people, going back I think to Chairman Smith's original question about the memo and trying to separate al Qa'ida from mainstream Islam, while that is a noble endeavor there is another aspect to it, which is basically the Muslim world is not waiting around to see what kind of legitimacy the U.S. is going to confer on al Qa'ida, because the U.S. is seen as a non-Muslim infidel entity, which is already on the wrong path. So whether it calls al Qa'ida jihadists or not, or calls them—I have read the memo where other words are posited like "muhara," which means like a pirate—I don't think that is going to go very far in the Arab Muslim world because the U.S. is not in a position to actually make an opinion that has to do with Islam in the first place.

Mr. MILLER. Is there such a thing as a good Muslim and a bad Muslim?

Mr. IBRAHIM. There are good people and bad people, and there are good Christians and bad Christians and good Hindus and bad Hindus. But see, and that is the thing——

Mr. MILLER. Are there good Muslims and bad Muslims?

Mr. IBRAHIM. But—and that is the thing. If you think of them——

Mr. MILLER. My question was, you just said there were good and bad Christians. You just said there good and bad Hindus. But are there good and bad Muslims?

Mr. IBRAHIM. There are good and bad Muslims, but we have to understand what we mean by the word "Muslim." I think a lot of people think by the word "Muslim" they conflate it with a certain race or certain culture or certain ethnicity. But to me a Muslim is literally a man who, or woman who is, as the word means, submitting to the will of Allah. That is a true Muslim.

Mr. MILLER. I am just trying to find out—Pensacola, where I come from, we have what I would call pretty radical Christian beliefs in regards to bombing of abortion clinics. I don't think that is right, and I am willing to speak out against that.

Mr. IBRAHIM. Right.

Mr. MILLER. My question is, you know, are there Muslims that are out there speaking out against those that I think have hijacked them. And my time has run out. Would you think about that and then——

Mr. SMITH. Give a quick answer to that.

Mr. IBRAHIM. Okay. Well, basically the abortion thing, which I hear a lot about, it ultimately to me comes down to——

Mr. MILLER. By the way, I am pro-life when I say that.

Mr. IBRAHIM. Okay, I understand. What it comes down to, to me anyway, is can this person who claims to be a Christian find precedence in the Bible that tells him to go and, you know, bomb an abortion clinic. I would argue no, at least not in the New Testament.

Now, compare that with the last time I did a survey, several thousand statements, direct by Mohammed, saying go and wage war and subjugate infidels. So this is what I mean.

Yes, people can say I am a Christian or whatever religion and do bad things, and people can say I am a Muslim and do great things. So I really—I try not to get into the realm of human will but more what doctrine teaches.

And as long as the doctrine is there, and this is the problem, there will be those who will take it seriously. Even if they are the minority—and I am not saying the majority of Muslims believe this, because I think the majority of Muslims don't even know about these doctrines—but—and that is what makes the radicals more powerful because they are able to go and delve into these arcane doctrines, bring them out, bring out the classical jurisprudence, and then show these things.

And then how is a moderate, who wants to be a moderate, going to actually have a leg to stand on to counter all that without being accused of apostasy, which, by the way, according to Islamic law earns a death punishment.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Andrews.

Mr. ANDREWS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the gentleman and to the witnesses.

Mr. Ibrahim, if I were in the Iraqi Parliament, and I wanted to make the argument that people should use any means necessary to expel the American occupiers from our homeland, and I used as the textual basis of that of the Judeo-Christian text in which the Christians and Jews are instructed there is only one God. Thou

shalt have no other God but me. I am the only God. And I cited that as authority for the proposition that Christians and Jews have a responsibility to expel others from the realms of power, and that is why the Americans are occupying my country. Would I be on legitimate ground theologically?

Mr. IBRAHIM. I would argue no and I think I can give you a better example from the Bible.

Mr. ANDREWS. Why won't you take mine. Why would I not be on valid theological ground?

Mr. IBRAHIM. Because, where exactly in the Bible does it say that?

Mr. ANDREWS. Well, the Ten Commandments instruct Christians and Jews that they should believe in one God, and that is the God of the Judeo-Christian heritage. So if you believe in some other God then you are apostate, right?

Mr. IBRAHIM. But there is no imperative in the Bible—as opposed to the Koran and the hadith—saying or inciting Christians to go and subjugate the rest of the world.

Mr. ANDREWS. Well, it depends on what we mean by imperative. You could make the argument that most of the Old Testament is a chronicle of wars waged by the Israelites in order to gain territory, because they are God's chosen people. So even though there may not have been an explicit command to go to war, there is book upon book that says you should wage war to claim what God has promised you.

And wouldn't that be consistent with what the Iraqi dissenter would say about us?

Mr. IBRAHIM. Not really, and there is a very subtle reason. In fact, the Old Testament wars are the examples that I was going to go to because those are usually the ones that are cited as showing how the Old Testament can just be interpreted as being a religion of conquest as much as Islam. And I will give you—the simple anecdote is the Book of Joshua, where Joshua is commanded to go—and essentially it is almost like genocide and he kills everyone, including animals, you know, every human, beast. He just totally purges.

The difference between that imperative, and, you know, anyone can make a moral decision about that, whether it was right or wrong or what happened——

Mr. ANDREWS. No, I didn't tell you to make any moral judgments. I am talking about doctrinal——

Mr. SMITH. Please let him finish.

Mr. ANDREWS. Go on.

Mr. IBRAHIM. But the difference between that and what you have in Islamic text is that if you look at it, and I have looked at it closely, they were very temporal in-the-now commandments from Yahweh or God. Basically if you read it, it commands the Hebrews to go and kill the Jebusites and the Jebusites and the Philistines until you get this piece of land.

It was not, as opposed to the Islamic doctrines, an open-ended command. And if you look at the language in the Koran——

Mr. ANDREWS. But couldn't one argue that God's word in the Old Testament isn't temporal, just as God's word in the Koran is not. And if—in the time of Joshua the command was to dominate a par-

ticular piece of land on the west side of the Jordan River, then the command in global times is to command the whole globe, including what we now call Iraq.

Mr. SMITH. If I could dive in here, God's word is temporal if he says it is temporal. But if he says it is not, it is not. That is the distinction.

Mr. IBRAHIM. That is what I am saying. In the Koran it says fight them. The key word you always see is fight them until they are subjugated. Fight them. And so this is why it became codified into the Islamic world view as a perpetual warfare between the abode of Islam and the abode of war until the latter has been subsumed——

Mr. ANDREWS. I actually think this discussion, which I appreciate very much, goes to the point that I was trying to implicitly make. History is replete with circumstances where people interpret the meaning of religious commands as they see fit. So, for example, one could argue that the Koran's mandate to go evangelize, to mix cultural references, but to go do so, has—is really more of a cultural and educational command and not necessarily a violent one.

Now I think you would disagree with that, but the hypothesis I am asking you to respond to is that couldn't a good Muslim be someone who uses the tools of the arts and culture and persuasion to try to convince others to submit rather than a means of violence. Is violence necessitated by the Koran?

Mr. IBRAHIM. No—actually, you are not supposed to go on an offensive jihad until you first invite people to Islam. If you can do it peacefully, that is fine. But jihad is the last means if they refuse, and this is how it has been historically. You have to remember, for example, to Muslims the golden era of Islam is Mohammed and the first what are called righteous caliphs which thrived for about four or five decades. In that period alone Islam burst out of the Arabian peninsula——

Mr. ANDREWS. My time is running out, but I would ask you this. Was the Crusade a Judeo-Christian jihad, offensive jihad?

Mr. IBRAHIM. The Crusade was a belated response to 400 years of Islamic depredations and annexing Christian lands.

Mr. ANDREWS. Was it offensive or defensive?

Mr. IBRAHIM. It depends on how you look at it. It was for Jerusalem and Jerusalem was annexed by force by Muslims from the Christian Byzantine Empire. By force. And so the crusaders were going to get it back. And so is that offensive or defensive?

Mr. ANDREWS. Your testimony was terrific. Thank you very much.

Mr. IBRAHIM. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Shuster.

Mr. SHUSTER. I thank you both for being here today. I am going to start with Mr. Doran first, and I have a question for you, Mr. Ibrahim.

Our strategic communications counter ideology of al Qa'ida extremists out there in the U.S. Would you talk a little bit about that? What can we do better? You mentioned the U.S. Information Agency in establishing that. Can you sort of go into more detail as to what you think we should do, what you think we have done well, and what we haven't done well?

Dr. DORAN. Well, let me start with what we have done well.

I think that in Iraq we have learned a lot of lessons. The successes with the tribes of al Anbar, this is a tremendous reversal, very quickly. And if you look at counterinsurgency doctrine that was used to—that informed our policies, our successful policies, you see that information operations and communications is a huge part of it.

So what I am saying is when we see a success like that, obviously that is in an area where the Department of Defense has total control, what mechanism do we have in our government to look at successful programs and say, ah, how do we replicate this program in another part of the world, or how do we take it and maybe if we want to take it out of an area where we have a hot war to an area where the Department of Defense is not in the lead, how do we take it and massage it and change it so that we can apply it to these other areas?

In order to do that, there has got to be a thinking, learning strategic center in the government that is looking at all of these different programs that are going on out in the field and adopting best practices and applying them, applying them elsewhere, and that currently doesn't exist. That is the problem.

We got to the point under Glassman in the last administration where we could start to see what right looked like about how you would pull these things together. There were still—don't get me wrong—there were still lots of obstacles to creating a kind of the unified, all of government team that was working together. But we had a community of people from all the different key agencies who were working together, and we had a central locus where they could at least be brought together to discuss these issues, and that is what I think is sorely lacking.

There are lots of things we are doing out there that are very effective. There is no doubt about that. The greatest sort of all of government cooperation that you see, the greatest example of it, is really at the country team level. If you have got an ambassador at the country team level who is interested in this, he has got all the representatives of the agencies right there, and they are coming up with innovative programs, that works very well.

We have got a big broad interagency coordination at the NSC level, but that—all the kind of planning and operational cooperation at anything above the country team level is extremely difficult, and that needs—someone needs to, I think, not someone, the President has to focus on that, put somebody in charge of it, demand that they achieve results and then follow up on it.

Mr. SHUSTER. And you place it at the State Department instead of NSC?

Dr. DORAN. I would. We have—there is a deep—throughout the government, there is a deep fear of an operational NSC, and there is something about the strategic communications influence that goes operational very quickly. So it is hard to run things like that out of the NSC. I think the NSC should be engaged in oversight and should be pulling the team together at various intervals, but there has got to be a strategic operational center.

Also, it has to be resourced. I mean, things happen, you know, priorities change. You have to have an organization that has

money, resources, that it can move to effect the perceptions of everybody else as well, and the NSC can't do that either.

Mr. SHUSTER. Thank you, and then my final question which is going to be a big question, Mr. Ibrahim. Where is the hope? Your testimony sounds awfully bleak. Give me a piece that I can smile about.

Mr. IBRAHIM. No, I understand. I present all of this, and I understand that it doesn't offer much hope. But the reason I do it is to essentially show that there needs to be a radical shift in the intellectual approach to the problem.

And I believe that if that is done, everything else will fall into play. And by saying that, I am not talking about, you know, an Armageddon-type war. I believe that once people start taking this seriously, then they will be able to implement something.

For example, I am a firm believer that a lot of people always discuss interfaith dialogues and bringing Christians and Jews and Muslims together to talk about their commonalities. I think it is time to bring them together to talk about their differences and for them to be open, and for, you now, non-Muslims—to essentially put Muslims in the hot seat and say, look, you have got this entire body of doctrine which is not ambiguous in the least. You have got all this history which essentially manifests that doctrine, and we know it. What is the deal, essentially. I mean, in other words, put the ball in their court.

But as long as we go around saying, no, that is not the problem, and, you know, this and that, but to be objective, and not in a condescending or insulting way, and just simply say, look, you have got about a few thousand texts that you all say are authoritative from the Koran to the hadith to the words of Mohammed, to the words of the Islamic scholars, theologians and jurists, and they all say, X, Y and Z. Okay. Now, what is the deal. How do you—how can you tell us this is not the fact?

I think by doing that one of the important things is they for the first time will see, you know what? These people actually have, you know, a reason to be the way they are or to be skeptical or to be cautious, and that goes back to saying a lot of Muslims don't even know their own texts. So by bringing it to them and throwing the ball in their court and showing them, your own religion teaches lots of violence and intolerance vis-a-vis the other and show us how that is not the case. I think that would go a long way into creating some sort of interreligious, on the international level debate, and that might help, for instance. But as long as we ignore it——

Mr. SMITH. The time is up. We have to go on. Move on to Mr. Cooper.

Mr. COOPER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks to the distinguished witnesses.

It is my understanding that one of our admirals has said the most single successful war on terror was tsunami relief in Indonesia, humanitarian aid, temporary involvement, relief, that worked.

Meanwhile, in other parts of the world we have been engaged over the last 20 years in rebuilding, what, 6 Muslim nations and almost no gratitude, in fact a lot of hostility provoked. No understanding in the Arab street that we are helping these folks, even

though in Iraq and Afghanistan alone, just in existing outlays, we have paid, we would have hired every man, woman and child in both countries for about 40 years.

So in terms of an effective strategy to reach out to folks, don't we kind of need to bypass ideology, deal with humanitarian and time limited and nongeographic, and that seems to work if recent history is any guide, sidestep these doctrinal issues.

Yes, sir. Mr. Doran.

Dr. DORAN. If I could just say a couple of words about the doctrinal issues, I disagree with Mr. Ibrahim on a couple of key points. He mentioned the words, that "words" memo. I actually was very supportive of that memo and pushed it around that government as much as possible.

What we found in extensive polling was that when Americans talk about Islam, use Islamic terminology, there is what we say and then there is what Muslim audiences hear. It is one of those cases where the minute we use Muslim terminology audiences turn off and they hear, ah, you have got a problem with Islam. It is very much what you were saying, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. And I tried that from a dozen different understanding angles with a bunch of different audiences, and I discovered exactly what you just said.

Dr. DORAN. Yes. Any time you talk to Muslim audiences you have that experience.

Mr. SMITH. Well, you are a non-Muslim presuming to understand their religion, and they are offended by that at first blush.

But go ahead, sorry.

Dr. DORAN. Yes. It has the unintended consequence of validating al Qa'ida's ideology which says that the United States is at war with Islam. So we just find it more effective that we talk about, we talk about interests, we talk about—we talk to people in terms of categories of identity, like tribes of al Anbar, Iraqis, and so on, that doesn't put the religious question forward.

It is one of those old things like the old question about, you know, when President Nixon said, I am not a crook, you know. When you deny the frame, you reinforce the frame.

So what people don't hear I am not a crook, they hear "crook."

So we sort of want to change the dialogue and get it off of religion. That is not an argument about—that is not an argument about theology and. It is saying, let's, to the extent—to the extent that we have any control over the tenor and the subject matter, let's move it off of the theological.

And I would still stand by that. I think it is quite a good idea.

On the tsunami relief, the question is what is our strategic goal in all of this, and that goes to what I was saying about the State "R" and the telling America's story. We have an interest out there in seeing to it that certain ideologies are weakened. What people think about the United States is not always the primary—and I would say that is usually not the primary factor that is going to weaken or strengthen those ideologies.

So, yes, we do want people to have a good view of the United States, and we want to carry out actions that they find completely compatible with their own interests. But we have—there are groups out there that we want to strengthen, there are groups that

we want to weaken, and we need an information system, we need an influence system that can target those enemies and create information flows that weaken them, and that doesn't necessarily have to do—those information flows don't necessarily have anything to do with the United States and its actions.

Mr. COOPER. Well, the most effective information flow might be medicine or a new American President whose middle name is Hussein or avenues like that that kind of diffuse the controversy. Is there a more failed position in all the Federal Government than the "R" Bureau, if we look at all the mismanagement and ineptitude?

Dr. DORAN. No, I don't think the "R" Bureau is a failed bureau. I think the problem isn't—the problem is one of leadership.

Mr. COOPER. There been about 12 leaders in recent years. Even I can remember Charlotte Beers.

Dr. DORAN. No. The "R" Bureau has had, I think it is four in the last eight. But if you look at it—I don't have the numbers in front of me, but if you look at it about half the time there has been no leadership there.

So the position has been, the under secretary's position has been empty quite a lot. When I say leadership, it really has to come from the top.

There has to—you have to—the White House has to decide that it wants to create the all of government team, and then it has to put somebody in charge of creating the team and demand results. We haven't had that. We haven't had that yet.

There are huge—all of the communities that are—even the communities within the Department of Defense that are tasked with influence and information were carrying out a radically different kind of role before 9/11. So we have suddenly taken what are basically tactical communities or communities that were directed toward mission X and we suddenly said, aha, you have this strategic communications mission. But we haven't stepped back and said how do we need to revamp all of this in order to pull it together for all of that mission.

Mr. SMITH. I am going to pause on that, and we will revisit that issue.

Mr. IBRAHIM. May I also briefly respond to the "words matter"?

Mr. SMITH. Very quickly, go ahead.

Mr. IBRAHIM. About this whole "words matter" memo, the points that I would like to stress, first of all, is, like I said, I don't think the kinds of words we use are going to either estrange Muslims or win them over, but I do think they need to be used carefully. And this goes back to what I am saying about learning and getting a better doctrinal education of what these words mean, and then using them properly.

So, for example, I remember in that memo words like "Sharia" were not supposed to be mentioned, words like "caliphate" were not supposed to be mentioned, even words like "ummah." Now, as long as they are being mentioned in a context that is applicable and legitimate, I don't see why a Muslim would be so estranged by that.

On the other hand, like I am saying, whatever words we use I don't think are going to make a dramatic difference there, but I do think they make a dramatic difference here in the U.S., because if

we do away with all these words which carry so much meaning and then instead just supplant generic words, then the people who talk who need to know what is going on won't have the necessary knowledge because it is a generic concept.

Mr. SMITH. I think we are talking about two slightly different things, which I will explore in a minute. But I want to get to Mr. Thornberry.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Doran, I have always believed the first step is to really understand not only the enemy, but the culture, the religion, that we are dealing with. You have been in at least three different positions. How would you rate today our government's understanding of what we are facing of the religious background that has been discussed here, as well as the culture, the tribes, and so forth, when you deal with various countries?

Dr. DORAN. I think that the understanding has increased exponentially.

Mr. THORNBERRY. I know it is better, but on a scale of one to ten, where are we?

Dr. DORAN. You see, you're asking me to have perfect knowledge. I would say 7.5. If you look at the quality of analyses about the Fatah, I watched as it got better and better and better, so that we understood down to the tribal level the motivations of individuals, motivations of the tribes.

The intersection, one of the important things—and this is another area where I disagree a little bit with Mr. Ibrahim. The problem we have got is, we have people who are motivated by the ideology, who believe the theology as understood by al Qa'ida; and then we have other groups that ally with them for reasons of their own self-interest, who calculate for whatever reason that they benefit from the violence of these guys. You saw this in Iraq.

So our job is to separate out, to drive a wedge between the global jihadis and the others who are aligning with them for whatever reason. But more and more I see that we understand that better.

Mr. THORNBERRY. But you have to have that deeper understanding in order to have effective strategic communications, in order to drive that wedge and separate them off.

In your comments at the beginning you made a comment about having the "R" Bureau kind of the leader where the government comes together. One of the concerns I have had is that too often strategic communications is an overlay to what we are doing rather than a part of the strategy from the beginning, an integrated part of the strategy, so that rather than spin some sort of kinetic operation to make it look as good as it could, maybe you shouldn't do it at all because of the implications of it.

Can an "R" Bureau or anything else integrate strategic communication into the planning of what we do, not just try to spin it after it is already done?

Dr. DORAN. That is a huge problem. It is a huge problem in terms of military operations, it is a huge problem in terms of policy.

The key isn't "R" Bureau; the key is a strategic proponent for all of this. The under secretary of "R" that I am talking about would be a much different "R". You would shift the balance between the

regional bureaus and the "R" Bureau, and you would have an empowered under secretary with access to the President. So you would have an individual there at all of the key meetings who would be reminding everybody that they need to think about the effect of our actions on perceptions out there first. That is the only way I can think about doing it.

I always come back to the organizational piece and to the creation of a powerful proponent in the government who can make all of these arguments. Absent that, I don't know how we do it.

Mr. THORNBERRY. When Secretary Gates was before the full committee a week or two ago, I asked him about an incident, just as an example, where there was a firefight in Iraq. Before our guys got back to the base they had rearranged the bodies to make it look like our soldiers had shot Muslims as they were praying. This was on the Internet, and we didn't respond for a week.

So part of what you are talking about, isn't it speed of making decisions? It can't come under Washington and be thrashed out at any level; you have got to be fast, and you have got to have tactical control over that or else a tactical operation becomes a strategic issue. Is that not part of what we are dealing with?

Dr. DORAN. Yes, absolutely. And let me give you some grist for your mill.

We have an enormous amount of combat camera footage that can show what we are doing, but it is very hard to get all of that declassified. Once things go into intel channels, they get locked away. And because we don't have a powerful proponent saying from the beginning—look, the enemy's narrative, it is pretty easy to see, it is you are killing babies, you are killing innocents, that is their narrative, it is as simple as that.

So we know from the outset, no matter what we do, that is what is going to be claimed against the U.S. So we have to say, what is the counter story that we are telling?

Right now, the counter story we are telling is, Oh, we did that by accident, or, We don't know; we'll get back to you in two weeks. That doesn't work. But—knowing the counter story is one thing, but then setting up the processes to make sure that we have the information going out immediately that supports our narrative is what is lacking.

Mr. SMITH. I want to follow up on that, because I am totally with you and Mr. Thornberry on the need for the strategic approach and how we organize it and coordinate it and the fact that that is, I think, really what we have been lacking in the last six or seven years in a comprehensive approach to defeating these violent ideologies.

And it is not a war on terrorism—I think it is important we understand that—it is a war of the ideology that Mr. Ibrahim has described, and how are we comprehensively trying to counteract that down to the tactical level, like the example that Mac mentioned, up to the strategic level of what our message should be and we don't have any sort of comprehensive strategy. And I am with you on that.

Where I part ways and what I want to explore is with the notion that the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy should be the person to lead this effort. Lots of arguments here. The first one is that

is what we have been trying for the last six years or so, and it is been a complete failure in terms of any sort of broad strategic planning.

Second, under secretaries do not, almost by definition, have access to the President. They just don't, because their most direct boss wouldn't want that to happen. So if we imagine that we are going to create an under secretary position that is going to have access to the President, then I think that is just a very faulty premise from the start.

All of which is a long way around to my thinking that the NSC is where this has to be, because the National Security Adviser does have access to the President. Most specifically, also within the current NSC there is a gentleman on the NSC staff who has access to the President, had access to him for two years, who has been charged in this general area amongst others; and that the only way to get sort of the comprehensive approach is to put that responsibility there. Because even if we fix the problem that you mentioned within Public Diplomacy, which is the fact that they went regional—even if you do that, all that does is that unifies State.

The comprehensive strategy that we are talking about requires many different agencies to do that. I mean, we could tick through all of them. And State is just not going to have that type of influence over it.

With that, I apologize, I got riled up by Mr. Thornberry's question there, and I wanted to explore that.

I will let you respond, and then I have got to go to Mr. Langevin.

Dr. DORAN. Couple of points: First of all, NSC has to be deeply engaged, there is no doubt about that. My point is, there has to be a strategic operational center, somebody who is following day to day what is going on on the ground, moving resources from here to there and so on.

Mr. SMITH. Across agency lines.

Dr. DORAN. Yes. It doesn't necessarily—now, because of the Economy Act, you can't move resources across, but you can——

Mr. SMITH. You can talk to them.

Dr. DORAN. You can talk to them and you can say, Hey, you are doing X, I am doing Y, and our friends over here are doing Z. According to your authorities, couldn't you actually do Y?

And they can say, Yes, we can do that.

And then that frees me up to take the money from Y and put it somewhere else.

Now, we got to that stage under Jim Glassman. That is the first time that ever happened, where we all sat in a room and said, Here is the goal we want to achieve in region X, here is what we are doing; and we started horse trading like that. That is the first time it ever happened. That kind of thing has to go on.

Ultimately, as I said in the beginning, to me, all roads lead to the State Department because they have the lead for foreign policy, they are out there putting together our strategy in every other realm. And so they have got to be deeply involved from the——

Mr. SMITH. They have to be deeply involved. And I will exercise my prerogative to take the last word, though I will revisit this in a second to say that all roads do not lead to the State Department

in this issue because there is a huge military component to it, there is a huge intelligence component to it.

So the roads do lead in slightly different directions. And I will let you stew on that for a second and you can come back at me in five minutes.

Mr. Langevin.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This has certainly been a fascinating discussion.

I really do thank you for your testimony, to both our gentlemen here today.

Let me ask you this: In terms of how we do communicate, and not wanting to enflame the situation making it any worse—I mean, we all speak to various groups, and when we speak about this issue, how do we speak about it in such a way that we refer to the terrorists, who and what they are, but not, you know, communicate in such a way that we offend those people in the Muslim world with whom we need to align, people that do want peace and that we need to work with against those people who want to cause death and violence?

Let me stop there, and then I will go to my other questions.

Mr. IBRAHIM. So how do we speak? You mean to the more moderate elements without alienating, how do we utilize words?

Mr. LANGEVIN. Right. How do we let them know that we have no conflict or issue with Islam, but we do have a problem with violent terrorists?

Mr. IBRAHIM. Well, I think you just more or less—the way you put it. You can say, we, per se, have no conflict or issues with Islam, but we have these terrorists who go around quoting from your core texts and who reveal, usually, a greater appreciation—a lot of these terrorists are usually top graduates from theological schools. And so the question would be, we are not out to have a crusade or anything against you, but your guys are saying that this is what your religion teaches.

And that is why I am saying to have a real debate without—I will give you an example of where debates normally end. Someone will say, well, the Koran has verse X, Y and Z which says, Go and fight infidels. And then the person, whoever it is who would respond, will say, yes, but also the Koran says, Live in peace, and this and that, and so it is open to interpretation.

But what most people don't know is that, again going back to the juridical roots of Sharia law, a system was created, which is called abrogation, which means basically any time in the Koran there is a statement that contradicts the other—and there are many—for example, live in peace with your neighbors, go and subjugate them—the rule of thumb is always, you go with what was revealed to Mohammed later.

And so—when you look at the Koran, the vast majority of the most violent verses were the ones revealed to him later, and so, according to Islamic theologians, they have abrogated the more peaceful ones.

So my point is, not to sit there and say, Well, you have violent verses, and they say, Well, we have peaceful ones. And then we say, Oh, okay, it is open to interpretation. Take it to a further

scholarly level and introduce this concept and kind of tell them this is where you are going.

So all I am saying is to actually bring it out into the open without being offensive, and just, from an inquisitive point of view, saying, We have been studying your own scriptures, your own top authorities, and this is what they are telling us. And then when you say, a moderate response, this is also how they come back—and also from a doctrinal point of view—so how are we supposed to understand?

Now I think that would go a long way, if for no other reason than showing Muslims that, Hey, our own religion does have these issues, and maybe we need to start addressing them, as opposed to ignoring them and going out of our way to tell them, oh, it is a matter of misinterpretation; and then no one wants to address it.

Mr. LANGEVIN. I want to go to Mr. Doran in just a minute. But getting back to Mr. Shuster's question, where is the hope and where do you see this going? What is the ultimate ending? Because it is pretty depressing.

Mr. IBRAHIM. It is depressing.

Mr. LANGEVIN. It would be great if in small groups we could sit down with 1.5 billion people, the billions of people in the world on both sides and try to work this out, but it ain't gonna happen.

So what is the end game?

Mr. IBRAHIM. It is depressing. It is almost—and I am not at all trying to liken Islam to, you know, Nazism or anything like that, but if I were to come and say Nazism, Hitler believe X, Y and Z, so what is the hope? How do you deal with that? Sometimes there really isn't.

But I do believe there is hope, which is not going to be mass war or anything like that, and the hope lies in exposing the truth and making the truth available for all parties to address and to talk about without political correctness or any other kind of intellectual restraints, but just objectively address these issues and bring them out in the forefront. And that has not happened; that is the whole thing.

So you have a group, the radicals, who believe this, who are gaining recruits because they make very strong arguments based again on doctrine. Then you have, on the other side, the West, or the Americans, who are going out of their way to ignore that and say, That is not part of it. So I am saying to actually say, Okay, this is part of it.

This is your argument. Now we want to ask moderate Muslims to actually explain to us all of this and have them go to a moderate Muslim and say, Your religion unequivocally demonstrates, according to all these sources and all these scholars, that when you can, you should go on the offensive. What are we going to do about that? How do you propose—and when they say, Oh, no, it is a matter of interpretation.

It can't end there because, like I said, there are a lot of different means and methods of jurisprudence which have already addressed these things, and so it is not open to interpretation; and then that has to be brought up.

And then, when the ball is in their court, I think a lot of Muslims will, a, see, you know, these people have a point; we need to actually start addressing this. And I think that would actually result in a good thing, not necessarily some kind of Armageddon war. But as long as no one is addressing the fact and we are ignoring it, I think it just gets worse and it gets bigger.

And I understand that is not exactly the most hopeful response.

Mr. SMITH. And I want to touch a little bit more on that in a second, but I want to give Mr. Doran a chance to talk a little bit more about who should be in charge of the strategy and how we do the interagency piece and all the different elements, put together all of our resources so that they are coordinated.

Dr. DORAN. With regard to the things that you left me to stew about, the NSC is often a recipe for gridlock, and I think that is important to see. When you elevate things up to that level, they become intertwined with the high political debates.

I saw very well, when I was at the NSC, anything to do with Iran, the most mundane things to do with Iran, would become proxies for policy arguments. And I think that we have seen it in the Pentagon, as well, when we grapple with the whole question of strategic communication within the Pentagon.

There has been a very clear pattern in the Pentagon since 2003 to push the communications authorities down out into the field because there was a recognition that these debates about what we should be messaging, they interact with policy debates in a way that is very unhealthy; and they also interact with turf issues in Washington that is very unhealthy. You get down to the country team level, and you—I was just out in Afghanistan recently. And the interaction between Department of Defense (DOD) Public Affairs, DOD Information Operations, and the State Department Public Diplomacy people on the ground in Afghanistan is absolutely exemplary. And you look at that and you think, what kind of organization do we need back in Washington that can support those kinds of efforts that are going on out the field, learn from them, have two-way communications (coms) with them, and expand them when they are successful?

Up at the NSC, it is all about high policy, so it is kind of counterintuitive. The minute you put something in the White House, you think you are going to get a quick turn on it. Well, often it sits there for six, eight months and goes absolutely nowhere.

So we have got to find a way to push the authorities out into the field, but have two-way coms with Washington. That is why I go back to strategic operational.

Mr. SMITH. Well, I would agree with that. And I think ultimately the model—and from all the people that I have talked to, you know, one of the centerpieces of all of this is going to be the country team, and it is going to be the State Department and it is going to be the ambassador in the various different places where we are engaged in this. And I think that is absolutely true.

We need to do a better job of empowering them though. You are right, we have taken steps in that direction. But on the sort of big picture meta-approach to what we are doing, all of the players on the national level are going to feed into that—what the Secretary

of Defense says, what the Secretary of State says, what the NSC says, the President, the Vice President.

There has got to be sort of a strategic top line, Okay, here is what this country team is doing in Nigeria and here is what they are doing in Pakistan and the Philippines; and we want them to do this. Someone has got to sort of develop that and send it out on that level and resource it.

Dr. DORAN. Right. Those top-line messages, that is absolutely the NSC's business, and they absolutely need to be focused on that and engaged with the operational elements. But putting the lead for the operational bid in the NSC, I think, is where it starts to go wrong. You then get guys at the very top level who——

Mr. SMITH. I get what you are saying. I don't want to interrupt you, but I think you are going to repeat what you said earlier. And I understand that, if they get caught up in those sorts of debates.

What I am most concerned about is the interagency approach, to basically make sure that all of the people in this very complicated flow chart are understood by somebody.

I mean, the way we are doing this is like we are playing a football game and the coach has half the players out in the field that aren't getting any message from him; and they are doing stuff, they may be talented, they may be important, but they are not part of the overall plan.

Now, obviously this is more complicated, even than football, because you have more than 11 people on the field at the time—it is in the dozens, if not the hundreds, when you think about all the different agencies and all the different resources. But somebody in this whole operation, somebody really smart and with good experience, has to understand that entire playing field, has to have in their mind, Okay, we have got this problem, and you know what? Gosh, we need the national geospatial folks involved on this piece—I am going obscure there, but that is what I mean—because right now we are missing pieces of that.

Or also, some of those pieces are off running their own play, running their own program, and there is nobody really to control them.

And if it can be the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy, I guess that is okay. It is hard. And I have seen it work before where somebody within one branch was able to do the interagency piece with, you know, Presidential authority, and pull folks together.

It has worked, so I guess it is conceivable. I could be persuaded of that. But whoever it is, that division we have to have; it can't just be country team by country team or State Department piece or this piece. It is got to be someone who says, Here is everything that we have at our disposal to win this battle, and we all, to some degree, have got to keep them on the same page. That is what we are trying to accomplish.

Dr. DORAN. It is incredibly difficult.

You know, we also need to develop mechanisms for cross-agency cooperation—beyond just the leadership, mechanisms that are new. So we need leadership from the top to say, Hey, we are entering into a whole new government era.

Mr. SMITH. Goldwater-Nichols.

Dr. DORAN. Yes. We need the equivalent of that. It doesn't necessarily have to be new legislation, but there has to be a really strong demand for getting this from the top.

Mr. SMITH. Sure. I think it shouldn't be new legislation. I think it should be exactly what you just said.

I have a couple more things for Mr. Ibrahim, but I want to turn it over to Mr. Thornberry.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Following on that, have you looked, Mr. Doran, at the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) as a possible example? You know, one of the commissions recommended that the NCTC have operational planning authority. It didn't end up with that, but is that maybe another model to at least consider?

Dr. DORAN. Yes. Well, we developed, under Glassman, a hybrid where one of the things that he did—as I said, he distinguished—his predecessors saw the job as a public relations (PR) job, he saw it as a national security position. And one of the things that he did is, he worked closely with the NCTC.

The problem with the NCTC is that it is working on counterterrorism. And the problem—which is fine as long as we are on a hard terrorist messaging issue, but a lot of the issues that we need to confront are where the policies of peer competitors, strategic rivals—Iran.

Mr. THORNBERRY. The NCTC for strategic communication——

Dr. DORAN. Yes. I think we are all in agreement of what is missing.

There are lots of problems with the "R" model that I laid out. The reason I went for the "R" model is for two basic reasons: Number one, State Department has got to be a major player; we have got to bring them on board. And number two, I just don't see creating a new agency at this point.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Let me ask you one other thing—and we may have talked about this before.

Do you see a role for private sector input into whatever is created? And I harken back to a Defense Science Board study several years ago that said there is lots of expertise out there in the country that can be brought to bear and taken advantage of, but there is no way for them to plug in at this point.

Dr. DORAN. That is another area where I am in 100 percent agreement with you. The private sector has an enormous amount to offer on many different levels. But at the risk of really sounding like a broken record, without the strategic center to plug in, we can't tap into it appropriately. So I don't think it is an alternative. It is another arm that we need to be using.

In my written statement I made reference to a book by Kenneth Osgood about—Total Cold War about the Eisenhower era. And it turns out that Eisenhower understood all of this, set up the government to deliver it, including outreach to the private sector.

I don't think we need to go back exactly to the Eisenhower model for a lot of reasons, but it is great to hold up and say, Hey, we did this once; we can do it again.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Finally, Mr. Ibrahim, how much of this is a struggle within Islam that we have no influence over, no influence to sway one way or another? And then how much room is there for us to have some positive influence if we do everything perfectly?

Mr. IBRAHIM. Right. I think there is a legitimate struggle within Islam over these interpretations. I have, of course, indicated the difficulties that reformers will encounter.

Insofar as how we can help? Very little, or at least not visibly, because the moment you have a non-Muslim, specifically an American, trying to reinterpret Islam for Muslims or even visibly supporting moderate Muslims, they are immediately just completely discounted as just being puppets.

So there is, I think, a debate. If you want to do it in the literal sense, the literalists kind of have an advantage because it is a traditional thing, and they have the law on their side. But if we can help, perhaps if it can be done clandestinely or behind the scenes by supporting this sort of thing, but once the U.S. or the West is visible, they lose credibility.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Jim.

I have a couple more questions, but I want to give Mr. Langevin another shot. I know you had some follow-up that I think we ran out of time on.

Mr. LANGEVIN. I did. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Joe Nye, the former Dean of the Kennedy School of Government and former Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security, has written extensively about the need to supplement our military might with soft-power assets, if you will, efforts to win the world's hearts and minds with our values and culture, successfully exercising the type of power that requires that we pursue many fronts, including international diplomacy, democracy building, culture exchanges, economic development, education initiatives, communication about our values and our ideals. And while we won't be able to influence that hard-core center, like the bin Ladens of the world, we may be able to reach out to those gray circles that are outside of that.

So, Mr. Ibrahim, do you believe that it is possible to reach out to those gray areas and, with soft-power assets, have an influence in at least dissuading people from going toward that hard-core center?

Mr. IBRAHIM. I do believe that. I think one of the conceptual differences that we have when we talk is that I am often looking at the long term, and I think in the long term it is always going to be a problem.

In the short term, what you say makes sense, and that can be done by reaching out and strengthening and all that. But, see, I always try to think as a Muslim. I have come from the Middle East and I know the mindset. And when you think as a Muslim, that means a different paradigm completely from what we are accustomed to doing or thinking about the world view.

And so, when you are left with—and again, I stress, by "Muslim," I don't mean one billion people; I mean the people who literally, by the word "Muslim," have submitted themselves to this codified world view.

And so, to me, I just don't understand how, if you believe God told you X, Y and Z—this is not open to interpretation, this is how it has been done for 1,400 years—how a person can get beyond that. Now, usually most people get beyond that by actually deflect-

ing out of Muslim and becoming moderates, which is really secular Muslims, which—that obviously helps, too.

So in the long term, I don't know how strategic these are. In the short term, they can help and they can make differences, but as long as that codified world view exists, it is always going to come back. And I think one of the problems is, people overlook history, and they often just start looking at the Islamic world and its interaction with the West, Europe and America, from the last 200 years. And they just see it always as the West on the offensive with colonialism and with all these sorts of things, but they don't appreciate the earlier history.

And the fact is that when Islam was strong, from the beginning it did implement these doctrines, so it was always there until, if you look at it from the seventh century until the Ottoman Empire, which annexed a big chunk of Eastern Europe by the jihads—and that is how it was explained; again, in Ottoman documents, that is the way it was, that is the norm until they got beaten.

So I think an intellectual or conceptual failure is people—and they often tell me, if what you are saying is true, how come in the last 200–300 years we haven't seen Muslims en masse invading and waging jihad. And the fact is, in the last 200–300 years, there has been a great disparity between what the Muslim world can do vis-à-vis the West. And so just because they have not been implementing these doctrines does not mean that they have annulled them and overlooked them; it can't be done anyway.

But that is the problem. People think, Well, if anyone has been the aggressor in the last 300 years, it is the West. And so they are not taking the historical context and the capability factor into play.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you.

Mr. Doran, in your testimony you conclude that interagency coordination is really a necessary step in combating extremist ideologies. One of the things that I have called for—and Mr. Thornberry and I have cosponsored legislation calling for a quadrennial national security, very similar to the Defense Department's Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), but it would require that cross-agency cooperation in developing the strategy as we go forward to better inform the national security strategy.

Do you think something like that would work, should work; and how do we best implement it?

Dr. DORAN. Demand signal coming from Congress to the agencies to pull together and think about these problems in a common fashion is always a good thing.

But in terms of the thing that is most important, I think here in the discussion we are all in agreement that institutionally there is something missing. It is all of the connective tissue that can pull all of these different teams together; and that is where I would put the emphasis, is demanding from the various agencies that they set up the different nodes that will pull it all together, and that the leadership will demand of the people who are in charge of this that they do so.

Mr. SMITH. If I could pick up on the conversation, Mr. Ibrahim, about how we deal with the doctrinal issues—and I think you very correctly identified the problem, and I think the problem does exist to some degree in other religions. In the Jewish religion, while it

is more specific, that is certainly one of the problems they are having in Israel; you know, the strict interpretation is, here is the land that we are supposed to have. And there is some percentage of the Jewish population that adheres to that. Most of them do not. But that, too, creates a problem; it is in the Bible, it is what we have to do.

Of course, where the Bible is concerned, there are a whole lot of things to adhere to in there, the whole shellfish—on down the line, a whole bunch of rules that don't seem to have much modern applicability.

And then, of course, within the Catholic religion, well, they have no end of rules. And adjustments have been made and we have gone through those battles in the U.S., Well, you are not a good Catholic if you don't follow all the rules. And there are a lot of Catholics who have said, Yeah, but a lot of those rules were kind of made by man. So there was a doctrinal defense there.

And that is sort of, as you describe, and I think accurately, where the Muslim world is at.

There has to be an interpretation of their religion that gets around some of their doctrinal challenges. And I think you are right in confronting that and having, you know, within the Muslim world, a conversation that comes up with that.

I want to explore one piece of that, and then I have two other areas. So let's walk down that road for a moment.

If you are a Muslim, it seems to me that there isn't any other way to do that other than to sort of—I am a Christian, and my own interpretation of the religion is that God wants us to think in advance, that there was no one time at any point in human history when it was all written down, and all we have to do is memorize it like a calculus test and then we are good to go. That is completely antithetical to human experience to me, that what God wants us to do is think and reason and move forward and understand the broader world and its context, not go back to some math problem. And as you can tell from my tone, I feel very strongly about that.

Whatever your religion, it is hard for me to imagine going in the other direction. It just doesn't make sense based on human experience.

But be that as it may, there is another way to go, and that is, Look, it is black and white; you know, we have got big problems in the world, and the only reason we have problems in the world is because we didn't adhere to that black and white. And that comes into problems certainly within the Jewish religion. In the Christian religion, as well, you will find many people who say that. And of course they have a fairly wide-ranging difference of exactly what it is that we are supposed to be doing exactly, what laws we are supposed to be following.

But as you describe, within the Muslim religion the Koran is relatively straightforward and relatively interpretive. So if you go down that road, if you put yourself in the Muslim shoes for a moment, just for the purpose of this room—accepting your argument that we should never do that publicly—what do you do?

How do you make an argument that, you know, well, this is the moderate approach, and with the key cornerstone of that being

other people can have different faiths and we can live with them and it is all good, we don't have to be focused on everybody converting to our way of thought? How would they sort of confront that doctrinal problem in the straightforward, honest, up-front way that you have described?

Mr. IBRAHIM. Well, I have seen moderate Muslims posit that approach that you just mentioned; and the radical response is always the same, which is——

Mr. SMITH. I know what the radical response would be, you have been clear on that.

What I am searching for is, how you then counter that radical response and when?

Mr. IBRAHIM. Well, that is the difficult part——

Mr. SMITH. That is why I am asking.

Mr. IBRAHIM [continuing]. Because ultimately we are talking about a religion, we are talking about truths. This is how it is understood; and we have to always remember, whatever we may think Islam is, to Muslims this is the internal truth.

And so I am a Muslim, and I have, like you were saying, X, Y and Z, black and white, codified, been practiced that way always. And then I get someone who says, Well, we need to reform this because it is the 21st century; we want to get along with people. And then they go and just give you a big list of how the Prophet Mohammed would not do that, how Prophet Mohammed subjugated people out.

And so that is the problem, this is the fundamental problem. I know you want to see how to get over that, and that is why people haven't been able to get over that at this point.

And then again you have Sufis——

Mr. SMITH. Well, that is the other thing. I mean, the other thing about this that I think—if I may help answer my own question—one of the ways to get around that is, it is not really as doctrinally black as white as you described it.

For instance, at one point when you mentioned that, well, from the 7th century to the 16th they adhered to these rules, and it was all good. No, they didn't; they adhered to some of them. They were drinking; they weren't doing for the poor what they were supposed to be doing.

If you go back and read that history, there is simply no way that from the 7th century to the 16th century they came within a country mile of adhering to everything that was in the Koran.

Mr. IBRAHIM. But that was the rule. That is sort of like us saying we have a Constitution, but we break it.

Mr. SMITH. Understood.

But understand that there is a critical point that I am making there, because a critical part of the argument that carries the day for the radicals in the Muslim world is, when we were doing it right, we were ruling the world.

Mr. IBRAHIM. Exactly.

Mr. SMITH. But we abandoned it. But that is crap.

Mr. IBRAHIM. From your perspective.

Mr. SMITH. No, no, no, no, no. We are off perspective now.

It is—I will use a different word as I describe this, but it is factually, incontrovertibly untrue. In the same way that your doctrinal

argument about what the Koran says is absolutely, factually true, it is untrue to say that from the 7th to the 16th century they adhered to the Koran. They did not. And you don't have to be very smart to prove that. It is just a matter of historical fact.

Mr. IBRAHIM. I was specifically discussing the obligation of jihad, and that is why Islam was able to spread from the Arabian Peninsula to Spain and India in about a century.

Mr. SMITH. Understood.

But you can't cherry-pick. That is the whole point. That is what you are saying is the strongest argument that bin Laden and those guys had is, you can't cherry-pick, and you just did.

Mr. IBRAHIM. Cherry-pick in what sense?

Mr. SMITH. Well, you said we followed jihad, but we didn't follow all the other stuff in the Koran.

Mr. IBRAHIM. Right.

Mr. SMITH. It is a package deal, as bin Laden describes it. So I think we can make that argument and say that, no, it was not followed and it did not lead to the successes as they describe.

Mr. IBRAHIM. Fair enough.

But to them there is this Golden Age myth, which is basically the era of Mohammed and how we lived, which—we have a lot of documents; that is what we need to follow.

Mr. SMITH. And all I am saying is we can factually contradict that myth.

Mr. IBRAHIM. And that would be a good strategy. If people actually actively and in a scholarly way went to prove that that was wrong, I believe that would be a good strategic point to try to do that. But, then again, coming from Westerners——

Mr. SMITH. Oh, I am not saying that should come from us. Absolutely, it shouldn't come from us.

Mr. IBRAHIM. Okay. Because if it does, it is just conspiracy and——

Mr. SMITH. Within the Muslim world, we have to be aware of this. Per your own argument, we have to be aware of what the best doctrinal argument is to go. Because the other thing that is possible is that if the doctrine just sort of ties us up in knots, then you might conceivably be better off not confronting these hard truths, and relying on the argument that there are things in the Koran that talk about peace and, therefore, that is the direction we need to go in.

Mr. IBRAHIM. But like I said, to them—see, this is the problem. To non-Muslims, they sort of approach the Koran and Islamic scriptures in general almost the way they do to the Bible by saying, Well, hey, there are a lot of interpretations.

In Islam, it is not a metaphysical religion, it is very much grounded in the here and now and how you live with each other. And that was already explained and defined.

Mr. SMITH. Ignorance can occasionally cut in your favor from a broad policy standpoint, and I am suggesting that it is possible that we can use—the analogy that occurs to me is the situation with Taiwan. Is Taiwan part of mainland China or isn't it? Okay, we just sort of keep it very fuzzy. It is all good. As long as we don't sit down and have that very hard-core, confrontational discussion—which seems to be where we are going now—then it is all fine. As

long as we can maintain the myth, yeah, we are one China. At some point in the future we will get there.

Mr. IBRAHIM. We are maintaining the myth among ourselves, but they are not. They already know better.

Mr. SMITH. Sure. In my example, they are maintaining the myth within Taiwan and China, and it is working for them.

And I am just asking—I could be totally wrong about this, but if you are saying that most Muslims don't know these sort of doctrinal specifics, then there is certainly a pretty big myth out there as well.

They don't know, for instance, that the later interpretations are more important than the earlier. Rather than going up to them and saying, Hey, did you realize this? You may be creating a bigger problem for yourself.

Mr. IBRAHIM. But that is what the radicals are doing, and that is what I am saying. They are doing that, and they are showing it and they are getting recruits. And that is part of the Wahhabi movement with the Saudis, who are just spreading all their literature everywhere, which states all these things.

And so, to me, it might not be very productive to have them mobilizing themselves with this, whereas we, kind of head in the sand, say, No, that is not what it is. And we have been doing that.

Mr. SMITH. Right. But you understand the basic rock and a hard place here.

Mr. IBRAHIM. Right, I understand that.

Mr. SMITH. That you can't rely on the ignorance argument that I just described; or, you know, it is hard to rely on the factual argument.

The one question I do have from all of this is—admitting that we shouldn't talk about this; it is not something we can resolve—we still have to have a big-picture message; we still have to say what it is that we are fighting and how we are confronting it.

Mr. IBRAHIM. Right. I totally agree.

Mr. SMITH. And in that regard, I think that the memo you mentioned—that has been talked about much—is spot on because if we get into it, I don't see a path in the maze that doesn't simply create more trouble.

And I will draw one distinction. You are saying that the memo said, Don't even talk about Sharia. I actually don't think that is what it said. You can talk about Sharia, you can talk about the stuff; don't link it to what we are fighting. Don't use it to describe what we are fighting. Don't say that they are Islamic terrorists or jihadists. Don't describe our enemy in those Islamic terms; not don't ever say Sharia, just don't use it as a way to describe what we are fighting.

And within that narrow ban, based on sort of the box you have constructed for us, it seems to me that that is the best of a series of difficult choices.

Mr. IBRAHIM. Except in that it misleads Americans by not understanding what it is. Until you find the body of knowledge or the body of doctrine that is fueling your enemies, and you just kind of dismiss it and say they are just bad guys, I don't think you will be able to properly address it.

And that is what I was saying earlier about education. Until we actually understand this body of knowledge and then use that as a base to try to implement strategies or to come up with it, I think that—and the strategy will not necessarily be one of violence, I don't think. I just think you are handicapped when you don't bring in what they say, what they believe, what they circulate amongst each other.

Mr. SMITH. One final argument on that—I may turn out to be wrong about that, there may be another argument. But my argument would be that you—first of all, I am not saying that our policymakers shouldn't be aware of this. They absolutely should. The question is whether or not they should use it as part of their argument, as part of their approach. And as you have described it, as a number of my colleagues have said in their questions, if, in fact, we take this approach; if, in fact, we send this mainly out to the broad, you know, American public—accepting for the moment that this an open public hearing—but if we send that message out, you wind up up against a brick wall basically.

I think you, in a certain sense, have contradicted your core argument in the rather brilliant way that you have described it. If, in fact, we lay this out and if this is the argument, then you come up with a religion that basically we have no choice but to fight, because they will fight us because we lose the doctrinal argument.

Mr. IBRAHIM. No, no. What I am recommending is being blunt and up front about it, but not saying this is what you teach in a question; saying, look, We have a concern because theologians and doctrinal people, both Christians and Jews and Muslims, are seeing this thing in your text. Now, we are not saying that is what it is, but we want a clear and straightforward answer. In other words——

Mr. SMITH. Forgive me, but you are saying that is what it is.

Mr. IBRAHIM. No. We are saying this is what your guys have said, al Qa'ida.

Mr. SMITH. Do you think they are wrong? Al Qa'ida. This is what they are saying, this is how they——

Mr. IBRAHIM. Do I think their interpretation is wrong?

Mr. SMITH. Yes.

Mr. IBRAHIM. In certain respects—I will give you an example.

One of the things that everyone will tell you, killing women and children is anti-Islamic. I have heard that from growing up until now, and everyone will tell you that. Now, again, this overlooks how Islamic jurisprudence articulates who and who not to kill.

Mr. SMITH. So you think they are right?

That is my point. I mean, if you think they are right, then that is not something we should be broadcasting.

Mr. IBRAHIM. No, no. I am not saying I think they are right. I think they have a doctrinal base, that is all. And that is what I am saying; it would be better to get other Muslims or whoever to try to counter it. But, see, as long as it is buried, no one is going to be able to address it.

I believe there may be a good way to address it, and—in a doctrinal way, and actually combat it and maybe even supplant it. But if we don't even acknowledge it, who is going to be able to start taking it seriously to try to formulate a counter-response? If it is

just ignored, and amongst the Muslim world it is getting recruits and we totally ignore it, how can anyone start actually coming up with a counter-interpretation which really may be valid and may end up——

Mr. SMITH. Just to be clear, you don't have one at the moment?

Mr. IBRAHIM. I am not Muslim, and I don't consider myself a theologian; I am a student of Islamic law. But I have talked to some who have come up with very clever interpretations. But you are always going to have a problem with the core, who are known as the Salafis. And these are the people who just: All we want to do is the way Mohammed lived his life in the first three generations of Muslims, that is all there is to it.

Now, there is no way that you are going to get beyond those people. And as I was saying, the problem is, even if 99 percent of the Muslim world doesn't agree with these doctrines, the nature of the war now is that a handful of people can do what 9/11 was, and so that is what is going to happen. So even if the majority of the Muslim world doesn't agree, as long as you have a few people who are radical and no one is able to really study their body of doctrine to come up with a better interpretation, a couple of people are enough to create havoc.

Mr. SMITH. And just so I am clear, I am not suggesting in the least bit that we not study it. And I actually, based on my work with people at the NCTC, at NSC and State Department, I think they are very much aware of what you just described.

Mr. IBRAHIM. Good. That is reassuring.

Mr. SMITH. They are figuring out what the best way to counter it is.

Mr. IBRAHIM. And I am not saying that this should be broadcast to the American public. I may have misspoken. And I am not saying we should tell the American public these people want to kill us. I am saying in an internal kind of environment, this needs to be made open and made available and not expressed or censored or just ignored.

Mr. SMITH. And in my experience, this is a discussion at this committee that we have had. Difference in interpretation: What do you do about it? And you have described how difficult that is. Thank you for indulging me on that.

Thank you both very much certainly on both of these subjects. I think this is very critical to what our subcommittee is doing and what our national security strategy is. One, we have got to figure out the best way to confront this ideology; however we describe it, it is clearly an ideology that threatens us. And then also in terms of how we structure it, I think we need to continue to do better about how we strategically implement a counter strategy.

So I thank you very much. It is been very helpful. And we are adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:30 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

FEBRUARY 12, 2009

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

FEBRUARY 12, 2009

Statement of Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee Chairman Adam Smith

Hearing on Strategies for Countering Violent Extremist Ideologies

February 12, 2009

"Today, the Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee will meet to discuss strategies for countering violent extremist ideologies. I want to thank our witnesses for attending and contributing their expertise to the important task of developing strategies for countering violent extremist ideologies. We welcome you and your thoughts.

"It is imperative that we combat the ideological underpinnings of violent extremism and vastly improve our engagement in countering these ideologies, especially on the Internet. The struggle against violent extremists will not simply be won on the battlefield. We must do far more to empower countervailing voices to the ideology that radicalizes individuals and encourages them to join violent extremist groups. Part of our job today, in addition to hearing about how these groups think and work, will be to seek new and better ways to counter them.

"The Internet poses a special challenge in understanding the interaction between extreme Islamist ideology and the radicalization process. It provides an ideal means to share information and link individuals around the globe by their common views – making the tracking of extremist networks more difficult than it has ever been in the past. An effective counter-ideology strategy must not only address the intellectual foundation of the ideology, but also the Internet as a means of disseminating that ideology.

"To do this we must better understand the ideology that fuels the global Islamist movement, such as Al Qaeda and other violent extremist groups, and how that ideology is used to radicalize and recruit new members. That means devoting far greater resources, personnel, and coordination to understanding the myriad of cultural, linguistic, political, economic, and social contexts within which these groups operate and proliferate.

"We must also better understand the strategies that can be most effective against the ideologies of these extremist groups. This subcommittee has focused extensively in the last two years on rethinking and enhancing our strategic communications strategy and operations, and I will be particularly interested to hear the witnesses thoughts on that complex issue.

"Again, I thank the witnesses and look forward to an illuminating conversation on how we can more effectively tackle this critical challenge."

Miller Opening Statement for Hearing on Strategies for Countering Violent Extremist Ideologies

February 12, 2009

"Mr. Chairman, I first wanted to say that I am pleased to be back on the Terrorism subcommittee and look forward to working closely with you as the subcommittee's Ranking Member over the coming Congress. This subcommittee deals with some of the more nuanced issues involving our nation's security and today's hearing is a clear example of one of those complex and difficult areas that requires our involvement and energy.

The virulent and hateful ideology that al-Qaeda espouses came to full light for most Americans in the 9/11 attacks over seven years ago. That tragic day served as a wake-up call to many who failed to appreciate the true threat al-Qaeda and groups like it pose to our nation's security. While the attacks marked a significant turning point in our collective consciousness and in our awareness of violent extremist ideology, the events of 9/11 were merely a culmination of years of ideological indoctrination, operational development and planning, violent acts, and clear messages about al-Qaeda's intentions that we failed to grasp in its entirety. The seeds from which those attacks grew were sown years before and were evident in the World Trade Center bombing in 1993, the embassy attacks in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, and the USS Cole bombing in 2000.

We can look even further back to 1983 and the Marine barracks bombing in Beirut as well as the many acts of terrorism kidnappings, aircraft hijackings and other attacks that spanned decades before September 2001. At the time, many defined such acts as isolated incidents of terrorism that did not necessarily contain ideological underpinnings or linkages. Subsequently, our counter-terrorism strategy focused on incident management instead of a comprehensive approach to address the underlying factors surrounding the act of terrorism and to drain the swamp of potential recruits to violent extremist movements. We failed to grasp the enormity and the complexity of what terrorism signified. In short, we saw the terrorist act as the issue to be dealt with, not the ideology that led to the act.

Our military response in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks was decisive and effective. Al-Qaeda quickly lost the physical safe haven the Taliban had provided it in Afghanistan under the weight of American hard power. But in remarks delivered in November 2007, Secretary Gates recognized that, success will be less a matter of imposing one's will and more a function of shaping behavior of friends, adversaries, and most importantly, the people in between. To a great extent, however, we continue to struggle with the hearts and minds piece of this conflict.

During recent Congresses, this subcommittee has held several hearing and briefings on the subject of strategic communications and public diplomacy. Some witnesses have pointed to the need for a reconstituted U.S. Information Agency, which had been dismantled at the end of the Cold War. Others are confident the current inter-agency process and organization is sufficient but say the resources, in funding and qualified personnel, are lacking. Yet others warn that U.S. efforts will have a limited effect because of the audience's rejection of the message's source; instead they cite the need for moderate Muslim voices to counter the violent extremist dialogue.

The Department of Defense and partner agencies have made many attempts to create an effective messaging process. In April, 2006, the interagency Policy Coordinating Committee was formed with the Department of State as lead agency. A year later, the Counterterrorism Communications Center was established to develop and deliver messages to undermine ideological support for terror and to counter terrorist propaganda. The Department of Defense has the Strategic Communications Integration Group, a body formed to provide a collaborative planning process for strategic communications within the Department. More recently, in recognition of the need for improved cultural and contextual understanding, the Department of Defense has increased its focus on social science research and the deployment of Human Terrain Teams, to help commanders on the ground make sense of the human environment and identify the true centers of gravity in a multidimensional fight centered on the population itself. Secretary Gates' Minerva project is another recent endeavor to better understand the cultural and social aspects of our adversary and the population in between.

The subcommittee, however, continues to be concerned about our government's effectiveness in the counter-ideology fight, especially as regards Department of Defense strategic communications and support to public diplomacy efforts. Accordingly, included in the Fiscal Year 2009 National Defense Authorization Act legislation mentioned in the hearing memo that directs the President to come up with a comprehensive strategy for public diplomacy and strategic communication, the subcommittee directed the Department of Defense to review its internal organization dedicated to public diplomacy and strategic communications. This legislative language represents one small step to improving our nation's capability in this vital area, but much more needs to be done.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to thank you for holding this hearing as it builds on previous subcommittee work in this area. I look forward to the testimony of the witnesses and expect they will provide valuable insights into understanding the ideology of our adversaries, identifying the opportunities to counter their ideology, and recommending organizational and mission changes for the many U.S. agencies involved in winning the hearts and minds battle."

Strategies For Countering Radical Islamist Ideologies:

Overcoming Conceptual Difficulties,

by Raymond Ibrahim

The greatest hurdle Americans need to get over in order to properly respond to the growing threat of radical Islam is purely intellectual in nature; specifically, it is epistemological, and revolves around the abstract realm of "knowledge." Before attempting to formulate a long-term strategy to counter radical Islam, Americans must first and foremost understand Islam, particularly its laws and doctrines, the same way Muslims understand it—without giving it undue Western (liberal) interpretations. This is apparently not as simple as expected: all peoples of whatever civilizations and religions tend to assume that other peoples more or less share in their worldview, which they assume is objective, including notions of right and wrong, good and bad.

The mainstream interpretation, particularly in academia, of radical Islam is that it is a byproduct of various sorts of discontent (economic, political, social) and has little to do with the religion itself. To trace "jihadist" violence to Islam itself is discouraged; in academia, it may be treated as anathema.

Americans think this way because the secular, Western experience has been such that people respond with violence primarily when they feel they are politically, economically, or socially oppressed. While true that many non-Western peoples may fit into this paradigm, the fact is, the ideologies of radical Islam have the intrinsic capacity to prompt Muslims to violence and intolerance vis-à-vis the "other," irrespective of grievances. Obviously, when radical Islam is coupled with a sense of grievance—real or imagined—the result is even more dramatic.

Conceptually, then, it must be first understood that many of the problematic ideologies associated with radical Islam trace directly back to Islamic law, or *sharia*. Jihad as offensive warfare to subjugate "infidels" (non-Muslims); mandated social discrimination against non-Muslim minorities living in Muslim nations (the regulations governing *ahl al-dhimma*); general animosity and lack of sincere cooperation vis-à-vis non-Muslims (as articulated in the doctrine of *al-wala' we al-bara'*)—all of these are clearly defined aspects that have historically been part of Islam's worldview and not "open to interpretation."

For example, the obligation to wage expansionist jihad is as "open to interpretation" as the obligation to perform the Five Pillars of Islam, such as praying and fasting. The same textual sources and methods of jurisprudence that have made it clear that prayer and fasting are obligatory, have also made it clear that jihad is also obligatory; the only difference is that, whereas prayer and fasting is an "individual" duty, jihad is understood to be a "communal" duty (a *fard kifaya*).

The prophet of Islam, Muhammad himself said: "He who wages jihad in the path of Allah — and Allah knows who it is who wages jihad in his path — is *as commendable as one who continuously fasts and prays* [emphasis added]. Allah guarantees if he who fights for his cause dies, he [Allah] will usher him into paradise; otherwise, he will return him to his home safely, with rewards or war booty."

By and large, then, to assert that radical Islamic groups, such as al-Qaeda, have "hijacked" or "distorted" Islam is unsatisfactory.[1] They and others have spent much time and effort justifying their actions via Islamic law, and have been by and large successful.[2] The unique role radical groups have been playing since the early 20th century is not so much distorting Islam, but rather bringing *sharia* back to the forefront of Islamic society, giving it a renewed sense of urgency, insisting to fellow Muslims that the root cause of all their troubles is that they have abandoned the laws of Allah and so must begin to tenaciously adhere to them.

That said, radical Muslims have further managed to exploit what the law maintains by making clever arguments. For instance, al-Qaeda's number 2, Ayman al-Zawahiri, argues that, if offensive jihad is an obligation on the Muslim world—and it is—how much more is to be expected from Muslims when they are defending their territories from aggressors, the usual culprits being Israel or the U.S? He goes on to quote from prominent Islamic scholars, such as the medieval jurist, Ibn Taymiyya, who decreed centuries ago that, whenever "infidels" invade the Islamic world, the greatest obligation Muslims have, after faith itself, is to wage a defensive jihad. According to this popular definition, even women and children are required to participate—as evidenced among the Palestinians and in Iraq.

Being able to understand all this, being able to appreciate it without any conceptual or intellectual constraints is paramount for Americans to truly understand the nature of the enemy and his ultimate goals. Any attempts at formulating a proper strategic response without this necessary data is doomed to failure, especially in the long-term. Unfortunately, recent developments are indicative that the opposite is happening.

For example, far from closely examining Muslim doctrines and ideologies, a recent government memo, arguing that "words matter," has all but banned several Arabic words that connote Muslim ideology and doctrine from formal discourse—such as *mujahid, jihadi, umma, sharia*, caliphate, and so on—asking analysts to rely primarily on generic terms, such as "terrorists." However, without knowing the ideology that fuels any particular terrorist group one will be

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[1] The issue here is not which "version" of Islam is "correct." The issue is that there *are* Muslims who have interpreted, do interpret, and always will interpret the mandates of Islam literally. As long as the Koran contains a plenitude of verses commanding Muslims to be in a perpetual state of war with non-Muslims (e.g., Koran 9:5, 9:29, 9:123), to "strike terror into the hearts of infidels" and "to strike their heads off" (Koran 8:60 and 47:4), all with assurances that "Allah has purchased the lives and possessions of the Believers in exchange for paradise: they fight in his cause, slaying and being slain" (9:111) — there will always be those faithful who take these words for what they plainly mean. Thus, even if the vast majority of Muslims are "moderates" and that, say, only a mere 20 percent of Muslims are "literalists," that simply means that some 200 million Muslims in the world today are dedicated enemies of the infidel West. At any rate, when it comes to instilling terror, numbers are of no significance. It took only 19 to wreak great havoc and destruction on American soil on 9/11. It won't take much more to duplicate that horrific day. That most Muslims are good, law-abiding citizens and that only a mere minority of the *umma*, say, 200 million, are dedicated to subjugating the world to *sharia* law is hardly assuring.

[2] See *The Al Qaeda Reader* for example, particularly the "theology" section.

severely handicapped in trying to formulate a counter-strategy. Censorship[3] hardly seems to be a strategic response at this juncture.

Finally, while Americans appear to be suffering from the ability to appreciate the idiosyncrasies of Islam's worldview, many radicals have proven themselves expert at understanding—and thus exploiting—the worldview of the liberal West. For example, al-Qaeda and many other radicals make it a point to intentionally use the language of political grievance when addressing Americans, only to abandon such language when talking to fellow Muslims, instead stressing only what Islamic law demands, such as jihad.

Before addressing the two, interconnected failures hampering the formulation of an effective strategy vis-à-vis radical Islam—education and epistemology—it is imperative that the reader better understand what *sharia* law is and how it is articulated, as this is pivotal to understanding how "knowledge" and hence "truth" is established within a purely Islamic paradigm.

For all the talk that Islam is constantly being "misunderstood" or "misinterpreted" by radicals, the fact is, as opposed to most other religions, mainstream Islam is a very clearly defined faith admitting of little ambiguity (which is to be expected, as it is more concerned with human actions rather than metaphysical considerations).

In Sunni Islam, every law, practice, or ideology must ultimately be traced back to *usul al-fiqh* (or the "roots of jurisprudence"). These are, in order of authority, the Koran[4] (words of Allah), the *sunna*[5] ("example") of Muhammad, *qiyas*[6] (the process of analogizing), and *ijma*[7] (the

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[3] The fact is, words do matter. Who those words are directed at matters even more. The world's Muslims aren't holding their breath to hear what sort of *Islamic* legitimacy the US government is about to confer on al-Qaeda, since it is not for non-Muslims to decide what is and is not Islamic in the first place. Americans, on the other hand, who are still asking "why do they hate us," are in desperate need of understanding. Using accurate terminology is the first step.

[4] The Koran is the foundation of Islam. Not only are the words of the Koran understood to be inspired by Allah (much like the Bible is believed to be inspired by God for Christians and Jews); but traditional Islam teaches that the words themselves have been relayed verbatim from an uncreated and eternal slab in heaven which contains the same words, letter for letter—also in Arabic, which is understood to be the celestial language. Due to the Koran's status as *the* word of Allah, all of its commandments are understood to transcend time and space and are thus seen as binding once and for all. Most Muslims reject arguments suggesting that the commandments contained in the Koran apply only to the 7th century and thus need to be "reinterpreted" to suit today's realities. Needless to say, any commandment or prohibition found in the Koran—and these are many—are to be taken literally and become divine foundations of *sharia* law. For example, the Koran expressly forbids the eating of swine (5:3): pork is therefore forbidden to Muslims without exception.

[5] After the Koran, the *sunna* of the prophet arbitrates, based on the Koranic verse, "Truly, you have in the Messenger of Allah [Muhammad] an excellent example…" [33:21]. Ultimately, the importance of the *sunna* arises from the function of Muhammad as the founder of Islam—hence the authoritative if not inspired nature of his words and deeds. The word *sunna* can mean "example, "pattern," or "custom." Based on the *hadith*, which contains thousands upon thousands of statements and deeds attributed to Muhammad, examples, patterns, and customs emerge. Depending then on the authenticity of any particular *hadith*, there are only six canonical collections, these *sunnas* go on to become codified as part of the *sharia*. Named after this second important root of jurisprudence, Sunni

consensus of the *umma* (international body of Muslims), especially the *ulema* (umbrella word for Islam's scholars, theologian, and jurists). Based on all of these, the *sharia* is established. In fact, according to Islamic jurisprudence, every conceivable human act is categorized as being either forbidden, discouraged, permissible, recommended, or obligatory. Such is the comprehensiveness—or totalitarianism—of the *sharia*.[8] This is important to understand since some of radical Islam's most intolerant positions are in fact grounded in *sharia* law.

On an epistemological level, then, "universal opinion" and "common sense" have little to do with Islam's notions of right and wrong. All that matters is what Allah (via the Koran) and his prophet Muhammad (through the *hadith*) have to say about any given subject; and how the *ulema*—literally, the "ones who know"—have codified it.

Educational Failures

Even though U.S. military studies have traditionally valued and absorbed the texts of classical war doctrine—such as Clausewitz's *On War*, Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, even the exploits of Alexander the Great as recorded in Arrian and Plutarch—Islamic war doctrine, which is just as if not more textually grounded, is totally ignored.

As recent as 2006—a full five years after the strikes of 9/11—former top Pentagon official William Gawthrop lamented that "the senior Service colleges of the Department of Defense had not incorporated into their curriculum a systematic study of Muhammad as a military or political leader. As a consequence, we still do not have an in-depth understanding of the war-fighting

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Muslims, who make up nearly 90% of the world's 1.2 billion Muslims, are thus extremely concerned with the words and deeds of Muhammad and strive to follow his example—often quite literally: the highly respected scholar, Ibn Hanbal, founder of one of the four Sunni schools of jurisprudence, forbade himself from eating watermelons simply because he found no instances of Muhammad eating any.

[6] Finding precedents and analogizing is a very important (though little understood) tool to articulating the *sharia* in the modern era. An example should clarify: based on the Koran and *sunna*, wine is forbidden to Muslims. However, neither the Koran nor the *sunna* expressly outlaw the consumption of beer—no doubt because it was generally unknown in 7th century Arabia. Through the process of analogy, then, beer, as well as all other forms of alcohol, become forbidden under Islamic law. The reasoning of the *ulema* is as follows: since the Koran and *sunna* obviously forbade wine because of its alcoholic, and thus intoxicating or harmful, qualities, clearly all other forms of alcohol must likewise be prohibited.

[7] If a question is not addressed by the Koran or *sunna*, nor is there any way to derive an analogy from them (through *qiyas*), the decision then rests with the majority's opinion, based on the *hadith*, "My community will never be in agreement over an error." This should not, however, be confused with democracy, since consensus is called upon only as a last resort when the Koran and *sunna* are silent or ambiguous on an issue. In other words, consensus can never supersede or abrogate the authority of the Koran or *sunna*, though it may be needed to interpret them. Moreover, it is generally the consensus of the *ulema* who are learned in *sharia* law that ultimately bears any weight. That said, rulings based on the consensus of Muslim *ulema* are generally seen as binding.

[8] The concept of separation between religion and state—ingrained in the West—is therefore completely alien to Islam, further complicating American approaches at conceptualizing Islam: Taking for granted the notion of separation of church and state inherent to the West, Americans find it difficult to accept the notion that separating politics from religion is contrary to traditional Islamic principles and assume radicals are "misinterpreting" them.

doctrine laid down by Muhammad, how it might be applied today by an increasing number of Islamic groups, or how it might be countered."

This is more ironic when one considers that, while classical military theories (Clausewitz, Sun Tzu, Machiavelli, et al.) are still studied, the argument can be made that they have little practical value for today's much changed landscape of warfare and diplomacy. The same cannot be said about Islam's (little known in the West) doctrines of war. By having a "theological" quality, that is, by being grounded in a religion whose "divine" precepts transcend time and space, and are thus believed to be immutable, Islam's war doctrines are considered applicable today no less than yesterday. While one can argue that learning how Alexander maneuvered his cavalry at the Battle of Guagamela in 331 BC is both academic and anachronistic, the same cannot be said of the exploits and stratagems of Muhammad—his "war sunna"—which still serves as an example to modern day jihadists, especially through the aforementioned juridical approach of analogizing (i.e., *qiyas*).

For instance and quite contrary to what is being taught in academia, certain terrorist strategies do, in fact, trace back to *sharia* rulings, such as the indiscriminate use of missile weaponry—perhaps in the guise of hijacked airplanes—even if women and children are accidentally killed.[9] Moreover, a close reading of *sharia* rulings suggests that when radicals refer to the controversial strategy of suicide-attacks as "martyrdom-operations," they are not necessarily euphemizing. In his seminal treatise, "Jihad, Martyrdom, and the Killing of Innocents," Ayman Zawahiri, for example, makes a cogent argument legitimizing suicide-attacks all through Islam's *usul al-fiqh*.[10]

Aside from ignoring these well documented Islamist war-strategies, more troubling is the fact that there is total failure to appreciate Islam's more long-term doctrines—such as the Abode of War versus the Abode of Islam dichotomy, which in essence maintains that Islam must be in a state of animosity vis-à-vis the infidel world and, whenever possible, must wage wars until all infidel territory has been brought under Islamic rule. In fact, this dichotomy of hostility is

[9] Even the reckless strikes of 9/11 — where mostly civilians, including women and children, were killed — are justified for al Qaeda through Islam. While it is true that Islam is generally against the killing of non-combatants such as women and children, there are certain exceptions to this generalization, and al Qaeda often cites them to validate 9/11. For instance, Muhammad authorized his followers to use catapults during their siege of the town of Taif in 630, though it was well known that women and children were sheltered there. Also, when asked if it was permissible to launch night raids or set fire to the fortifications of the infidels even if women and children were among them, the prophet is said to have responded, "They are from among them" (see *Sahih Muslim* B19N4321).

[10] See *The Al Qaeda Reader*, p. 141-171, where Zawahiri quotes numerous *hadiths* of 7th century mujahidin intentionally putting themselves in positions where death was all but certain, including some who were goaded on by Muhammad, who promised them paradise if they died. Zawahiri further utilizes the juridical tool of *qiyas* by analogizing that, whereas suicide is a great sin, fighting to the death in the jihad is the most worthy endeavor. The dividing line, then, is *intention*: whether one literally kills himself (such as in a suicide-bombing) or is killed by another in the jihad is irrelevant. *Why* one wills his own death is all-important. Here the end clearly justifies the means: Writes, Zawahiri, "Thus the deciding factor in all these situations is one and the same: the intention—is it to service Islam [martyrdom] or is it out of depression and despair [suicide]?" There is also an anachronistic element at work here that sides with Zawahri's view. Considering that there was no technology in the guise of explosives in the early years of Islam, there was no way for a Muslim to inflict damage on the enemy by causing his own death. Thus even if suicide-bombings are legitimate, there is no way to find a precedent for them in the traditional texts of Islam.

unambiguously codified under Islam's worldview and, as aforementioned, is deemed a *fard kifaya*—that is, an obligation on the entire Muslim body that can only be fulfilled as long as some Muslims actively uphold it.

The way the word "jihad" has been treated in academia is another case in point. Islam's earliest theologians unanimously agreed that jihad was simply offensive warfare with the express purpose of spreading Islamic rule — a path shown by Muhammad himself, and then by his companions, the "rightly-guided" caliphs, who conquered much of the Old World in the name of Islam. There is a good reason why all early works of English-language scholarship have always translated "jihad" as "holy war."

Regardless, the vast majority of academics—particularly those in search of tenure—are in the habit of teaching that the concept of "jihad" has nothing to do with "holy war," but that it simply means "to strive" — as in to strive to be "a better student, a better colleague, a better business partner" per one Islamic studies professor, Bruce Lawrence. This widely held view is founded on an oft-quoted *hadith* that has Muhammad telling a group of mujahidin returning from war that, "You have returned from the lesser jihad [warfare to spread Islam] to the greater jihad [warfare against one's own vices]." This one *hadith* has all but come to define jihad for the academic community.

Placing so much emphasis on this one *hadith*, however, is either disingenuous or ignorant. Though there are thousands of *hadiths*, there are only six canonical collections that Sunnis consider trustworthy. This *hadith* does not occur in any of those six. On the other hand, the most authentic of the six *hadith* collections, the ninth-century *Sahih Bukari*—second in authority only to the Koran—mentions jihad 199 times, *all* in the context of warfare against non-Muslims in an effort to spread Islam, or, as known in Arabic, *jihad fi sabil Allah*. More ironic, even if that lesser-greater jihad hadith was canonical, it does not negate the military jihad but rather simply calls it "lesser jihad."

Academics tend to also be fond of playing semantic games. Scholars of Arabic insist that the word "jihad" literally means "to struggle" and thus clearly has nothing to do with "holy war." While literally true, this line of reasoning totally ignores the historical and textual contexts in which the word jihad predominantly appears — all which revolve around "holy war" — and is therefore nothing short of disingenuous.[11] As Daniel Pipes, director of the Middle East Forum, puts it:

"It is an intellectual scandal that, since September 11, 2001, scholars at American universities have repeatedly and all but unanimously issued public statements that avoid or whitewash the

[11] Indeed, many are the words that, while denoting one thing, are only understood connotatively. Imagine going to Arabic speakers and adamantly explaining to them that the English words "boyfriend" and "girlfriend" mean nothing more than what they denote: a boy or girl who is simply a "friend." Considering that the vast majority of English speakers understand by those two terms something quite more than a friend, would that not be a dishonest explanation to the non-English-speaking Arab? Americans who don't speak Arabic are being duped in the same way. Just as a "boy/girl friend" is a very specific *type* of friend, so too is jihad a very specific *type* of struggle — a lasting war in order to establish Islam supreme, "until all chaos ceases and all religion belongs to Allah alone," in the words of the Koran.

primary meaning of jihad in Islamic law and Muslim history. It is quite as if historians of medieval Europe were to deny that the word "crusade" ever had martial overtones, instead pointing to such terms as "crusade on hunger" or "crusade against drugs" to demonstrate that the term signifies an effort to improve society."

Yet if these academic failures have traditionally been predominant in the civilian sector, they have clearly come to also infiltrate the military. For example, a faculty member of the U.S. Army War College, one Sherifa Zuhur, recently published what has been criticized as an "apologia" for Hamas—a radical Islamist group that makes no secret of its desire to annihilate Israel and which is listed as a terrorist organization by the United States. Among other things, she described Hamas as being"misunderstood" and "villainized." Defense expert Mark Perry notes "It's worse than you think. They have curtailed the curriculum so that their students are not exposed to radical Islam. Akin to denying students access to Marx during the Cold War."

This last assertion is a reminder that, though there are today many Islamic studies departments in the universities, one will be sorely pressed to find any courses dealing with the most pivotal and relevant topics of today—such as Islamic jurisprudence and what it has to say about jihad or the concept of Abode of Islam versus the Abode of War—no doubt due to the fact that these topics possess troubling international implications and are best buried. Instead, the would-be student will be inundated with courses dealing with the evils of "Orientalism" and colonialism, followed by a focus on gender studies. Whenever Islam is broached as a subject unto itself, it is often done in the most apologetic manner, as evinced by the linguistically false cliché: "Islam is peace." In fact, Islam means "submit" or "submission."

Before implementing the most basic strategy in warfare—Sun Tzu's ancient dictum, *know thy enemy*—it behooves one to first ac*know*ledge his enemy. Yet, due to the pervasiveness of these academic failures, it was only inevitable that epistemological failures would follow. Without accurate information, the U.S. is philosophically unprepared to properly address the specter of radical Islam in the modern world.

Epistemological Failures

To better appreciate the idiosyncratic nature of *sharia*, as well as understand why non-Muslims face various epistemic hurdles when trying to comprehend Islam's worldview, consider the concept of deceit, which one may otherwise take for granted is universally condemned as unethical. In fact, according to *sharia*, deception[12] is not only permitted in certain situations but is sometimes deemed *obligatory*. For instance, not only are Muslims who must choose between either recanting Islam or being put to death permitted to lie by pretending to have apostatized; a number jurists have actually decreed that, according to Koran 4:29, which counsels Muslims to not "destroy themselves," Muslims are obligated to lie; if they do not, they sin.

[12] The primary Koranic verse sanctioning deception vis-à-vis non-Muslims states: "Let believers [Muslims] not take for friends and allies infidels [non-Muslims] instead of believers. Whoever does this shall have no relationship left with Allah—unless you but guard yourselves against them, taking precautions" (3:28; other verses referenced by the ulema supportive of deception include 2:173; 2:185; 4:29; 16:106; 22:78; 40:28). "Taking precautions" and "guarding against them" are usually interpreted as deceiving infidels.

This is the Islamic doctrine of *taqiyya*, which, in varying degrees, revolves around deceiving the enemy. According to the authoritative Arabic text, *Al-Taqiyya fi Al-Islam*, "*Taqiyya* [deception] is of fundamental importance in Islam. Practically every Islamic sect agrees to it and practices it. We can go so far as to say that the practice of *taqiyya* is mainstream in Islam, and that those few sects not practicing it diverge from the mainstream.... *Taqiyya* is very prevalent in Islamic politics, especially in the modern era [p.7; my own translation]."[13]

Deception has such a prominent role that renowned Muslim scholar Ibn al-Arabi declares: "[I]n the *hadith*, practicing deceit in war is well demonstrated. Indeed, its need is more stressed than [the need for] courage."[14]

Al-Tabari's (d. 923) famous *Tafsir* (exegesis of the Koran) is a standard and authoritative reference work in the entire Muslim world. Regarding Koran 3:28, he writes: "If you [Muslims] are under their [infidels'] authority, fearing for yourselves, behave loyally to them, *with your tongue*, while harboring inner animosity for them.... Allah has forbidden believers from being friendly or on intimate terms with the infidels in place of believers—except when infidels are above them [in authority]. In such a scenario, let them *act* friendly towards them."

Regarding 3:28, Ibn Kathir (d. 1373, second in authority only to Tabari) writes, "Whoever at any time or place fears their [infidels'] evil, may protect himself through outward show." As proof of this, he quotes prophet Muhammad's close companion, Abu Darda, who said "Let us smile to the face of some people [non-Muslims] while our hearts curse them"; another companion, al-Hassan, said, "Doing *taqiyya* [deceiving] is acceptable till the Day of Judgment [i.e., in perpetuity]."

Other prominent *ulema*, such as al-Qurtubi , al-Razi, and al-Arabi have extended *taqiyya* to cover deeds. In other words, Muslims can *behave* like infidels—including by bowing down and worshipping idols and crosses, offering false testimony, even exposing fellow Muslims' weak spots to the infidel enemy—anything short of actually killing a Muslim.

None of this should be surprising considering that Muhammad himself—whose example as the "most perfect human" is to be tenaciously followed—took an expedient view to lying. It is well known, for instance, that Muhammad permitted lying in three situations: to reconcile two or more quarreling parties; to one's wife; and in war.[15]).

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[13] Some erroneously believe that *taqiyya* is an exclusively Shia doctrine: As a minority group interspersed among their traditional enemies, the much more numerous Sunnis, Shias have historically had more "reason" to dissemble. Ironically, however, Sunnis living in the West today find themselves in a similar situation, as *they* are now the minority surrounded by *their* historic enemies—Christian infidels. And thus, from a Muslim point of view, today the Sunnis have as much reason to deceive as the Shias have historically.

[14] *Al Qaeda Reader*, 142.

[15] Sahih Muslim B32N6303, deemed an "authentic" *hadith*. As for our chief concern here—deception in war—during the Battle of the Trench (627) which pitted Muhammad and his followers against several non-Muslim tribes (collectively known as "the Confederates"), one of these Confederates, Naim bin Masud, went to the Muslim camp and converted to Islam. When Muhammad discovered that the Confederates were unaware of their co-tribalist's conversion, he counseled Masud to return and try somehow to get the Confederates to abandon the siege—"For," Muhammad assured him, "war is deceit." Masud returned to the Confederates without their knowing that he had

The Western reader may find these legalistic interpretations and colorful anecdotes from the prophet's life curious but ultimately unconvincing. Here, again, we are entered into the tricky realm of epistemology: every civilization has its own particular sources, physical or metaphysical, whence knowledge, and hence "truth," are articulated. As explained above, for the Islamic world, *sharia*—specifically the words of the Koran/Muhammad—forms the basis of all truth and reality, and therefore must be accepted as they are, on faith, without excessive rationalizing.

There is also a troubling philosophical aspect to *taqiyya*. Anyone who truly believes that no less an authority than God justifies and, through his prophet's example, sometimes even *encourages* deception, will not experience any ethical qualms or dilemmas about lying. This is especially true if the human mind is indeed a tabula rasa shaped by environment and education: Deception becomes second nature.

Consider the case of Ali Mohammad—bin Laden's "first trainer" and longtime al-Qaeda operative. Despite being entrenched in the highest echelons of the terror network, his confidence at dissembling enabled him to become a CIA agent and FBI informant for years. People who knew him regarded him "with fear and awe for his incredible self-confidence, his inability to be

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"switched sides," and began giving his former kin and allies bad advice. He also went to great lengths to instigate quarrels between the various tribes until, thoroughly distrusting each other, they disbanded, lifting the siege from the Muslims, and thereby saving Islam in its embryonic period (*Al-Taqiyya Fi Al-Islam*; also, Ibn Ishaq's *Sira*, the earliest biography of Muhammad). More demonstrative of the legitimacy of deception vis-à-vis infidels is the following anecdote. A poet, Kab bin al-Ashruf, offended Muhammad by making derogatory verse concerning Muslim women. So Muhammad exclaimed in front of his followers: "Who will kill this man who has hurt Allah and his prophet?" A young Muslim named Muhammad bin Maslama volunteered, but with the caveat that, in order to get close enough to Kab to assassinate him, he be allowed to lie to the poet. Muhammad agreed. Maslama traveled to Kab, began denigrating Islam and Muhammad, carrying on this way till his disaffection became convincing enough that Kab took him into his confidences. Soon thereafter, Maslama appeared with another Muslim and, while Kab's guard was down, assaulted and killed him. Ibn Sa'ad's version reports that they ran to Muhammad with Kab's head, to which the latter cried "Allahu Akbar!" (God is great!) It also bears mentioning that the entire sequence of Koranic revelations are a testimony to *taqiyya*; and since Allah is believed to be the revealer of these verses, he ultimately is seen as the perpetrator of deceit—which is not surprising since Allah himself is described in the Koran as the best "deceiver" or "schemer" (3:54 , 8:30, 10:21) . This phenomenon revolves around the fact that the Koran contains both peaceful and tolerant verses, as well as violent and intolerant ones. The *ulema* were baffled as to which verses to codify into *sharia*'s worldview—the one, for instance, that states there is no coercion in religion (2:256), or the ones that command believers to fight all non-Muslims till they either convert or at least submit to Islam (8:39, 9:5, 9:29)? To get out of this quandary, the *ulema* developed the doctrine of abrogation (*naskh*, supported by Koran 2:106) which essentially states that verses "revealed" later in Muhammad's career take precedence over the earlier ones, whenever there is a contradiction. For example, the vast majority of the *ulema* have a consensus that Koran 9:5, famously known as *ayat al-saif*—the "sword verse"—has abrogated some 124 of the more peaceful Meccan verses. But why the contradiction in the first place? The standard answer has been that, since in the early years of Islam, Muhammad and his community were far outnumbered by the infidels and idolaters, a message of peace and co-existence was in order. However, after he migrated to Medina and grew in military strength and numbers, the violent and intolerant verses were "revealed," inciting Muslims to go on the offensive—now that they were capable of doing so. According to this view, quite standard among the *ulema*, one can only conclude that the peaceful Meccan verses were ultimately a ruse to buy Islam time till it became sufficiently strong enough to implement its "true" verses which demand conquest. Or, as traditionally understood and implemented by Muslims themselves, when the latter are weak, they should preach and behave according to the Meccan verses (peace, tolerance); when strong, they should go on the offensive, according to the Medinan verses (war and conquest).

intimidated, absolute ruthless determination to destroy the enemies of Islam, and his zealous belief in the tenets of militant Islamic fundamentalism." Indeed, this sentence sums it all: for a "zealous belief" in Islam's "tenets," which, as seen, legitimize deception, will certainly go a long way in creating "incredible self-confidence" when lying.

The fact that Islam legitimizes deceit during war cannot be all that surprising. After all, non-Muslim thinkers and philosophers, such as Sun Tzu, Machiavelli, and Hobbes all justified deceit in war. The crucial difference, however, is that, once again—this cannot be stressed enough—according to all four recognized schools of Sunni jurisprudence, war against the infidel goes on in *perpetuity*, until "all chaos ceases, and all religion belongs to Allah" (Koran 8:39). In its entry on jihad, the definitive *Encyclopaedia of Islam* simply states:

"The duty of the *jihad* exists as long as the universal domination of Islam has not been attained. Peace with non-Muslim nations is, therefore, a provisional state of affairs only; the chance of circumstances alone can justify it temporarily. Furthermore there can be no question of genuine peace treaties with these nations; only truces, whose duration ought not, in principle, to exceed ten years, are authorised. But even such truces are precarious, inasmuch as they can, before they expire, be repudiated unilaterally should it appear more profitable for Islam to resume the conflict."[16]

Celebrated Muslim historian and philosopher, Ibn Khaldun (d.1406), wrote: "In the Muslim community, holy war [jihad] is a religious *duty*, because of the universalism of the Muslim mission and the *obligation* to convert everybody to Islam either by persuasion or by force. The other religious groups [specifically Christianity and Judaism] did not have a universal mission, and the holy war was not a religious duty for them, save only for purposes of defense... But Islam is under *obligation* to gain power over other nations."

Amazingly, and thanks in part to the aforementioned educational failures, no matter how many authoritative texts of Islam make clear that jihad is a militant obligation, no matter how many

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[16] This concept is highlighted by the fact that, based on the ten year treaty of Hudaibiya (628), ratified between Muhammad and his Quraish opponents in Mecca, ten years is, theoretically, the maximum amount of time Muslims can be at peace with infidels. Based on Muhammad's example of annulling the treaty after two years, (by citing a Quraish infraction that could have been punished separately), the sole function of the "peace-treaty" (or *hudna*) is to buy weakened Muslims time to regroup before going on the offensive once more. Moreover, according to a canonical *hadith*, Muhammad said, "If I take an oath and later find something else better, I do what is better and break my oath." The prophet further encouraged Muslims to do the same: "If you ever take an oath to do something and later on you find that something else is better, then you should expiate your oath and do what is better." This is more obvious when one considers that, in the history of the modern era, every single time Muslims have reached out for "peace," it has always been when *they* were in a weakened condition vis-à-vis "infidels"—that is, when they, not their non-Muslim competitors/counterparts, benefit from the peace. This is the lesson of the last two centuries of Muslim/Western interaction, wherein the former have been militarily inferior and thus beholden to the latter. When the Islamic world was more or as powerful as the non-Islamic world, offensive jihads were the norm, and are historically responsible for the vast majority of the modern Islamic world's territories. From Morocco to India, all the territory in between was conquered by force and subjugated to Islam during the early Islamic conquests (c. 636-750). Only those few nations that are on the periphery of the Islamic world, such as Indonesia and Somalia, converted to Islam over time and more or less peacefully.

authoritative Muslims—past and present—insist on this point, the Western mind, so accustomed to assuming that the "normal" state of affairs is such that there is a clear separation between religion and politics, and that all this "discontent" is merely garbed in religious talk but is ultimately a byproduct of political grievances, still cannot take seriously or embrace the implications of Islam's straightforward worldview vis-à-vis non-Muslims, that is, infidels. Formulating any long-term strategies must begin here.

For instance, the fact remains: If Islam must be in a constant state of war with the non-Muslim world, which need not be physical, as the *ulema* have classified several non-violent forms of jihad, such as "jihad-of-the-pen" (propaganda), and "money-jihad" (economic); and if Muslims are permitted to lie and feign loyalty, even affection, to the infidel simply to further their war efforts—what does one make of *any* Muslim overtures of peace, tolerance, or dialogue?

This leads to another epistemic hurdle for non-Muslims, as captured by the following question I am often asked: "If this is the case, if Muslims must always wage war, why have there been long periods of relative peace between Muslims and non-Muslims?" The problem with this otherwise plausible objection is that most Westerners have a limited understanding of history, and tend to focus on the modern era, when, if anything, Westerners have played a more aggressive role—specifically via colonialism. In fact, the last time Muslims made a major offensive vis-à-vis the Abode of War, specifically the West, has been centuries ago.

Yet this overlooks the fact that, in the last few centuries, Muslims have been simply *incapable* of going on the offensive, whether they wanted to or not. Due to this quirk of history, Americans tend to assume that Muslims do not *want* to go on the offensive, but rather live in peace with their non-Muslim neighbors—a purely Western, secular worldview. History demonstrates otherwise: whenever Muslims have been stronger than their non-Muslim neighbors, they have always gone on the offensive. From the inception of Islam in the 7th century to the waning of the Ottoman empire, Islam has constantly been on the offensive—until it was beaten on the battlefield c. the 17th-18th centuries.[17]

It should be noted that, if Americans are having a hard time understanding the epistemic mindset of Islam, radical Muslims have demonstrated their mastery of the West's epistemology, and continue exploiting it against the West. Consider the following anecdote: After a group of prominent Muslims wrote a letter to Americans saying that Islam is a peaceful religion that wishes to co-exist with others, seeking only to "live and let live," Osama bin Laden, thinking no non-Muslim would see his retort, castigated them as follows:

[17] One need not even study history; where non-Muslim minorities live among Muslim majorities, this Muslim impetus to dominate is evident: while living in constant social subjugation, or, in Western parlance, "discrimination," (according to Koran 9:29) non-Muslims are also sporadically persecuted and sometimes killed—such as the Christian Copts of Egypt who, after recently assembling for prayer in a condemned factory, were surrounded by some 20,000 rioting Muslims hollering the Muslim war-cry, "Allah Akbar," while hurling stones at the Copts.

"As to the relationship between Muslims and infidels, this is summarized by the Most High's Word: 'We [Muslims] renounce you [non-Muslims]. Enmity and hate shall forever reign between us — till you believe in Allah alone' [Koran 60:4]. So there is an enmity, evidenced by fierce hostility from the heart. And this fierce hostility — that is, battle — ceases *only* if the infidel submits to the authority of Islam, or if his blood is forbidden from being shed [i.e., a *dhimmi*], or *if Muslims are at that point in time weak and incapable* [i.e., *taqiyya*]. But if the hate at any time extinguishes from the heart, this is great apostasy! ... Such, then, is the basis and foundation of the relationship between the infidel and the Muslim. Battle, animosity, and hatred — directed from the Muslim to the infidel — is the foundation of our religion. And we consider this a justice and kindness to them." [18]

However, when addressing Americans directly, bin Laden's tone drastically changes; he lists any number of "grievances" for fighting the U.S.—from Palestinian oppression, to the Western exploitation of women and U.S. failure to sign the Kyoto protocol to protect the environment—never once alluding to fighting the U.S. simply because it is an infidel entity that must be subjugated.

This is of course a clear instance of *taqiyya*, as bin Laden is not only waging a physical jihad, but one of propaganda. Convincing a secular West (whose epistemology does not allow for the notion of religious conquest) that the current conflict is entirely its fault only garners him and his cause more sympathy; conversely, he also knows that if Americans were to realize that, all political grievances aside—real or imagined—according to Islam's worldview, nothing short of their submission to Islam can ever bring peace, his propaganda campaign would be quickly compromised. Hence the constant need to lie, "for war," as their prophet asserted, "is deceit." [19]

Ayman Zawahiri follows the same strategy. Speaking to the many "under-privileged" of the world in one of his interviews, the terrorist-doctor declared: "That's why I want blacks in America, people of color, American Indians, Hispanics, and all the weak and oppressed in North and South America, in Africa and Asia, and all over the world, to know that when we wage jihad in Allah's path, we aren't waging jihad to lift oppression from Muslims only; we are waging jihad to lift oppression from *all* mankind, because Allah has ordered us never to accept oppression, whatever it may be...This is why I want every oppressed one on the face of the earth to know that our victory over America and the Crusading West — with Allah's permission — is a victory for them, because they shall be freed from the most powerful tyrannical force in the history of mankind."

Ironically, Zawahiri is not lying when he talks about "lifting oppression from all mankind" and al Qaeda's desire to "free" humanity from "the most powerful tyrannical force in the history of mankind." Rather, once again, here we have a conflict between the Western notion of "freedom" and "oppression" and radical Islam's notion. For radicals such as al-Qaeda, the dichotomy between "freedom" and "oppression" is wholly founded on whether *sharia* law is made supreme

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[18] *Al Qaeda Reader*, 43.

[19] See my essay, "An Analysis of Al-Qa'ida's Worldview: Reciprocal Treatment or Religious Obligation," *Middle East Review of International Affairs,* Volume 12, No. 3 - September 2008, for a lengthy juxtaposition of bin Laden's statements to the West and to fellow Muslims which totally contradict each other.

in the world; that is, whether every single man, woman, and child — both Muslim and non-Muslim — lives under the mandates of Islamic law. If they do, they are considered "free"; if not, as the case is today, the mass of humanity is considered to be "oppressed."

Osama bin Laden himself makes this clear in one of his more arcane documents written for Muslim eyes only: "Muslims and especially the learned amongst them, should spread *sharia* law to the world — that and nothing else. Not [secular] laws under the 'umbrella of justice, morality, and rights' as understood by the masses. No, the *sharia* of Islam is the foundation....For practically everything valued by the immoral West is condemned under *sharia* law.... As for [the concept of] oppression, the *only* oppression is to forsake them [Americans] in their infidelities, and not launch a jihad against them till they submit to the faith — as the Prophet did with them."[20]

Thus by portraying al-Qaeda as a "liberating organization" or a band of "freedom fighters, Zawahiri is technically not lying; he is being disingenuous.[21] "Blacks in America, people of color, American Indians, Hispanics, and all the weak and oppressed in North and South America, in Africa and Asia, and all over the world" certainly do not have *sharia* law in mind whenever Zawahiri sings praises about freedom and the need for the world to unite and lift off the yoke of "American oppression." This is especially the case since *sharia* law specifies a number of draconian restrictions and double-standards for all those who choose not to convert to Islam: second-class *dhimmi* status for Christians and Jews (in accordance to Koran 9:29); death for polytheists — those whom Zawahiri would otherwise implore for aid in Africa and Asia (in accordance to Koran 9:5).

Strategic Suggestions

It should be acknowledged that, educational failures exacerbate epistemological failures, and vice-versa, leading to a perpetual cycle where necessary knowledge is not merely ignored, but not even acknowledged in the first place. When American universities fail to teach Islamic doctrine and history accurately, a flawed epistemology permeates society at large. And since new students and new professors come from this already conditioned-towards- Islam society, not only do they not question the lack of accurate knowledge and education, they perpetuate it.

Thus Americans must learn to transcend their subjective worldview and secular philosophies and understand Islam the way mainstream, traditional Muslims understand it—no matter how much doing so may contradict their preconceived notions. Universities should unabashedly teach Islam the way Muslims teach it; jihad should mean jihad—not a "struggle to be a better business partner."

The government should not seek to censor language when discussing radical Islam, as language has a direct bearing on knowledge. Political correctness must be eliminated. Inter-faith

[20] *Al Qaeda Reader*, 32-33.
[21] Another aspect of *taqiyya* is *kitman*, or "passive deception," that is, not forthrightly providing the complete picture.

dialogues should continue to be encouraged; however, not to stress (often strained) commonalities, but to honestly and openly question differences. Books on Islamic doctrine and jihad written in Arabic need to be translated in droves and made available to American students.[22] If taken, such steps would instrumentally lend themselves to the formulation of much more strategic responses to countering the violent ideologies of radical Islam.

[22] When I worked in the African and Middle Eastern division of the Library of Congress, I was amazed at the amount of Arabic books there were, many of which—such as *The Al Qaeda Reader*—if translated, would serve as an invaluable resource for formulating counter-strategy. A list of such books should be compiled and they should be translated.

Testimony for Hearing of the HASC Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities
on
"Strategies for Countering Violent Extremist Ideologies"
February 12, 2009
by
Michael Doran
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Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Miller, members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to testify again. Your letter of invitation asked for "recommendations on how to craft a whole-of-government approach to countering violent ideologies." I have studied this question from a variety of vantage points. I appear before you today as an academic, a Middle East expert who has published extensively on al-Qaeda's ideology. But the greatest value that I add to this discussion comes from my work in government. When I started at NYU Wagner one month ago, I ended three and a half years of government service that included work in three separate organizations. At the White House, I served as Senior Director for the Near East and North Africa; at the Pentagon, as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Support to Public Diplomacy; and at the State Department, as Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. In each one of these positions, countering violent extremism was one of my core responsibilities.

My multi-agency experience taught me that the question that you are posing is in fact the key problem that we need to address at this stage. I am very grateful that you have focused on it, and I am equally thankful that you have given me this opportunity to share with you my thinking on the subject.

Let me begin by stating a simple truth: the biggest challenge to crafting a whole-of-government approach is the fact that we have no clear leader for this effort. No office has been given the necessary power to pull together all of the relevant parts of the government.

Countering extremism is part of a larger enterprise. For the sake of discussion, let's call it "strategic communication." This is an imperfect label for what we are talking about, but I do not want to get bogged down in definitional debates. When I say "strategic communication," I mean the effective coordination of all of the activities of government that are intended to persuade, inform, and influence foreign audiences.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the United States government got out of large parts of the strategic communication business. Since 9/11 we have been groping our way back in the dark. It need not be this difficult. Strategic communication is not totally alien to our democracy. A number of our most respected modern presidents were avid supporters and practitioners. I just

finished reading a book, entitled Total Cold War by Kenneth Osgood, about President Eisenhower's approach to the struggle with the Soviet Union. In Eisenhower's view, the Cold War, at its essence, was a global influence campaign. He organized the government for strategic communication, resourced the effort, and paid very close attention to it.

Eisenhower had at his disposal the kind of comprehensive system that is lacking today. To be sure, not all aspects of Eisenhower's influence machinery would be acceptable to us now. The value of Osgood's book is not that it provides a precise blueprint. Rather, it reminds us that if we did it once, we can do it again. In addition, it alerts us to the importance of presidential-level engagement.

The Obama administration can dramatically advance the enterprise simply by designating an office as the lead for government-wide strategic communication, vesting that office with the requisite authorities and resources to do its job properly, and holding it accountable for results.

Where should this office reside? One school of thought supports placing it at National Security Council. Appointing one of the president's advisors to monitor the enterprise is certainly a good idea, but doing so will not entirely solve the leadership problem. Those who argue in favor of the NSC ignore the strong (and healthy) aversion, which exists throughout our system, to an operational White House.

In addition, giving the NSC the lead is a recipe for gridlock. This fact is counterintuitive. One usually assumes that the closer one stands to the president, the greater one's ability to cut through red tape. Yes and no. When you raise up operational activities too high in the system, routine decisions become intertwined with more weighty issues. The easy question, "What should we broadcast to Iran?" becomes a proxy for the harder one, "What should our policy be toward Iran?" All work grinds to a halt. At the rarefied heights, the smallest steps are hard and sap one's breath.

Effective strategic communication does require some White House-level engagement, but it also requires empowering the field, pushing authorities and resources out to the operators, so that they are not required to look to Washington at every step to ask, "Mother may I?" Consequently, even if the White House does directly engage in this effort, we will still need a strategic-operational center in the government, an office that is resourced adequately to coordinate all relevant field activities.

Another school of thought favors resurrecting the United States Information Agency (USIA). There are strong arguments in favor of this proposal, but I am dubious. We are headed for a period of great economizing, and creating a new USIA is unlikely to play well in Peoria. Even if the political will for such a step does materialize, it will take years for the new bureaucracy to get up on its feet and successfully define its rightful place in the system.

In the meantime, let's develop proposals that we can enact today, without controversial new legislation. My preference is to build on existing structures, however imperfect they may be. They at least have the advantage of being recognized and understood by all the relevant players. The Bush administration gave the lead for strategic communication and countering violent extremism to the office of the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs – the "R" Bureau, as it is known in the nomenclature of the State Department. What if we were to retain this model and improve upon it?

The opponents of keeping "R" in the leadership role make two basic arguments. First, they claim that strategic communication cuts against the grain of the State Department, which harbors a deep bias in favor of quiet engagements, conducted behind closed doors, with the official representatives of foreign governments. We are asking State to behave out of character when we suggest that it should call out over the heads of those officials to the wider population. As one friend of mine says, "public diplomacy was placed in the State Department, because its name has the word 'diplomacy' in it. In reality, public diplomacy has about as much in common with diplomacy as lightning bugs have with lightning."

There is truth to this view, but it is important not to overstate the case. Ambassadors will always hold the final approval authority over activities conducted in their areas of responsibility. Sooner or later, all roads lead to the Department of State. So, we might as well begin our journey there.

The answer is not to remove strategic communication from the State Department, but, rather, to strengthen the influence of "R" inside the larger State organization. Currently, the office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs is too weak and narrowly focused to function as a fully effective strategic coordinator. The bureaus in "R" are the parts of USIA that remained after the organization's dissolution. As an independent agency, USIA had the ability to conceive and execute public diplomacy strategies on its own. It certainly had to coordinate with State, but it brought more clout to the table. "R" has lost that independent stature. The Under Secretary controls only a small budget and does not have oversight over the public diplomacy officers in the field. For their part, ambassadors are under no obligation to respect the strategic priorities as defined by "R."

The remedy for this imbalance is to turn "R" into a semi-autonomous agency within the State Department. It should be provided with greater discretionary resources, greater control over the existing public diplomacy budget, and greater power over all public diplomacy appointments, in embassies and as well as in the regional bureaus in main State. Convincing the regional bureaus to cede power to "R" will not be easy, but it is certainly less difficult than resurrecting USIA.

If the status of "R" were enhanced, its definition of its mission would also have to expand. Public diplomacy, as the discipline has developed historically, has become very closely

associated with telling America's story -- on conducting exchanges, and generally informing the world about American culture, politics, and society. In the Cold War, we faced off against a peer competitor who advocated an alternative political and social system. In that context, broadcasting the benefits of our way of life was a truly strategic communication, in the sense that it delegitimized our primary enemy. Telling America's story is still very important today, but it is no longer the sharpest edge of the strategic-communication spear.

Jim Glassman, the last person to serve as the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, understood this fact well. He spoke eloquently and at length about the need to expand the definition of public diplomacy, and he developed programming designed to start the transformation. I won't repeat his arguments here, which are undoubtedly well-known to you already. Unfortunately, his term in the office was too short to complete the culture change that he started. Nevertheless, his orientation is well-documented and it offers a valuable directional signal that the Obama administration would do well to heed.

The key to Glassman's success was that he wholeheartedly embraced the notion that the business of Under Secretary is national security. By contrast, his predecessors viewed the position as a public relations portfolio. They shied away from associating with the Department of Defense (DoD) and other agencies. To his enduring credit, Glassman focused on using our soft power to achieve the national security goals of the United States. He interacted vigorously with DoD, exhibiting the kind of whole-of-government leadership that we need to turn strategic communication from an aspiration into a reality.

This brings me to the last point that I would like to make today: the contribution of the DoD to strategic communication. In recent months a number of voices in the media have warned against the encroachment of the DoD into public diplomacy. I can assure you that these warnings are based on inadequate information. My former office in the Pentagon, Support to Public Diplomacy, was designed to be the connective tissue between DoD and State. Its very existence is tangible proof of the desire, felt at the highest levels of the Department, to support State's leadership.

DoD is engaged in traditional military activities -- public affairs, information operations, and theater security cooperation engagements. Due to the pressures brought about by two wars and by the need to come to grips with the revolution in new media, these activities sometimes overlap with the public diplomacy mission of State. It is a fact of life that the lines of responsibility between the two Departments can never be demarcated with laser-like precision. DoD can certainly scale back in some areas, and State can ramp up in others. But the fact remains that it is in the nature of the world today that the two Departments are bound to rub against each other.

The answer to this problem, in my view, is to develop thicker connective tissue between the State and DoD, especially in the fields related to strategic communication. Exactly what I

mean by "thicker connective tissue" is itself a subject for another discussion – one that would touch on mutual training, compatible planning processes, and institutional reorganizations. We need not go into those details now. My main point today is that closer coordination will not take place until we create a strategic-operational center in the government that can act as an effective proponent for a whole-of-government effort. And with that point, I circle right back to where I began: with all roads leading through the Department of State.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING

FEBRUARY 12, 2009

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. SMITH

Mr. SMITH. How should we deal with the issue of religious terminology when we craft our messages for foreign Muslim audiences?

Mr. IBRAHIM. Religious terminology should be treated as objectively as possible when addressing Muslim audiences. Islamic law (Sharia) assigns a clear definition to select Islamic terminology (e.g., jihad) and it is these definitions that Muslims acknowledge. To rely on equivocal or compromised Western definitions for the sake of being politically correct at best leads Muslims to think that the U.S. is naïve. In short, whenever applicable—that is, whenever there is need to evoke Muslim terminology—mainstream definitions that mainstream Muslims subscribe to should be relied upon. That said, Muslim terminology should not be spoken or disseminated lightly by non-Muslims but rather only when appropriate. When appropriate, objective definitions—those present in Islam's juridical texts—should be used.

Mr. SMITH. You have pointed out significant issues with how the academic community approaches Islamic doctrine as an ideology. Through initiatives like the Minerva project, the DOD is proposing to reach out to just that academic community to try to seek insight to inform Department of Defense decision making. What recommendations would you suggest for the DOD to push the academic community to engage in a more open and intellectually honest discussion of these issues, particularly through mechanisms like Minerva?

Mr. IBRAHIM. The academic community should be encouraged to treat their topic objectively, rather than projecting their own 21st century, post-modern epistemology onto the Muslim world, as happens often. Jihad as a doctrinal obligation should be presented without apology or reticence. Euphemisms need to be dropped. Sharia law—what it is and its prominence in Muslim life—should be elaborated. History needs to be portrayed accurately, based on primary sources.

Mr. SMITH. What capabilities do you believe are necessary to improve U.S. government capabilities to conduct counter-ideology and counter-propaganda efforts?

Mr. IBRAHIM. 1) Freedom from fear of being censored, ostracized, or retaliated against. In short, knowing that one can speak their mind freely, without fear of reprisal. 2) Before being able to formulate proper counter-ideology efforts, the ideologies themselves must first be properly understood. Without being able to acknowledge the threat, finding strategies is doomed to failure. As for propaganda, it is just that—propaganda, and can only be fought with American "propaganda" (i.e., the battle to win "hearts and minds"). In other words, the ideologies must be seen as objective and treated with commensurate strategies, while the propaganda must be seen as a way to incite Muslims and demoralize Americans. Unfortunately, it seems that the opposite—ignoring Islamist ideologies while seriously considering Islamist propaganda—is more in effect.

Mr. SMITH. What recommendations do you have for handling the Internet as a means for medium for extremist propaganda and ideology?

Mr. IBRAHIM. For Islamists as for others, the Internet has become the primary means of disseminating both their ideology as well as their propaganda. Accordingly, it should be closely monitored.

Mr. SMITH. Given the cultural and religious context, who should U.S. Government efforts target with any messages? What types of messages should the U.S. be sending? By region (or country), who are the actual centers of gravity to influence the vulnerable population, i.e. to keep the extremist message from gaining converts. Can U.S. efforts even add to the discussion or are any efforts doomed from the start? What is the vulnerable population? Who should we be targeting and what are the venue/media to communicate?

Mr. IBRAHIM. In this context, the two primary targets that ultimately matter are: 1) the religious authorities (the ulema—scholars, sheikhs, imams, etc); and 2) the Muslim youth. As for the latter, Osama bin Laden himself delimited the age group jihadi organizations should target: 15- to 25-year-old males; these, then, make up the vulnerable population. Two things influence the 15- to 25-year age group of men: 1) The perceived belief that the U.S. is "oppressing" the Muslim world, and 2) the conviction that they are religiously-obligated to battle the U.S., as both an oppressive and infidel force.

Originally, the ideas and ideologies emanated from Wahhabi Saudi Arabia, the original center of gravity whence ideas were actively disseminated. Increasingly, however, these ideologies have taken hold and now have indigenous representatives throughout the Muslim world (i.e., "Salafis"). More practically, the primary center of gravity is the local mosque.

The U.S. can try to ameliorate its image as oppressor, etc. However, the U.S. has little or no role in regards to ameliorating its de facto infidel/enemy status, a status due to Islamic law. The U.S. can and should support true moderate Muslims attempting to reform Islam; but it should not be visible, as its visibility will only cause other Muslim segments to accuse the American-supported moderates of being U.S. "stooges," "agents," and ultimately apostates.

Mr. SMITH. What cultural, personnel or other changes need to occur, in both State and Defense, to create the "thicker connective tissue" you describe in your written testimony?

Dr. DORAN. [The information referred to was not available at the time of printing.]

Mr. SMITH. The difficulties faced by the State Department go beyond more resources or more people. For State to claim a leadership role in strategic communication, there must be a broader cultural change in what types of things State does and how it carries out its mission. How can we positively effect that change? What role does (or should) DoD play in the process?

Dr. DORAN. [The information referred to was not available at the time of printing.]

Mr. SMITH. You've spoken of the position of the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs as a weak under secretary. How would you change the responsibilities and authorities of that position to make it effective as the strategic-operational center for the U.S. Government's strategic communication effort?

Dr. DORAN. [The information referred to was not available at the time of printing.]

Mr. SMITH. Based on your time in government service, and as an academic observer, could you give us your assessment of U.S. efforts at counter-ideology and strategic communication? What can be improved and how?

Dr. DORAN. [The information referred to was not available at the time of printing.]

Mr. SMITH. Many people have advocated the recreation of the U.S. Information Agency, or a new Center for Global Engagement—an independent agency no longer under the Department of State chain of command. Do you believe such a move is necessary? If so, what do you believe are the important structures or authorities that such an organization should possess? Are there other recommendations for how the U.S. Government should organize to provide a cohesive and comprehensive strategic communication and public diplomacy approach?

Dr. DORAN. [The information referred to was not available at the time of printing.]

Mr. SMITH. In your comments, you mentioned that Under Secretary of State Glassman began some programs to move the State Department beyond just telling America's story and getting at real strategic communication. Could you describe some of these programs? Have they continued since Under Secretary of State Glassman's departure?

Dr. DORAN. [The information referred to was not available at the time of printing.]

Mr. SMITH. What recommendations do you have for improving the Defense Department's organization and structure for dealing with strategic communication?

Dr. DORAN. [The information referred to was not available at the time of printing.]

Mr. SMITH. What capabilities do you believe are necessary to improve U.S. Government capabilities to conduct counter-ideology and counter-propaganda efforts?

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