

said that for the first two hurricanes, we are going to have \$2 billion of losses just in agriculture. Yet all we have announced out of that \$2 billion requested by the Commissioner of Agriculture—who happens to be in the same party as the President—all we have seen is the Secretary of Agriculture offer a package that is only one quarter of what the Commissioner of Agriculture of Florida has asked for. That is just not going to do it.

Since the first two hurricanes, we have been hit by a third hurricane and, a day ago, by a fourth hurricane. In that third hurricane, there is going to be a big loss of the cotton and peanut crops up in the panhandle. With the fourth, what was left of the citrus crop across central Florida is going to be all gone because these ferocious winds are going to drop to the ground any fruit that was remaining. This is an election year, but this should not be partisan.

People are hurting and they need help, they need it now. I ask the White House, this administration, the Department of Agriculture, and all those myriad of agencies to come forward and help us. We need that help right now.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, how much time am I allotted?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa has 19½ minutes.

Mr. HARKIN. I thank the Chair.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I want to talk a little about Iraq. Before that, I have a responsibility to respond to the majority leader's comments on health care today. Sometimes you hear things on the Senate floor and you have to stop and say, did I really hear that or is that just something I thought?

I was really listening to the Republican leader talk about Republican support for health care—meaningful health care. Listening to the Republican leader talk about Republican support for meaningful health care is like listening to the big tobacco companies talk about the need for cancer research. How do I say that? Because the problems of cancer basically are caused by the big tobacco companies. The problem that we don't have a meaningful health care system in America today—people-based, patient-based, preventive care-based—is because of Republican Party policies.

It has been very clear for a long time that the Republican Party has opposed any kind of meaningful people-based health care program. After all, it was our colleague, former Senator Robert Dole, who during his Presidential campaign in 1996 bragged he had voted against Medicare, as most Republicans did in the mid 1960s. Now, again, the majority leader says that the elderly

are not signing up for these discount cards and we ought to be promoting them, sort of like a cheerleader. Maybe they are all taking their cue from the fact that President Bush was a cheerleader in college, so now we have to be a cheerleader. We heard that we have to cheerlead, regardless of what the facts are. There is a reason the elderly are not signing up for this card. It is meaningless. It doesn't do anything for them. Yet we are supposed to go out and be a cheerleader for them?

Well, the Republicans rammed through their health care program. The elderly get a meaningless card, and the pharmaceutical companies got \$12 billion in payments to entice them into this program. How about giving the elderly in our country \$12 billion?

I sum it up by saying that President Bush does have—I want to be fair to him—a health care plan. It is very simple and straightforward: Pray you don't get sick. That is President Bush's health care plan.

JOHN KERRY has a sound health care plan: One, to overturn the ban on Medicare bidding down the prices from pharmaceutical companies. Again, that was in our last Medicare bill. Republicans insisted on it. They pushed it through. Right now, Medicare cannot bargain with the large pharmaceutical companies to bid down the prices. Why? Because they are paying in the bill and they are forbidden to do so. What kind of sense does that make? The Veterans' Administration can bargain down the price of drugs with pharmaceutical companies but not Medicare. That makes no sense.

One of the first things a President KERRY would do is get rid of that ban and let Medicare get the price of drugs down for the elderly.

Secondly, a President KERRY will say we have to allow for the reimportation of drugs from Canada. We have a free-trade agreement with them on cars, clothes, pens, ties, and everything else, except for one thing—drugs. Well, it is time we have a free-trade agreement on drugs and let us reimport drugs from Canada.

The third part of the Kerry program is to provide a tax credit for small businesses—up to 50 percent—so they can carry a health care policy on their workers. That is so important for us in rural America, where most of our people work for small business.

Fourth, Senator KERRY says we ought to open the Federal Employee Health Benefit Program to everybody in America. That is a good program. It allows you to pick your doctor and hospital, and it allows you to change your plan if you would like to do so. It is a great program. I ought to know, I am in it. So is President Bush. So is Vice President CHENEY. So is every Senator on this floor. If it is good enough for us, it ought to be good enough for the American people.

The last thing in the Kerry program for health care is to double the National Health Service Corps to get

more doctors, physicians' assistants, nurse practitioners, and others serving in our rural and underserved areas and to increase the number of community health centers in America.

So while I am proud JOHN KERRY has a forward-looking, comprehensive health care plan that will be meaningful, that will reduce drug prices, and that will get affordable, reliable health care to the American people, President Bush is silent. Again, President Bush's health care plan is simple: Pray you don't get sick. That is not enough. We need better than that.

IRAQ

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I also wish to speak for a few minutes about the mess in Iraq. Last week, Prime Minister Iyad Allawi came to Washington to join in President Bush's campaign of relentless happy talk about the war in Iraq. President Bush says:

We're making progress. We're making progress.

Meanwhile, back in the real world—the world that American soldiers confront on the ground in Iraq—the chaos gets worse and worse. Entire regions and many provincial capitals are under the insurgents' control. Virtually every day we see car bombings, kidnappings, assassinations, beheadings.

As we learned last week, the CIA has produced a formal National Intelligence Estimate that says that, at best, the current level of violence will continue and, at worst, Iraq will plunge into a civil war. As Secretary of State Colin Powell acknowledged yesterday, it is getting worse in Iraq. But amazingly, President Bush insists that this mess in Iraq has made us safer, and the President and his political allies have been relentless in using the war on terror for their own electoral purposes.

Their message to the American people is simple: Be afraid, President Bush will protect you; his opponent will not.

Vice President DICK CHENEY also took this line of attack 2 weeks ago when he darkly warned with his Darth Vader-type voice that if JOHN KERRY is elected President, then "the danger is we'll get hit again, that we'll be hit in a way that will be devastating." That was Vice President CHENEY.

Last Tuesday, the senior Senator from Utah, Mr. HATCH, said that terrorists "are going to throw everything they can between now and the election to try and elect Kerry."

Last Monday, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage said terrorists in Iraq "are trying to influence the election against President Bush."

If these gentlemen have such excellent access to the terrorists' thoughts, they are not doing a good job of turning that knowledge into effective policy against the terrorists. At key junctures, this administration has made disastrously wrong choices. Repeatedly, these decisions have played into the terrorists' hands. Let's look at the record.

It is a fact that the September 11 attacks happened despite repeated warnings to Mr. Bush from the CIA that al-Qaida was planning to attack America. Those warnings included an August 8, 2001, President's daily briefing which he received while he was vacationing in Crawford, TX. The report was titled "Bin Laden Determined to Strike in the U.S." That is not a subhead or a sentence in the memo, that is the title of the memo: "Bin Laden Determined to Strike in U.S."

Let's look at the rest of the record.

On President Bush's watch, the U.S. botched the single best opportunity to capture bin Laden at Torah Borah in Afghanistan. A political decision was made to allow Afghan warlords to carry the brunt of that siege, and bin Laden escaped.

It was President Bush who 3 years ago pledged to smoke bin Laden out of his cave, but has utterly failed to do so. Instead, by successfully defying President Bush, bin Laden has become a folk hero across the Muslim world. He has attracted not only thousands of new recruits, but dozens of imitators, new bin Ladens who are forming their own terrorist organizations to attack America and Americans.

It was President Bush who diverted our military intelligence resources and certain military hardware, such as the Predator aircraft, the unmanned aerial vehicles, took them out of Afghanistan, away from the hunt for bin Laden and sent them to Iraq.

It was President Bush whose taunt, "Bring it on," did indeed bring it on—a nationwide insurgency in Iraq, an urban guerrilla war that has trapped our Armed Forces in a quagmire.

It was President Bush whose unilateral approach on Iraq alienated many of our oldest allies and turned world opinion against the United States.

It was President Bush whose invasion and occupation of the second largest Arab country has outraged much of the Muslim world and has been a recruiting bonanza for Islamist terrorists.

This is an astonishing record of mistakes, misjudgments, and mismanagement. It is an astonishing record of George W. Bush again and again playing into Osama bin Laden's hands. It is like Wile E. Coyote chasing the Road Runner, only this time it is not funny. It is a colossal tragedy. It has put our Nation at even greater risk of terrorist attack.

Ironically, President Bush's father, George Herbert Walker Bush, warned against the folly of invading and occupying Iraq. Listen to this. On February 28, 1999, speaking to a group of Desert Storm veterans at Fort Myer, VA, former President Bush said:

Had we gone into Baghdad—we could have done it, you guys could have done it, you could have been there in 48 hours—and then what?

The first President Bush continued:

Whose life would be on my hands as the Commander in Chief because I, unilaterally, went beyond international law, went beyond

the stated mission, and said we're going to show our macho? We're going into Baghdad. We're going to be an occupying power—America in an Arab land—with no allies at our side. It would have been disastrous.

That is the first President Bush. That is not me. That is an exact quote from the first President Bush, 1999. I would say to this President: You do not have to listen to us, just listen to your father. He would have told you what you are getting into in Iraq.

This is what his father said:

We're going to be an occupying power—America in an Arab land—with no allies at our side. It would have been disastrous.

It is disastrous. Of course, we heard the same prophetic warnings from Brent Scowcroft, James Baker, and other foreign policy experts. But this President Bush and his partner DICK CHENEY and the neoconservative intellectuals thought they knew better. They reveled in words such as "slam dunk" and "cakewalk." And so now the disaster that Bush 41 warned against has become a reality under Bush 43.

The Iraq invasion has set back, rather than advanced, the war on terrorism and al-Qaida. Osama bin Laden remains at large—an imminent danger to our homeland. Our Armed Forces are bogged down in Iraq, with casualties rising above 8,000, and they are not able to respond to real threats to the United States. Our moral authority and credibility on the world stage are at rock bottom.

The other day I was watching former President Carter at the Carter Center answer a question. He said he has been, I believe I am not mistaken, in over 120 countries. He said never in the history of the United States has our country been at such low esteem and moral authority in the rest of the world—never in the history of our country.

Despite President Bush's blustery threats about the so-called axis of evil, on his watch, North Korea has acquired nuclear weapons and Iran appears to be proceeding with impunity to develop its own nuclear weapons. This is an extraordinary record of mistakes, misjudgments, miscalculations, and missed opportunities.

As a consequence of President Bush's choices over the last 4 years, America is weaker, America is less secure, America is more vulnerable.

I say to my friend and colleague from Utah, whom I quoted earlier, look at the record. Look at this record and come to only one conclusion: The single best recruitment poster for al-Qaida and the terrorists is our policy in Iraq. Quite frankly, the architect of that policy, the person who is carrying it out, is President George W. Bush. No, it is not JOHN KERRY, I say to my friend from Utah. It is not JOHN KERRY. George W. Bush's reckless, stubborn policy is the single best recruiter for al-Qaida, and this must end so that our people can truly be made secure; that we can go after the terrorists; that we can get out of this quagmire in Iraq; that we can once again become the

moral authority, the shining city on a hill that America has been to the rest of the world. I am sad to say it will not happen on this President's watch. That is why a change is in order.

I ask unanimous consent that an article that appeared September 26, 2004, in the Los Angeles Times be printed in its entirety in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Los Angeles Times, Sept. 26, 2004]

AL QAEDA SEEN AS WIDER THREAT

(By Douglas Frantz, Josh Meyer, Sebastian Rotella and Megan K. Stack)

RABAT, MOROCCO.—Authorities have made little progress worldwide in defeating Islamic extremists affiliated with Al Qaeda despite thwarting attacks and arresting high-profile figures, according to interviews with intelligence and law enforcement officials and outside experts.

On the contrary, officials warn that the Bush administration's upbeat assessment of its successes is overly optimistic and masks its strategic failure to understand and combat Al Qaeda's evolution.

Even before the Sept. 11 attacks, Al Qaeda was a loosely organized network, but core leaders exercised considerable control over its operations. Since the loss of its base in Afghanistan and many of those leaders, the organization has dispersed its operatives and reemerged as a lethal ideological movement.

Osama bin Laden may now serve more as an inspirational figure than a CEO, and the war in Iraq is helping focus militants' anger, according to dozens of interviews in recent weeks on several continents. European and moderate Islamic countries have become targets. And instead of undergoing lengthy training at camps in Afghanistan, recruits have been quickly indoctrinated at home and deployed on attacks.

The United States remains a target, but counter-terrorism officials and experts are alarmed by Al Qaeda's switch from spectacular attacks that require years of planning to smaller, more numerous strikes on softer targets that can be carried out swiftly with little money or outside help.

The impact of these smaller attacks can be enormous. Bombings in Casablanca in May 2003 shook Morocco's budding democracy, leading to mass arrests and claims of abuse. The bombing of four commuter trains in Madrid in March contributed to the ouster of Spain's government and the withdrawal of its troops from Iraq.

Officials say the terrorist movement has benefited from the rapid spread of radical Islam's message among potential recruits worldwide who are motivated by Al Qaeda's anti-Western doctrine, the continuing Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the insurgency in Iraq.

The Iraq war, which President Bush says is necessary to build a safer world, has emerged as a new front in the battle against terrorism and a rallying point for a seemingly endless supply of young extremists willing to die in a jihad, or how war.

Intelligence and counter-terrorism officials said Iraq also was replacing Afghanistan and the Russian republic of Chechnya as the premier location for on-the-job training for the next phase of violence against the West and Arab regimes.

"In Iraq, a problem has been created that didn't exist there before," said Judge Jean-Louis Bruguiere of France, dean of Europe's anti-terrorism investigators. "The events in Iraq have had a profound impact on the entirety of the jihad movement."

Officials warn that radical Islam is fanning extremism in moderate Islamic countries such as Morocco, where the threat of terrorism has escalated with unexpected speed and ferocity, and re-energizing adherents in old hot spots such as Kenya and Yemen.

In recent weeks, police thwarted an attack against a U.S. target in Morocco at the last minute, and concerns have increased sharply about the possibility of attacks in Kenya, U.S. and foreign officials say.

The Madrid bombings and arrests in Britain this summer highlight Europe's emergence as a danger zone. Long used by extremists as a haven for recruitment and planning attacks elsewhere, the continent now is believed to be a target itself, especially countries backing the Iraq war.

Al Qaeda's transformation since the destruction of its Afghan training camps nearly three years ago has been chronicled extensively. Arrests and killings of senior leaders and the shutting down of major avenues of financing further fragmented the network.

Bush said at the Republican National Convention this month that more than three-quarters of Al Qaeda's leadership had been killed or captured.

Among those arrested are Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, alleged planner of the Sept. 11 attacks, and Abu Zubeida, who oversaw the global network and helped recruit for the training bases in Afghanistan.

Administration officials contend that information from interrogations helped prevent new attacks and unravel the network, leaving Al Qaeda too diminished to carry out a strike as complex as that of Sept. 11.

Polls indicate that voters trust Bush to handle the fight against terrorism better than his Democratic challenger, Sen. John F. Kerry.

A far less reassuring assessment of the condition of Islamic extremism emerged from the interviews with government intelligence officials, religious figures and counter-terrorism experts in the United States, Europe, the Middle East and North Africa.

Although opinions are not unanimous and ambiguities remain, there is a consensus that Al Qaeda's leadership still exerts some control over attacks worldwide. However, veterans of the extremist movement have demonstrated a new autonomy in using the group's ideology and training techniques to launch attacks with little or no direct contact with the leaders.

"Any assessment that the global terror movement has been rolled back or that even one component, Al Qaeda, is on the run is optimistic and most certainly incorrect," said M.J. Gohel, head of the Asia-Pacific Foundation, a London think tank. "Bin Laden's doctrines are now playing themselves out all over the world. Destroying Al Qaeda will not resolve the problem."

U.S. and foreign intelligence officials said the Bush administration's focus on the "body count" of Al Qaeda leaders and its determination to stop the next attack meant comparatively few resources were devoted to understanding the threat.

Michael Scheuer, a senior CIA official, said in an interview that agents wound up "chasing our tails" to capture suspects and follow up leads at the expense of countering the rapid spread of Al Qaeda and the international jihad.

Scheuer, chief of the CIA's Bin Laden unit from 1996 to 1999, now plays a broader role in counter-terrorism at the agency. He is the author of "Imperial Hubris," a recent book that criticized U.S. counter-terrorism policy; the interview with him occurred before the CIA restricted his conversations with reporters.

Another counter-terrorism expert who works as a consultant for the U.S. govern-

ment and its allies said Scheuer's criticism had been echoed elsewhere.

"I think they're deluged with the immediate stuff and I think their horizons are also very, very short-term," said the consultant, who spoke on condition of anonymity. "One of the biggest complaints I hear when talking to intelligence services around the world is that the Americans are so interested in the short term, preventing attacks and getting credit."

Anti-terrorism experts who fault the administration's strategy and its optimism argue that concentrating on individual plots and operatives obscures the need to address the broader dimensions of Islamic extremism and makes it impossible to mount an effective defense.

The Al Qaeda movement now appears to be more of an ideology than an organization, spreading worldwide among cells inspired by the Sept. 11 attacks.

Adherents generally share a few basic principles: an overarching belief that Muslims must take up arms in a holy war against the Judeo-Christian West, a profound sense of indignation over the deaths of Muslims in Palestinian territories and Iraq, and a conviction that secular rulers should be replaced by Islamic governments.

But beyond that, their concerns often splinter along the lines of geography, local politics and the intricacies of Islamic thought. A Moroccan is unlikely to pursue the same targets or even agree with the strategy of his Saudi counterparts. Saudis, in turn, are fighting bitterly among themselves over whether it's more important to battle the royal family at home or the Americans in Iraq.

The inadequate response to the threat is not unique to Washington.

European officials also see gaps in their policies, particularly when it comes to understanding the complexity of the situation, said Gijs de Vries, the counter-terrorism coordinator for the European Union.

"Al Qaeda is increasingly being invoked as an ideological motivation of Islamic radicals," he said. "There is a type of diffuse jihadism, which on the one hand consists of loosely structured small cells and on the other hand ideology."

SHIFT TO SMALLER STRIKES

A new cadre of second-generation Al Qaeda commanders has compensated for the damage to the network by stepping up the pace of attacks with smaller strikes on soft targets.

The strategy relies on a limited number of veteran operatives trained in Afghanistan who function with a high degree of autonomy. They recruit foot soldiers through mosques, local groups and the Internet, then provide on-site training in bomb-making and tactics.

Senior counter-terrorism authorities in the U.S. and Europe say they are not certain how much central control is exercised over these independent operators—or even whether they are linked to one another in a formal manner.

But officials said evidence indicated that attacks in Saudi Arabia, Morocco and Turkey during the last 16 months were part of a loosely coordinated pattern that could be traced to Bin Laden and his lieutenants.

Based primarily on intercepted communications from Iran to Saudi Arabia by U.S. listening posts, U.S. and European officials said orders for the suicide bombings in the Saudi capital of Riyadh on May 12, 2003, came from an Al Qaeda fugitive in Iran.

The officials said the most likely suspect was Saif Adel, a former Bin Laden bodyguard now believed to be Al Qaeda's military commander. But Western security officials said

Adel was only one of numerous Al Qaeda figures granted haven by Iran's Revolutionary Guards. Iran denies that.

Extremists behind a string of attacks in Saudi Arabia since then operate with a large degree of independence, but Saudi security officials said the radicals retained links with Al Qaeda leaders in Iran and elsewhere by telephone and courier.

Authorities in Morocco and Europe said the go-ahead for the Casablanca suicide attacks on May 16, four days after the Riyadh bombings, was given at a meeting of Al Qaeda commanders in Istanbul, Turkey, in January 2003. They also said the young men who died carrying out the five nearly simultaneous bombings were recruited and trained by an Al Qaeda veteran.

Turkish extremists who bombed two synagogues, the British Consulate and the headquarters of a London-based bank in Istanbul in November 2003, killing more than 60 people, received money and advice on targets from Al Qaeda and its associates, according to testimony this month in the trial of 69 suspects.

One of the defendants, Adrian Ersoz, testified that he arranged a meeting in August 2001 in Afghanistan between Habib Akdas, the leader of the Turkish cell, and Mohammed Atef, also known as Abu Hafs Masri, a top Bin Laden lieutenant later killed in a U.S. airstrike in Afghanistan.

He said that Akdas was promised money from Al Qaeda but that after Afghanistan's Taliban regime collapsed, the cell leader turned for financial help to Al Qaeda representatives in Iran and Syria, whom Ersoz did not identify. Akdas fled to Iraq immediately after the Istanbul bombings and participated in the kidnapping of several Turkish workers there, Turkish authorities said.

These smaller strikes cost relatively little, even compared with the modest \$500,000 price tag for Sept. 11, indicating that the network has adapted to the clampdown on its financing methods.

Mohammed Bouzoubaa, Morocco's justice minister, said the bombings in Casablanca, which killed 45 people, cost \$4,000.

Top suspects in the Madrid bombings have long-standing ties to Al Qaeda cells in Spain, Morocco and elsewhere. Still, six months after the bombings, investigators have no evidence that the planners received instructions or money from outside for the attacks that killed 191 people.

The methods used in Casablanca and Madrid illustrate what a senior European counter-terrorism official described as "the most frightening" scenario: local groups without previous experience, acting with minimal supervision from an interchangeable cast of Al Qaeda veterans.

"By now we have no evidence, not even credible intelligence, that the Madrid group was steered, financed, organized from the outside," he said. "So that might be the biggest success of Bin Laden."

In the past, Al Qaeda militants were mostly educated young men in their mid-20s and older who had strong religious convictions and middle-class backgrounds. They trained extensively at camps in Afghanistan and their missions were planned over months or years.

Recent attackers were drawn from a larger pool of alienated young men, reflecting the wider tug of Al Qaeda's doctrine, Bin Laden's status as a hero to some Muslims and fury at American foreign policy.

Some experts, like Richard Clarke, the former White House counter-terrorism chief, publicly blame the war in Iraq for strengthening the motivation of radical Islamic groups globally. Others still in governments around the world make the point privately, saying that the conflict in Iraq has broadened support for extremism.

De Vries, the EU counter-terrorism chief, acknowledged only that there were differences over the impact of Iraq. "Public opinion in many countries has not been convinced that the war in Iraq has helped the war on terror as defined by some," he said.

The bombers in Casablanca were uneducated slum dwellers between the ages of 20 and 24 with little previous involvement in extremism, religious figures and people who knew them say.

The Moroccan immigrants who spearheaded the Madrid attacks were shopkeepers and drug dealers. They embraced a theology that justified their crimes as part of their jihad.

The sense that an angry young man anywhere could become the next suicide bomber, the absence of training camps and only intermittent contact with any central command structure pose tough challenges for law enforcement.

"Terrorist culture has been disseminated," said Pierre de Bousquet de Florian, director of France's intelligence agency. "Technical knowledge has spread."

Even U.S. officials, most of whom are more optimistic than their foreign counterparts, acknowledged that there were too many blank spots for them to understand the full scope of the threat.

"From what we have seen and learned, particularly in light of the recent arrests, we have made enormous strides in knocking out Al Qaeda," a senior counter-terrorism official in the Bush administration said. "That said, we believe there are operational people who have moved up, with operational expertise, and that there remains some sort of loose command and control structure."

Among the mysteries is whether Bin Laden and his second-in-command, Ayman Zawahiri, still play operational roles. Another question is the extent of coordination between Al Qaeda's leadership and the attacks in Iraq.

The role that Jordanian militant Abu Musab Zarqawi plays in Iraq has been cited repeatedly by the administration as evidence of an Al Qaeda-Iraq link, but many counter-terrorism officials said he had long operated independently.

His activities in Iraq have boosted his status among Islamic extremists and led to what investigators suspect is an even greater independence from Bin Laden.

Zarqawi's reach extends beyond the carnage in Iraq and makes his offshoot of Al Qaeda an urgent threat. As the former chief of a training camp in Afghanistan, he has alliances with militant groups from Chechnya to North Africa.

European counter-terrorism officials blame him for several thwarted attacks in Europe and suspect that he helped plan the Casablanca and Istanbul bombings.

Investigators believe that there are ties between suspects in the Madrid attacks and the Zarqawi network. They have turned up evidence of an operational and ideological axis that links fighters traveling to Iraq from Europe and North Africa—and raises the threat that they will bring the mayhem home with them.

In June, Italian police arrested Rabei Osman Sayed Ahmed, an Egyptian suspected of playing a lead role in the Madrid attacks.

According to transcripts of electronic eavesdropping, police also learned of Ahmed's involvement in a European network sending fighters to Iraq to carry out suicide bombings.

"All my friends are dying, one after another," he said during a conversation in his Milan hide-out May 26. "I know so many who are ready. I tell you there are two groups ready for martyrdom. The first group leaves the 25th or 20th of next month for Iraq via Syria."

French authorities opened an investigation Wednesday into a network involved in recruiting extremists and helping them get to Iraq, but so far the flow of such foreigners does not approach the thousands who went to Afghanistan before 2001.

Still, European investigators are particularly concerned about the increasing movement of North Africans—some from Europe but most from their homelands—to fight in Iraq and what it means for the future.

"Our fear is that they go and become a threat to our countries," said De Bousquet de Florian, the French intelligence chief. "We pay a great deal of attention because once these guys have gone to Iraq to train, they know how to use weapons and explosives. That's the first level: Iraq as a new Afghanistan, a Chechnya."

Determining who is behind the attacks in Iraq is difficult. U.S. military and Iraqi authorities blame much of the violence on foreign fighters, and Saudis, Egyptians and other nationals have been seen saying farewell in videotapes before suicide bombings. A Saudi captured after a botched car bombing in Baghdad recently said he had been slipped across the border, given \$200 and keys to a car and told to attack a military convoy.

But some say pinning most of the suicide attacks on Zarqawi's network and foreign fighters in general ignores the insurgency's home-grown aspects and overlooks growing links between Iraqis and radical Islam.

RADICAL ISLAM ADAPTS

The new model of Islamic terrorism was born May 16, 2003, in Sidi Moumen, a shantytown of 200,000 people on the outskirts of Casablanca. That day a band of unemployed young men from the neighborhood, most of whom lived on the same narrow street, carried out five nearly simultaneous attacks.

The targets were in the heart of Casablanca: a Jewish community center, a Spanish restaurant and social club, a hotel, a Jewish cemetery and a Jewish-owned Italian restaurant. The death toll was 45, including 12 of the 14 bombers.

Morocco's role in Islamic extremism previously had been as a way station for jihadis entering and leaving Europe, and investigators said the emergence of Moroccans as front-line operatives demonstrated the ability of radical Islam to adapt.

In unraveling the Casablanca plot, Moroccan and foreign authorities discovered that the bombers had no previous ties to extremism, which meant spotting them in advance would have been almost impossible, even in a country where paid informants lurk in almost every neighborhood.

Moroccan authorities identified Karim Mejatti, a Moroccan veteran of Afghanistan, as the person who recruited them and received a green light for the attacks in the meeting in Istanbul. Unlike his recruits, Mejatti is educated and spent time in the U.S. in the late 1990s. He remains a fugitive.

On camping trips in the dusty hills outside Casablanca, Mejatti indoctrinated the men and taught them to make explosives, authorities said. Al Qaeda videos on making bombs with TATP, the group's trademark explosive, were later discovered in their homes. They rode to the attacks in taxis with homemade explosives stuffed into backpacks.

"They did not need sophisticated equipment or means," said Bouzoubaa, the justice minister. "They made their own explosives."

Mejatti recruited the men in November 2002, and authorities were struck by the speed with which he converted them into suicide bombers.

Moroccan police foiled a number of follow-up attacks in other cities by cells formed by Mejatti and a handful of other graduates of Afghan camps, investigators said.

"The thing about this kind of operation is that it could be repeated just about anywhere," said an Italian law enforcement official who investigated the European links to Casablanca.

Spanish anti-terrorism police who visited Casablanca after the attacks said they were convinced the tactic could be replicated in Europe. The prediction came true 10 months later in Madrid.

The involvement of Moroccans in the Madrid attack and evidence that it was linked to Casablanca sent shivers through the counter-terrorism community.

Spain's leading anti-terrorism judge, Baltasar Garzon, testified before a government commission investigating the bombings that Morocco was home to as many as 100 cells linked to Al Qaeda. They pose Europe's biggest terrorist threat, he said.

Other counter-terrorism officials said Garzon's figures might be too high, but they estimated that 400 to 500 Al Qaeda veterans returned to Morocco after the Taliban regime's collapse in Afghanistan.

The officials said Moroccan extremists posed a unique danger because they could slip easily in and out of Europe and blend in with the immigrant population. Moroccans are the largest immigrant group in several European countries.

Morocco prides itself on being a moderate country with virtually no history of terrorism, but the Casablanca attacks led to a massive crackdown that has drawn complaints from local and international human rights groups.

More than 100 mosques have been closed and thousands of people rounded up and jailed. Family members and lawyers complained that detainees were abused and tortured.

So far, about 1,000 people have been convicted of terrorism-related offenses; 14 have been sentenced to death, including the two surviving Casablanca bombers.

Washington has provided tens of millions of dollars in aid to Morocco and deeper cooperation in law enforcement.

In July, three FBI agents moved into the U.S. Embassy in Rabat to work with the Moroccans. A Navy officer was assigned to help monitor potential attacks on shipping in the Strait of Gibraltar.

U.S. diplomats are on high alert in Morocco. Two planned attacks in recent months, including one on an American target, were stopped only hours before their execution, authorities in Rabat said.

Police also discovered that a private security guard at the embassy was reporting diplomats' movements to an extremist group.

Morocco's leaders are defensive about their country's new profile in the campaign against Islamic extremism. Senior officials argue that outsiders are trying to destabilize a country that is striving to be a model of moderation for the Arab world.

Moroccans and officials of other Islamic countries agree that anger over U.S. policies in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict provides much of the motivation for the attacks.

"If the Palestinian issue were settled, if Iraq were stable, 70% of the threats would disappear," said Bouzoubaa, the justice minister.

But officials say they also recognize that not enough has been done to reach disaffected areas such as Sidi Moumen.

In July, King Mohammed VI ordered new social programs, including the construction of 100 small mosques and 20 large ones to counter the spread of hard-line Islam.

"We are very aware that we must fill the gap between what is good in Islam and the initiatives by outsiders, particularly in the poorer areas," said Ahmed Toufiq, the minister of Islamic affairs. "They were left to themselves too long."

REFUGES FOR EXTREMISTS

Even as new trouble spots emerge, eradicating known extremist sanctuaries has proved difficult, particularly in remote places out of the reach of government authority, such as parts of Yemen on the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula.

After Al Qaeda bombed the U.S. destroyer *Cole* in Yemen in 2000, killing 17 American sailors, Washington helped train and equip Yemeni security forces and tried to persuade the government to do more to counter extremists.

But diplomats say the country remains primarily a lawless place where forbidding terrain and intricate tribal codes provide an ideal nest for militants.

Saudi and U.S. officials identified Yemen as the primary source of weapons and explosives for the Al Qaeda cells that have launched attacks in neighboring Saudi Arabia.

"Yemen still has to be viewed as largely ungovernable," a senior U.S. counter-terrorism official said. "We sunk some money and time and effort into it, but we don't have much to show for it."

Yemeni officials acknowledged in interviews that surface-to-air missiles, grenade launchers and other weapons remain widely available despite a crackdown on open-air arms bazaars.

The mix of radicals and weapons is particularly potent along the Saudi border, which encompasses rugged mountains and remote desert where tribal leaders hold sway.

"If somebody comes, he's going to pay for tribal protection," said Faisal Aburas, a sheik from the impoverished province of Al Jawf on the Saudi border.

"Then it would look bad for a sheik to hand him in, even if he's a criminal, because it shows weakness."

Abubakr al Qerbi, Yemen's foreign minister, denied that the country still harbored Al Qaeda veterans.

"This is old information," he said, saying they were expelled in 1995 and again after the *Cole* bombing.

But Hamood Abdulhamid Hitar, a Yemeni government official in charge of negotiating with extremists, said he was holding theological debates with hundreds of militants, including 107 suspected Al Qaeda loyalists.

Yemen also links the Arabian Peninsula and the Horn of Africa. Somalia, where there is virtually no workable, central government, is just an hour by boat across waterways that are essentially wide open.

Farther down the coast in Kenya, concerns focus on a group run by Fazul Abdullah Mohammed, an Al Qaeda operative with a \$25-million bounty on his head. Mohammed, a native of Comoros off the southeastern coast of Africa, was indicted in the United States on charges of orchestrating the 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. He also is suspected of organizing the 2002 attacks on Israeli targets in Mombasa, Kenya.

Today, U.S. and other Western security officials say they believe he is planning another round of attacks, possibly on the new U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, the Kenyan capital.

"Al Qaeda is preparing for another sensational attack against Western targets in Kenya," a Western security official said. "Two attacks planned for Kenya were exposed during the past year."

U.S. officials suspect that the hunt for Mohammed has driven him into a remote part of northern Kenya, but they say he remains in touch with Al Qaeda leaders through courier and computer.

"I consider him to be a high-value target and a real player in the global Al Qaeda op-

eration," said a senior U.S. official in Washington.

U.S. STILL A TARGET

U.S. and foreign intelligence and counter-terrorism officials warned that the United States remained the prime target of radical Islam.

"They have overcome the shock of the Afghanistan war and very likely they are preparing another large scale attack, possibly on a U.S. target," the senior European counter-terrorism official said. "There are good reasons to be on alert."

A CHANGING ROSTER

Despite the arrests of several high-profile leaders, anti-terrorism experts believe that Al Qaeda has managed to reemerge as a lethal ideological movement. Dispersed operatives—loosely organized or acting alone—recruit and quickly train local terrorist groups for small but deadly attacks.

A TERRORIST EVOLUTION

In operations such as the 1998 U.S. Embassy bombings in Africa and the Sept. 11 attacks, Al Qaeda leaders exercised considerable control over operations. Today, Al Qaeda appears to have become more ideology than network, spreading globally among cells inspired by Sept. 11.

MARKING TERROR'S CHANGES

"In Iraq, a problem has been created that didn't exist there before. The events in Iraq have had a profound impact on the entirety of the jihad movement." Judge Jean-Louis Brugulere, French anti-terrorism investigator.

"Any assessment that the global terror movement has been rolled back or that even one component, Al Qaeda, is on the run is optimistic and most certainly incorrect. Bin Laden's doctrines are now playing themselves out all over the world. Destroying Al Qaeda will not resolve the problem." M.J. Gohel, head of the Asia-Pacific Foundation, a London think tank.

"Once these guys have gone to Iraq to train, they know how to use weapons and explosives. That's the first level: Iraq as a new Afghanistan, a Chechnya." Pierre de Bousquet de Florian, director of France's intelligence agency.

"Al Qaeda is increasingly being invoked as an ideological motivation of Islamic radicals." Gijs de Vries, counter-terrorism coordinator for the European Union.

"By now we have no evidence, not even credible intelligence, that the Madrid group was steered, financed, organized from the outside. So that might be the biggest success of Bin Laden." A senior European counter-terrorism official.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CORNYN). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the remainder of morning business time on both sides be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. Morning business is closed.

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE REFORM ACT OF 2004

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to consideration of S. 2845, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2845) to reform the intelligence community and the intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the U.S. Government, and for other purposes.

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, today the Senate begins an important debate on the National Intelligence Reform Act. This legislation, which I have introduced with my good friend and colleague, Senator JOE LIEBERMAN, represents the most sweeping reform of our intelligence structures in more than 50 years. It reorganizes an intelligence community designed for the Cold War into one designed for the war against global terrorism and future national security threats. It recognizes that the fundamental obligation of government is to protect its citizens and that those protections must evolve along with the threats. It reorders the priorities of an intelligence structure that was devised for a different time and a different enemy.

On July 22, the 9/11 Commission released its final report on terrorist attacks against the United States. On that same day, our leaders, Senator FRIST and Senator DASCHLE, assigned the Governmental Affairs Committee the task of developing legislation addressing the Commission's recommendations to restructure the intelligence agencies within the executive branch. Our committee performed that task with dedication and diligence, and with the active participation of its talented members. From late July until mid-September, we held eight in-depth hearings to assess the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission. We heard testimony from more than two dozen witnesses, including Secretary of State Powell, Secretary of Homeland Security Ridge, FBI Director Mueller, CIA Director McLaughlin, the 9/11 Commission Cochairmen, Kean and Hamilton, Commissioners Fielding and Gorelick, intelligence experts, field operatives, professors, and representatives of the 9/11 families. As a result of this unprecedented effort and wide-ranging input, the committee has produced the legislation now before the Senate. It is legislation that is comprehensive, bipartisan—indeed, unanimous—and historic.

This legislation is not, however, merely the product of 2 months' work by our committee. It is based upon the work of the 9/11 Commission and the inquiry that spanned 20 months, with 19 days of hearings and 160 witnesses, the review of 2.5 million documents,