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# PRISON RADICALIZATION: ARE TERRORIST CELLS FORMING IN U.S. CELL BLOCKS?

## HEARING

BEFORE THE

## COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

SEPTEMBER 19, 2006

Available via http://www.access.gpo.gov/congress/senate

Printed for the use of the
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

30–597 PDF WASHINGTON : 2007

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) 512–2250 Mail: Stop SSOP, Washington, DC 20402–0001

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# PRISON RADICALIZATION: ARE TERRORIST CELLS FORMING IN U.S. CELL BLOCKS?

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2006**

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS,
*Washington, DC.*

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:02 a.m., in room 342, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Susan M. Collins, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Collins and Carper.

## OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN COLLINS

Chairman COLLINS. The Committee will come to order.

For the past 5 years, the Federal Government has attempted to prevent terrorists from entering our country from abroad. Our homeland security efforts have made it increasingly difficult for foreign terrorists to infiltrate and operate in the United States. Increased border security and screening of overseas airline passengers, while critical to help keep out foreign terrorists, do not, however, protect us from home-grown terrorists. The rise of domestic terrorist cells inspired by but not linked directly to al Qaeda is an emerging threat to our national security.

This morning, the Committee will examine a deep pool of potential homegrown operatives, American prisons. Our corrections facilities, Federal, State, and local, provide fertile grounds for radicalization and recruitment efforts. We have seen this problem in the formation of such prison gangs as the Mexican mafia and the white supremacist group, the Aryan Brotherhood. And we see it in the focus of our hearing today, the spread in prison of an extremist form of Islam dedicated to committing acts of terrorism.

Let me be clear. Our concern is not with prison inmates converting to Islam. For many converts, this religion brings the direction and purpose their lives previously lacked. Our concern is instead with those who would use prisons as places to indoctrinate inmates with a hateful ideology that incites adherents to commit violent acts.

We need to learn more about the process of radicalization. For some inmates, the conversion to Islam sets their lives on a lasting path that shuns violence and criminality. What is it, then, that leads other inmates to adopt the extremist interpretation that teaches violence against those of different beliefs? How can prison authorities identify the teachings that incite violence while respecting the right of inmates to have access to religious materials? What

training and skills do corrections officers need to be able to recognize radicalization and recruitment efforts?

A current case demonstrates that these concerns are not hypothetical. Kevin James is an American citizen incarcerated in California for armed robbery. A convert to Islam in prison, this self-styled Imam founded an organization called JIS, the Arabic initials of the Assembly for Authentic Islam. Based upon his radical interpretation of Islam, Kevin James preached that it was the duty of JIS members to target his perceived enemies of Islam, including U.S. military personnel and Jewish and non-Jewish supporters of Israel, for violent attacks. Kevin James recruited JIS members among his fellow inmates.

One of Kevin James' radicalized converts, upon being released from prison, allegedly recruited other members at a Los Angeles area mosque. His group reportedly sought to acquire automatic weapons, firearms with silencers, and explosives. They conducted surveillance on military installations, synagogues, and the Israeli consulate. Allegedly, they financed their operations by committing at least 11 armed robberies throughout Southern California.

Kevin James and his accomplices now face trial on terrorism charges. This terrorist plot was only uncovered when a JIS operative inadvertently dropped a cell phone at one of the crime scenes. The data retrieved from that phone allowed the FBI-led investigators to trace the crimes from the gang committing the robberies back to the prison and ultimately back to Kevin James. It was only then that prison officials learned the true nature of JIS and the scope of the conspiracy that had developed within the prison walls. We have to wonder how many other such conspiracies are taking shape under the radar in other prisons.

During our first panel today, experts from the George Washington University and the University of Virginia will release a report by their Prisoner Radicalization Task Force. The report, titled "Out of the Shadows: Getting Ahead of Prisoner Radicalization,"[1] is one of the first to address religious radicalization in American prisons. I am pleased that we have the two chairmen of this task force with us today.

We will also have a witness who will give us the inside view based on his experience in working for an Islamic charity that has ties to terrorist groups and that has been listed as supporting terrorism financially. This individual will tell us about a prison literature program run by this charity.

We will then look at the government's response to radicalization with a panel of Federal experts who will discuss, among other things, the Correctional Intelligence Initiative, a positive program at the Federal level. But we have to remember that most prisoners are held at the State level, not in Federal prisons.

We will discuss with this panel the challenges that we face. For example, how can we, while preserving civil liberties, track released inmates identified as radicalized as they move from one jurisdiction to another? How can one State's corrections system, having identified a particular chaplain, volunteer, or inmate as a teacher who incites others to violence, effectively share that infor-

[1] The report appears in the Appendix on page 86.

mation with other systems should that clergy member move to another system or if an inmate be transferred to another prison?

This is an issue with profound national security implications that reach into virtually every State and a great many cities throughout America. We must find a way to bring every level of government with a corrections system into a unified effort that addresses our national security while respecting the autonomy and authority of the individual jurisdictions.

I would note that the criminal gang that sprang from Kevin James' teaching of violent jihad was centered in Torrance, California. Hence, the investigation that resulted was given the code name "Torrancial Rain," a code name that well describes the storm of terrorism that could result if the radicalization of prison inmates goes unchecked.

We are very pleased today to have the distinguished Senator from Delaware, Senator Carper, acting as the Ranking Minority Member at Senator Lieberman's request. Welcome, Senator Carper.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARPER**

Senator CARPER. Thanks, Madam Chairman. I said to Senator Lieberman, this is a little bit like Pee Wee Reese pinch-hitting for Mickey Mantle. But I got up early this morning to catch the train and was driving to the train station this morning in Wilmington. I turned on NPR, and there you were.

Chairman COLLINS. Really?

Senator CARPER. There you were, in living color. It is a pleasure to sit here and to pinch hit for Senator Lieberman.

I had a busy weekend. You probably did, too. Among the folks I met with, I met with a number of people whose faith is Islam, and we talked about radicalization and how in my own faith, I am Protestant, but we have some people in our faith who have tried to hijack it in order to meet their own ends. We have seen Catholic priests abuse young people, but that doesn't make Catholicism bad or wrong, in the same way we have seen folks that have taken the major faith of Islam and tried to pervert it for their own means.

I think as we start today's hearings, it is always important to remember that most of the people who are Muslim and whose faith is Islam are good. In this country, they are good, law-abiding citizens, and they really just want the same things that the rest of us want. So as we approach this hearing, I think it is important maybe just to remind us all of that.

Having said that, I thank you for the chance to be here. We appreciate our witnesses coming today, and we look forward to their testimony as well.

This is obviously an important and timely hearing as we commemorated just last week the fifth anniversary of the September 11 attacks and the loss of 3,000 people. Those attacks, as we know, were perpetrated by 19 hijackers who grew up and were indoctrinated with their radical views overseas. Last week, we had Secretary Chertoff before us and some homeland security experts who came by to testify, and some of the discussion focused on the threat of home-grown terrorism and whether the next terrorists who seek to do harm to us might actually come from within our own borders.

While home-grown Islamic terrorism might not be as much of a threat here as it is in, say, Europe or some other places, we ignore the threat that does exist at our peril. We need to look no further than the experiences of our allies in Great Britain to see the danger we could be facing down the road or down the railroad track. I understand that many of those arrested this past summer in the plot to blow up planes on the way to the United States were British citizens. British citizens also played a role in the deadly transit attacks that took a number of lives in London last July.

So I think it is important that we address what contributes to the spread of radical or violent views before we have major problems on our hands, as well.

I was disturbed, as I am sure many of us were, as I prepared for this hearing to learn how extensive of a problem we may already have, at least in some communities within our country. Islamic radicalism and other extreme ideologies prey on the minds of the angry and the dispossessed. America's crowded prison systems are full of that type of person, unfortunately, and are probably the ideal place for someone with dangerous views to attract and foster new recruits. At least some people have figured that out.

As a former governor who was once very much involved in our own corrections system in our State, I know that religion and other diversions, like job training, are an important part of keeping prisons safer and helping to ensure that when inmates are released, and most all of them will be, they come out of those prisons as better people, not as better criminals.

In our prisons, Madam Chairman, we used to say that we seek to focus on a variety of inmates' needs—their educational needs, as many of them had little if any education, their substance abuse problems that they faced, their needs for job training so they would have a job skill when they walked out of there, working with them on life skills, just knowing that they had a schedule and had to get up in the morning and have breakfast and go to work and have people who expected something from them. We sought to meet their spiritual needs, as well. We tried to touch all of those bases before we let 95, 96, 97, 98 percent of them go, to leave and to go back out into the community.

I am certain that the vast majority of those who go to prisons to preach or to seek converts are good people quite literally doing the Lord's work. I know a number of them in my State, and you probably do, too, and that is certainly the case in most instances. I understand that the Federal Bureau of Prisons and other agencies have done some work aimed at keeping Islamic radicals out of the Federal prison system and attempting to ensure that extreme versions of the Qur'an and other writings don't make their way into the hands of impressionable prisoners, and that is good news. But the vast majority of prisoners at risk of being influenced by dangerous ideologies are serving their time in State or local institutions.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today about steps that we need to take and steps that those who run our prisons need to take to prevent prison systems from becoming even more susceptible than they currently are to the spread of the kind of thinking that leads to tragedies like September 11.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARPER

Thank you, Madam Chair. Thanks as well to our witnesses for being here today and for helping us shed some light on this important issue.

This is a very timely hearing. Just last week, we commemorated the fifth anniversary of the September 11 attacks and the three thousand lives that were taken that day.

Those attacks, as we all know, were perpetrated by 19 hijackers who grew up and were indoctrinated with their radical views overseas.

Last week, we had Secretary Chertoff and some homeland security experts in to testify and some of the discussion focused on the threat of homegrown terrorism and whether the next terrorist who seeks to do us harm might come from our own shores.

While homegrown Islamic terrorism might not be as much of a threat here as it is in Europe or elsewhere, we ignore the threat that does exist at our peril.

We need look no further than the experiences of some of our allies to see the danger we could be facing down the road. I understand that many of those arrested in recent months in failed plots in Great Britain and Canada were actually British and Canadian citizens. Homegrown terrorists also played a role in the deadly transit attacks that took hundreds of lives in attacks in London and Madrid.

It's important, then, that we address what contributes to the spread of radical or violent views before we have a major problem on our hands as well.

I was disturbed as I prepared for this hearing to learn how extensive a problem we may already have, at least in some communities.

Islamic radicalism and other extreme ideologies prey on the minds of the angry and the dispossessed. America's crowded prison systems are full of that type of person, unfortunately, and are probably the ideal place for someone with dangerous views to attract and foster new recruits. At least some people have figured that out.

As a former governor who was once responsible for running my state's prison system, I know that religion and other diversions like job training are an important part of keeping prisons safer and helping ensure that inmates are better people once they get out. I'm certain that the vast majority of those who go to prisons to preach or seek converts are good people quite literally doing the Lord's work. That's certainly the case in Delaware.

I understand that the Federal Bureau of Prisons and other agencies have done some work aimed at keeping Islamic radicals out of the federal prison system and ensuring that extreme versions of the Koran and other writing don't make their way into the hands of impressionable prisoners.

That's good news, but the vast majority of prisoners at risk of being influenced by dangerous ideologies are serving their time in state or local institutions. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today about steps we need to take and steps those who run our prisons need to take to prevent prison systems from becoming even more susceptible than they currently are to the spread of the kind of thinking that leads to tragedies like September 11.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you, Senator.

I would now like to introduce the witnesses on our first panel. We are very pleased to have each of you here today.

Our first witness, Frank Cilluffo, is the Associate Vice President for Homeland Security and Director of the Homeland Security Policy Institute at the George Washington University. He currently serves as the Co-Chair of the Prisoner Radicalization Task Force, which as I mentioned was jointly sponsored by George Washington and the University of Virginia's Critical Incident Analysis Group. Mr. Cilluffo joined GW from the White House, where he served as Special Assistant to the President for Homeland Security.

Our second witness, Dr. Gregory Saathoff, serves as the Executive Director of the Critical Incident Analysis Group and is an associate professor at the University of Virginia. He currently serves as the other Co-Chair with Mr. Cilluffo of the Prisoner Radicalization Task Force. He is also on the Research Advisory Board for the FBI's National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime. Over the

past 15 years, he has provided psychiatric consultations to inmates in more than 10 Federal and State prisons in the United States.

Our final witness on this panel, Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, is the Senior Consultant for the Gerard Group International and Co-Chair of the Counterterrorism Foundation. He converted to Islam in his early 20s and eventually went to work for the head U.S. office of the Al Haramain Islamic Foundation, a group later designated by the U.S. Government as a financier of terrorism.

I welcome all of you here today. We very much appreciate sharing your expertise, and Mr. Cilluffo, we will start with you.

**TESTIMONY OF FRANK J. CILLUFFO,[1] ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT FOR HOMELAND SECURITY, AND DIRECTOR, HOMELAND SECURITY POLICY INSTITUTE, THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY**

Mr. CILLUFFO. Madam Chairman, Senator Carper, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. Your initiative in pushing to the fore the issue of prison radicalization is crucial. Proactive consideration of this challenge and a carefully calibrated response will place the United States ahead of the curve and bolster national security. We simply cannot wait until we are faced with the need to manage a crisis.

In today's context, radicalization is "the process by which inmates adopt extreme views, including beliefs that violent measures need to be taken for political or religious purposes." This is a subset of a more general phenomenon of radicalization that has manifested itself in a series of terrorist attacks and activities, including the bombings in Madrid, in London, as well as the thwarted terrorist activities in Canada earlier this year.

The larger terrorist threat is the tapestry by which prisoner radicalization must be studied, but that fabric is ever changing. Al Qaeda in its classic form is now a degraded entity, with many of its remaining key figures on the run. However, it has franchised itself across the globe with its franchises prepared to act locally and largely independently, in effect, a network of networks. We have also seen the emergence of a leaderless movement, marked significantly by self-enlistment and taking its inspiration from al Qaeda classic to join the global Salafi jihad.

The Internet has fueled this development, building in essence a virtual umma, wherein chat rooms have replaced the smoke-filled bars of le Carré novels. Ironically, it is when home-grown groups attempt to reach out to al Qaeda that they have been caught in key instances. Fortunately, these groups have not yet attained a higher level of competence.

Whether beyond prison walls or inside them, it is essential to better understand the life cycle of a terrorist, specifically, the process by which an individual becomes motivated to listen to radical ideas, read about them, enlist oneself or respond to terrorist recruiting efforts, and ultimately act upon those ideas. This transition from sympathizer to activist will be addressed in greater detail by my colleague, Dr. Saathoff.

[1] The prepared statement of Mr. Cilluffo appears in the Appendix on page 37.

Prison radicalization is not a new threat. To the contrary, prisons have always been an incubator for radical ideas, in part because there is a captive audience. Recall that Hitler wrote *Mein Kampf* while in prison, and Stalin while himself incarcerated recruited inmates to power the Bolshevik Revolution. The founder of Arkan's Tigers, who took part in the ethnic cleansing of Bosnia in the 1990s, was just a petty criminal until he spent time in Western Europe prisons. The spiritual philosopher of al Qaeda, Sayyid Qutb, wrote the radical Islamist manifesto *Milestones Along the Road* while in an Egyptian prison. Al-Zarqawi, initially merely a petty criminal, rose to leadership while imprisoned in Jordan.

Of course, religious radicalization is not unique to Islam and remains the exception rather than the rule, irrespective of the faith at issue.

Five months ago, GW's Homeland Security Policy Institute and UVA's Critical Incident Analysis Group convened a dedicated all-volunteer task force encompassing a variety of subject matter experts to do a deep dive into this issue, some of whom are here today—Abdullah Ansary, Steve Herrick, Thurgood Marshall, Jr., and all of whom should be thanked for their time and insights. Our goal was to examine radicalization in prisons from a multi-dimensional perspective rather than studying the issue through a single lens or solely from a law enforcement or intelligence perspective.

During the course of our work, we heard from imams and chaplains and brought together officials at all levels of government with scholars of religion and behavioral science experts. The aim was to integrate insights from each of these professions and recast their distinct lenses on this issue as a prism. Our study led us to conclude that an objective risk assessment is urgently needed in order to better understand the nature of the threat. Although we have snippets of data, we still don't have a sense of how these various pixels fit together as a mosaic in the big picture. Simply put, we don't know what we don't know.

We urge you to establish a multidisciplinary commission to investigate this issue in depth and to advance our understanding of the nature of the threat and lay the groundwork for effective and proactive prevention and response measures.

To date, select cases from the well known, such as Richard Reid and the New Folsum Prison case and Sheik Rahman, to the lesser known, such as El Rukn or the extremist Christian group Covenant, Sword, and Arm of the Lord, have revealed connections between former prisoners and terrorism. Each held the potential to be a high-consequence event, and authorities have attested that these cases would appear to be just the tip of the iceberg, though they cannot discuss ongoing investigations publicly in great detail.

The potential scope of our challenge is considerable. America's prison population is the world's largest, at over 2 million. Our incarceration rate is the world's highest. Ninety-three percent of U.S. inmates are in State and local prisons and jails. The figures for California alone are staggering. Facilities are hugely overcrowded, operating at 200 percent capacity. Wardens understandably have their hands full dealing with day-to-day operations and safety issues alone. And prisoners with radical Islamic religious views often conduct themselves as model prisoners, so wardens and other

prison staff who are already overburdened may have little incentive to focus on these inmates.

Despite such overstretch, California officials have demonstrated an impressive level of resolve and commitment to countering prisoner radicalization. Arizona and New York also have been forward-leaning in their approach. However, even in these proactive jurisdictions, publicized successes may be due in no small part to luck, as you mentioned earlier, Madam Chairman.

In short, strides have been made, but disconnects remain. Crucially, local information has yet to fully find its way into regional and national intelligence processes and networks, and strategic analysis is not yet fused with investigatory efforts. The old adage, do you string them up or do you string them along, still has not been 100 percent resolved.

Complicating the matter, there is currently no database, as you mentioned, Madam Chairman, to track inmates after release or to identify inmates associated with radical groups and no comprehensive database exists to track religious service providers who are known to expose inmates to radical religious rhetoric.

Compounding the threat by Islamic radicalization is the established presence of violent gangs and extremist Christian groups in prisons. Some of these groups have found common cause with extremist Muslim groups who share their hostility toward the U.S. Government and Israel, the enemy of my enemy is my friend effect.

It should go without saying that religion may have a tremendously constructive impact upon inmates, imbuing them with a sense of discipline and purpose, among other things. Prisoners have a legal right to practice their religion, and prisons are legally bound to provide for inmate worship. Unfortunately, a shortage of suitably qualified Muslim religious service providers has opened the door to under-qualified and radical chaplains to enter prisons. In fact, prisoners often take on this role themselves. Their converts may in large part have had no prior exposure to Islam and have no means to put the radical message into context. The only version some may ever learn is a cut-and-paste version of the Qur'an that incorporates violent prison gang culture, known as jailhouse Islam or Prislam.

Currently, prayer leaders and religious service providers only require endorsement by local organizations, and there is no consistently applied standard or procedure to determine what reading material is appropriate to enter the prison system. Radical literature and extremist translations and interpretations of the Qur'an have been distributed to prisoners by groups suspected or known to support terrorism.

The threat posed by prisoner radicalization does not end when inmates are paroled or released. Former inmates are vulnerable to radicalization and recruitment because many leave prison with very little financial or social support. By providing for prisoners in their time of greatest need, radical organizations can build upon the loyalty developed during the individual's time in prison, and this is an oft-used tactic by gangs and white supremacist groups.

The challenge of prison radicalization is by no means unique to the United States. The problem is a global one, and moving forward information sharing between and among the United States

and other countries will be crucial. Others' experience offers us an opportunity to stay ahead of the curve by learning, adapting, and applying the lessons of what has worked elsewhere and what has not.

Moving forward, the most fundamental imperative in my view as well as that of the task force is for Congress to establish a commission to investigate this issue in depth. Only then will we better understand the full breadth and depth of the threat and hence respond accordingly and better prioritize our resources. All relevant perspectives must feed into this endeavor. No one profession alone is equipped to analyze and recommend change. And throughout, the practice of religion should be given fulsome consideration and weight while means of preventing the spread of radical ideology in a religious context are studied.

We would urge that the commission accord the following core issues priority status: Information sharing between and among agencies at all levels of government involved in managing inmates and monitoring radical groups; steps to ensure the legitimacy of Islamic endorsing agencies so as to ensure a reliable and effective process of providing religious services to Muslim inmates; steps to effectively reintegrate former inmates into the larger society; development of a comprehensive strategy to counter radicalization, drawing upon the lessons that can be learned and adapted from other efforts to combat gangs and right-wing extremists in prisons; and the evaluation of existing prison programs from all levels of government and internationally designed to prevent radicalization and recruitment or to disrupt radical groups. Knowledge must be translated into action across the board. Awareness, education, and training programs must be developed for personnel who work in prison, probation, and parole settings.

Finally, broader avenues of dialogue with the Muslim community should be identified and pursued to foster mutual respect and understanding and ultimately trust. To confine the discussion to issues of terrorism alone is bound to encourage a defensive posture and impede constructive dialogue.

Prison radicalization is but one subset of the battle of ideas, and it is only by challenging ideas with ideas, both within and beyond prison walls, that hearts and minds may ultimately be changed and radical ideas moderated.

Thank you, Madam Chairman, and I am sorry for going a couple seconds overtime.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you very much for excellent testimony. Dr. Saathoff.

**TESTIMONY OF GREGORY B. SAATHOFF, M.D.,[1] EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CRITICAL INCIDENT ANALYSIS GROUP, AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF RESEARCH, SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA**

Dr. SAATHOFF. Chairman Collins, Senator Carper, and the staff members of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, I would like to thank you for inviting me to testify before you today on this subject of national importance. It has

[1] The prepared statement of Dr. Saathoff appears in the Appendix on page 46.

been a privilege to serve as Co-Chair with Mr. Cilluffo on the Prisoner Radicalization Task Force that has released its report today.

Throughout the last decade, I have assisted in the coordination of briefings between behavioral science experts in the FBI and an international group of religion scholars associated with the American Academy of Religions. During the last 15 years, as a member of the faculty of the University of Virginia's School of Medicine, I have provided consultation in more than 10 State prisons, Federal prisons, and jails. Through this work, I have had an opportunity to witness the importance of the media, the power of social networks, the changing role of information technology, and the often vital role that religion plays in rehabilitation, if not redemption.

In my brief remarks today, I will speak to the issue of radicalization from a behavioral science perspective.

While the Federal prison system has made great strides in addressing the issues of religious radicalization and recruitment within prisons, our level of awareness and understanding is still quite limited, particularly at the level of the State prisons, community corrections, and local jails. Research on the characteristics of terrorist recruits abroad has identified youth, unemployment, alienation, a need for a sense of self-importance, and a need to belong to a group as common factors, all of which are present among U.S. prison populations.

The landscape of prison life has also changed dramatically in that the 24-hour news cycle available within prisons acts as a force multiplier. Now, why is this important? Behavior is contagious, whether it occurs in exuberant fans crowding onto a sports field after a victory or angry inmates who riot within a facility.

I learned this myself when I was called to see an inmate who had set his cell on fire. It was only after I treated him that I realized that the image of a raging fire on television had provoked him to torch his cell.

This can also occur on a macro level. Two days after the World Trade Center attack, I consulted to a prison that I thought I knew well. Anxious inmates informed me that the televised images of the September 11 attack were cause for celebration among many of the inmates. In fact, they estimated that perhaps a third of the inmates praised the attacks, and their cheers could be heard in cellblock after cellblock. I would like to emphasize that the cheering inmates shared not a single religion, but a vulnerability to radicalization.

Of course, access to radio and television can have a significant positive impact within prisons. However, one of the byproducts of our smaller, more information-connected world is the globalization of grievance. Images of distant conflicts are burned into the memories and identities of impressionable inmates. Television transmissions of bombings and group violence have immense power, and their impact within the prison environment cannot be overstated.

When there has been little exposure to organized religion in the community, the inmates' understanding of religion is dependent upon the religious leadership and materials at their facilities, and this is complicated by the fact that the vast majority of inmates are located not in the Federal, but in the State prisons and local jails, 1.7 million inmates in a diverse, dispersed system, or set of sys-

tems, actually. Radical rhetoric may therefore exploit the inmates' vulnerabilities and lack of grounded religious knowledge by providing validation to the inmates' disillusionment with society and by creating an outlet for their violent impulses.

Psychological factors that increase vulnerability include a high level of distress, cultural disillusionment, lack of intrinsic religious beliefs or values, dysfunctional family systems, and dependent personality tendencies. Inmates may also be drawn to radical groups out of the need for protection or to gain status among other prisoners.

Occasionally, I am asked to describe the typical radicalized inmate. While it seems a reasonable question, I would suggest that focusing only on individual inmates is not an appropriate solution. In fact, terrorism is a team sport. Social bonding is not only the magnet, but also the glue that holds these groups together, rather than concepts like brainwashing that are simple, attractive, and wrong. The most effective terrorists are team players who play different positions on a radicalized field. Our overcrowded prisons provide an opportunity for a deep bench.

Even more importantly, para-radicalization and recruitment occur in prison. In this exploitative environment, inmates, visitors, and even prison employees can be unwitting players who can be cajoled, bribed, or coerced into transmitting messages and materials without being aware of their real purpose.

It is not enough to understand terrorism in prison by learning only about inmates. One must also have an understanding of those who visit and volunteer in prisons. Studies have suggested that terrorist recruitment methods are not always expected to yield a high number of recruits. Even if the radical message resonates with only a few inmates, they could then be targeted for more intense one-on-one instruction. The impact and destructive potential of a prison-directed terrorist cell is enormous.

There is a difference between a radicalized prisoner who holds radical religious or political beliefs and a prisoner who has been recruited by a terrorist group and who has chosen to commit violence. An important resource for combatting terrorism might be to determine which factor or factors influence some radicalized prisoners to make that specific leap from radical beliefs to violence in the name of those beliefs.

Because radical religious violence can occur within prisons, we have an obligation to inmate populations, certainly, but also to those who are charged with maintaining safe prisons. Just as we seek to protect our soldiers by providing them with the most up-to-date intelligence, we are also obligated to use our enhanced knowledge to safeguard the lives of our correctional officers. A compelling case can be made for a review of our prison system, particularly at the State and local levels.

Chairman Collins, in order to defeat a networked opponent, our prisons need to be networked through information technology systems that are truly integrated.

When serious symptoms present, it is tempting to try to reach for a treatment before we have a diagnosis. History reveals that government works best when it first shines light rather than heat upon concerns that involve religious questions and conflict. Govern-

ment must be proactive. We must base our operations on real intelligence rather than gut reactions. Unless we understand the nature and extent of the problem of religious radicalization in prison, we are likely to first neglect it and then overreact in a way that unnecessarily antagonizes and polarizes our prison population.

In addition to being an assault on civil liberties, an aggressive overreaction by government in the absence of good intelligence would lose hearts and minds to radicalization and recruitment, playing into the very hands of those who would want to subvert our system. Our briefings revealed that while the New Folsum plot in California was discovered in the community accidentally by virtue of a dropped cell phone, the response of the Joint Terrorism Task Force in Los Angeles was superb. Expecting, though, that a Joint Terrorism Task Force should be a primary force for dealing with this complex problem is like expecting emergency rooms to provide all medical care. Proactive, integrated, intelligence-sharing systems are critical to identify and connect the dots before they become plots.

In my role as a consulting psychiatrist to prisons, I also teach the medical students who accompany me. Prison can be a humbling place where teachers once again find themselves to be students. I will never forget one of the first religious challenges that faced me in prison. A suicidal inmate was to be placed in a stripped cell without any possessions. As he was led from my office, he begged me to allow him to keep just one possession, his Bible. At such a time, it appeared obvious to me that this request could easily be granted, and without hesitation, I instructed the officer to give him his Bible. Before doing so, though, the officer flipped through the pages, reached into the Book of Revelations, and pulled out a razor blade. "Doc," he said, "do you want him to have this, too?" The inmate smiled weakly and said, "I guess I don't need my Bible after all."

Unfortunately, we are living in more complex times. An officer who can easily identify and remove a razor blade from a Bible will most likely not be able to identify the razors of radicalization, such as jihadist material that advocates violent measures against innocent civilians, gangs who are willing to masquerade their violence as religion, and radicalized individuals who are willing to take the last step toward terrorism.

In closing, I would like to recognize the Committee and staff for their professionalism and the School of Medicine at the University of Virginia and its resources within the Critical Incident Analysis Group. I would also especially like to thank Frank Cilluffo and the Homeland Security Policy Institute at the George Washington University for their dedication to this process, and, of course, the task force members.

I would like to extend to you an open offer to continue to work closely with them, thank you, and I would be pleased to try to answer any questions you may have.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you, Doctor. We very much appreciate your testimony and your offer to continue to work with the Committee as we pursue this issue.

Chairman COLLINS. Mr. Gartenstein-Ross.

**TESTIMONY OF DAVEED GARTENSTEIN-ROSS,[1] SENIOR CONSULTANT, THE GERARD GROUP INTERNATIONAL, AND CO-CHAIRMAN, THE COUNTERTERRORISM FOUNDATION**

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. Chairman Collins and Senator Carper, thank you for inviting me to testify before you today. The Committee is to be commended for tackling an important issue like prison radicalization.

In this testimony, I will provide an inside look at how access to the prison system can be used and exploited by an Islamic charity, radical in orientation, that is intent on fostering its vision for the faith. The core of this testimony is based on my time working for the Al Haramain Islamic Foundation, which was an international charity devoted to Wahhabism, the austere form of Islam that originated in what is now Saudi Arabia. While I now work in counterterrorism, I entered the field in an idiosyncratic manner. My introduction came as an employee of a radical Islamic charity that is now designated as a sponsor of terrorism by the Treasury Department.

I grew up in Ashland, a small town in Southern Oregon. As my name suggests, both of my parents are from Jewish backgrounds, but they weren't happy with traditional Judaism, so they encouraged me to find my own spiritual path. I found this spiritual path in college when I converted to Islam. My first job after college was with the U.S. headquarters of the Al Haramain Islamic Foundation, which happened to be located in my hometown.

I worked for Al Haramain from December 1998 until August 1999. I had a number of responsibilities during this time, but the most directly relevant one is that I was responsible for overseeing the charity's prison dawa program, dawa being the Islamic form of evangelism. It was designed to educate U.S. prisoners in what Al Haramain considered to be true Islam.

To cap off the story before getting to the specifics of the prison dawa program, I left the Islamic faith for Christianity prior to September 11, and by the time the FBI's investigation of Al Haramain kicked into high gear in February 2004, I was ready to assist the Bureau in investigating the charity organization. I write about the experience in a forthcoming book coming out in February 2007 called *My Year Inside Radical Islam,* copies of which have been provided to staff members of the Committee.

At the outset, I would like to explore the Al Haramain Islamic Foundation's connections to international terrorism in order to demonstrate the charity's ideological orientation. The international Al Haramain organization was originally formed in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in 1992. At the time I worked for the group, it had offices in more than 50 countries and an annual budget of $40 to $50 million. Today, however, Al Haramain no longer exists as a separate entity. It was eventually merged, along with other charities, into the Saudi National Commission for Relief and Charity Work Abroad.

Al Haramain's terrorist connections begin with the branch that I worked for in Ashland, Oregon. It was designated as a terrorist sponsor by the Treasury Department. Two of the directors of this

[1] The prepared statement of Mr. Gartenstein-Ross appears in the Appendix on page 57.

group were indicted for their roles in a complicated money laundering scheme that Federal investigators believe funded the mujahideen of Chechnya.

Beyond the branch I worked for, Al Haramain had a number of other connections to international terror. The U.S. Treasury has designated Al Haramain offices in Kenya, Tanzania, and the Comoros Islands as sponsors of terrorism for their role in the 1998 embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania. The Treasury alleges that the attacks were funded by a wealthy Al Haramain official, that a former Al Haramain director helped prepare the advance party that planned the bombings, and that these offices were used as a staging area and exfiltration route for the perpetrators.

Al Haramain's Indonesia office was also designated by Treasury. That office was reportedly a conduit for funds to Jemaah Islamiyah, the terrorist group responsible for the October 2002 Bali bombings, which killed 202 people, primarily foreign tourists.

Other Al Haramain offices that were similarly designated by Treasury for connections to terror include the branches in Afghanistan, Albania, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, and Pakistan.

Now, Al Haramain's international terror connections provide a backdrop for understanding its prison dawa program, for understanding both the radical literature that the group distributed and also the potential for the program to be used in far more nefarious ways than it was actually used. I turn first to the group's literature, which was undeniably radical. At the heart of any concerted Islamic literature program is distribution of the Qur'an. Al Haramain distributed a Wahhabi/Salafi version known as the Noble Qur'an that was translated into English by Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din Al-Hilali and Muhammad Muhsin Khan. This version was known for containing numerous bracketed interpolations that were not present in the original Arabic script of the Qur'an. Although ostensibly designed to explain the verses, these interpolations, in fact, pushed the meaning in a radical direction, one which was suffused with contempt for non-Muslims and one which openly advocated the global jihad.

One example of this occurs in an early footnote in the translation, which states, "Al-Jihad (holy fighting) in Allah's Cause (with full force of numbers and weaponry) is given the utmost importance in Islam and is one of its pillars. By Jihad, Islam is established, Allah's word is made superior, and His Religion is propagated. By abandoning Jihad, Islam is destroyed and the Muslims fall into an inferior position; their honor is lost, their lands are stolen, their rule and authority vanish. Jihad is an obligatory duty in Islam on every Muslim, and he who tries to escape from this duty, or does not in his innermost heart wish to fulfill this duty, dies with one of the qualities of a hypocrite."

This passage thus rules out non-military interpretations of jihad by insisting that it occur with full force of numbers and weaponry, and it also endorses jihad as a means of propagating the Islamic faith, specifying that it is required of every Muslim.

But most chilling in the translation of the Qur'an that Al Haramain distributed was a 22-page appendix. This appendix, written by former Saudi Arabian Chief Justice Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Humaid, was entitled "The Call to Jihad in the

Qur'an." The appendix was nothing less than an exhortation to violence. In it, bin Humaid argues at length that Muslims are obligated to wage war against non-Muslims who have not submitted to Islamic rule. He explains, "Allah commanded the Muslims to fight against all the Mushrikun as well as against the people of the Scriptures (Jews and Christians) if they do not embrace Islam, until they pay the jizyah (a tax levied on the non-Muslims who do not embrace Islam and are under the protection of an Islamic government) with willing submission and feel themselves subdued." Mushrikun, referred to in this passage, is describing all non-believers who are not classified as the people of the scripture, i.e., those who are not Christians and Jews, and thus bin Humaid advocates war with the entire non-Muslim world. The appendix also appeals to the reader to join the jihad.

Nor was the translation of the Qur'an the only piece of radical material that Al Haramain distributed to prisons. Another widely distributed volume was Muhammad bin Jamil Zino's *Islamic Guidelines for Individual and Social Reform.* Like the translation of the Qur'an that Al Haramain distributed, one of the themes of Zino's book was jihad. At one point, he instructs his readers that their children should be indoctrinated in the glories of jihad.

Moreover, virulent anti-Semitism and hatred of non-Muslim governments were recurring themes in Al Haramain's literature. On a page headed, "Act upon these Ahadith," the hadith being the sayings and traditions that were attributed to Prophet Muhammed, Zino's first injunction reads, "The last hour will not appear unless the Muslims fight the Jews and kill them."

More sweepingly, Zino denounces belief in manmade destructive ideologies, such as secularism, as nullifying an individual's adherence to Islam. This is in keeping with the views of another writer whose works Al Haramain sent to prisons, Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips. In *The Fundamentals of Tawheed,* Philips describes acquiesence to non-Islamic rule as an act of idolatry and an act of disbelief.

But beyond the literature, it is also important to understand the contours of the program that allowed this literature to reach the U.S. prison system. Prisoners would initiate contact with Al Haramain by writing to request Islamic literature. They might learn about us from their chaplains, through word of mouth, or through the name and address information that was stamped into the literature that Al Haramain distributed. Prisoners who wrote to Al Haramain would be sent a number of pamphlets and a questionnaire. The questionnaire asked a variety of informational questions, including inmates' names, prisoner numbers, release dates, and address outside of prison. It also included questions designed to determine the inmate's level of Islamic knowledge.

It is what happened next with the questionnaires that caught investigators' interest during their investigation of Al Haramain. After we graded the questionnaires, all of the information—including the inmates' names, prisoner numbers, facilities they were held in, release dates, and the address they would be released to—was entered into a massive database containing 15,000 names. This database is significant because of the potential for terrorist recruitment. As the panel has already discussed, the prison population is

ripe for terrorist recruiting, and the database hosted by Al Haramain was perfectly designed to allow follow-up with prisoners and potentially to allow for terrorist recruitment. Al Haramain could have established ongoing relationships with prisoners, and the database contained the critical information that would have allowed Al Haramain or ideologically sympathetic organizations to follow up with prisoners after they were released and to point them in a direction that these organizations considered to be convenient.

Ultimately, the program was not used in that way, but part of the reason may well have been that in a pre-September 11 world, it wasn't seen as advantageous to recruit prisoners into terrorism out of the prison system because it was seen as more desirable to be able to raise funds and gain political influence in the United States. But now, in the post-September 11 world, the United States is undeniably seen as the focus of the global jihad.

In closing, I would like to recognize the Committee and the staff for their professionalism and extend an open offer to continue to work closely with them. I am pleased to try to answer any questions that you may have.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you very much for your testimony.

I would like to follow up on some of the points that you just made. You talked about the literature that was being sent in to prisons under your prison literature program, and you described it as undeniably radical. You read some excerpts from the Noble Qur'an, which certainly is the radical interpretation. But I understand that this publication, *Islamic Guidelines,* was also sent in by the charity, is that correct?

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. Yes, that is correct.

Chairman COLLINS. I would like to have the board[1] put up so that I can read a couple of excerpts from this book, as well. There is a section on jihad as collective duty, and it says, "If someone makes any obstacle in the way of propagation, Muslims are allowed by Allah to fight them until Islam becomes the governing authority. Jihad in this sense will not stop until the day of judgment." And then there is another quote that says, "The last hour will not appear unless the Muslims fight the Jews and kill them." Obviously, a very extremist and radicalized version of Islam.

My question to you is this. During any time that you were associated with sending this kind of extremist literature in the prison, was it ever refused by prison officials? Was it ever turned back or rejected that you are aware of?

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. No. During my time there, the literature was not once refused on the basis of its radical content. There were two instances I recall of literature being refused. Once, there was a prison chaplain who refused one of the pamphlets that we sent in. It was written in the typical vitriolic style of Al Haramain material, and it was a pamphlet discussing the Nation of Islam. But his concern was not so much the content itself as the potential for creating sectarian strife within the prison.

The second instance of literature being refused was when a prison screener found that we had sent literature bundled in a manila envelope that had a metal clasp. He thought that the metal clasp

[1] The posters referenced by Senator Collins appear in the Appendix on page 83.

might be used as a weapon by prisoners without any attention to the content of the material, which may well have been the deadlier weapon.

Chairman COLLINS. This is an issue that I am going to raise with our next panel, but I want to follow up, Mr. Cilluffo, with your comment in which you talked about the need for more involvement by the Muslim community. It seems to me that this is an excellent example, where many prison officials, particularly at the State or even local level, are simply not going to have the resources or the expertise to do a review of the literature to see if it is appropriate. There is obviously also a difficult balancing test in that you don't want to impede the flow of legitimate information about Islam into the prisons.

Last week, we had a hearing in which we heard all of the witnesses who were asked to look ahead to the emerging threats over the next 5 years, and all of the witnesses told us that there needed to be more of an outreach to the Muslim community. You mentioned that in closing in your comments. Could you expand on how we might be able to better involve moderate Muslims in programs with prisons, including the review of literature?

Mr. CILLUFFO. Absolutely, Madam Chairman, and that, to be honest, is the primary reason, or one of the primary reasons, we advocated the creation of a commission, since this cannot be won or defeated or tackled long-term by law enforcement means alone. That is only a small part of the solution. Rather, we need to bring people who actually have the knowledge and the wherewithal to be able to steer people in another direction and who have the capacity and the capability to know when things go awry.

But I think if we look at it only through a counterterrorism perspective, that is automatically going to create defensive postures, understandably, that we need to actually expand those issues, and we quite honestly need more imams. We need more chaplains, I mean, at the Federal level. We only have 10 imams. In California, where we are talking about 300,000 people throughout the system, including paroles on the parolee side, we only have 20 imams. That is a tip. That is a very small percentage that can even handle the Muslim needs.

So what I think we need to be able to do is expand the dialogue, but if we only look at it through this particular lens, and that in large part is where that dialogue is occurring, we are only going to get so far. So I think that we need to be able to put together an entity and a group that are going to look at it from multiple perspectives, from different denominations, as well, because ultimately it is going to require—this is a challenge that is within, to some extent, the Muslim faith, and they are going to be the most important component to any solution.

One may argue, where is the Martin Luther King? Where is the Mahatma Gandhi? Maybe we need martyrs. But I think at the end of the day—for good, not only for terrorism. But at the end of the day, it is going to require bringing these communities in a trusted, honest way as part of an honest dialogue.

Chairman COLLINS. Dr. Saathoff, could you help us better understand the circumstances under which radicalization lasts? What I am talking about is from your testimony, it has helped us under-

stand why the prison population is particularly ripe for radicalization efforts. After all, many prisoners are anti-social, angry at their government, looking to strike back, alienated, are seeking some sort of bond. But what causes the radicalization to last after an inmate is released from prison? I can understand why our prisons are fertile grounds, but once the inmate is released?

Dr. SAATHOFF. Chairman Collins, this is a question that is on the minds of so many researchers who are interested in this issue. Certainly, there is such a dearth of research and literature on this issue of radicalization and particularly the issue of how radicalized individuals move to that next important step. And so I would say that we know very little except for the fact that networks and social bonds are very powerful. And so those kinds of social bonds that keep people in other types of organizations, religions, etc., are also important, from what we can understand, in terms of keeping people bonded within a certain community. And so as we look at not only the issue of prisons, but also rehabilitation and probation and parole, as Senator Carper was mentioning, these are issues that we would advise that a commission look at because the only way to loosen certain bonds is to find out how we can strengthen others.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you.

Mr. Gartenstein-Ross, the comments the physician has just made about networks leads me to a final question for you before I yield to my colleague, and that is the compilation by Al Haramain of this enormous database on 15,000 prisoners, information about their release dates and the address to which they were going to be released, what do you think was the organization's purpose in compiling all that information? You made clear in your testimony that, as far as you know, it wasn't used as a recruitment tool. Why would the organization, which is a sponsor of terrorism, go to the effort of maintaining such a detailed, comprehensive database on 15,000 inmates?

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. Well, the information is dual-purpose. It is information that could be used either for legitimate purposes or for more nefarious purposes in terms of terrorist recruitment.

In the case of legitimate purposes, the information can be used to make sure you don't send the same literature to an inmate twice, to make sure that you don't send literature to the inmate after the inmate has been released from prison, and also the address to which the inmate is released could allow for an ongoing relationship, but one that isn't necessarily tied to recruitment to terrorism.

In this case, Al Haramain, it seems to me, had a few factors working against it when using this for terrorist recruitment, one of which was that the head office in Riyadh, which held the purse strings, really didn't have the idea of the kind of gold mine that it had in its hands. Rather than recruiting people out of prisons, they were much more intent on the social status that would be attained from recruiting rich white people into Islam and specifically instructed the head U.S. office that this is the kind of demographic that we should concentrate on.

One other thing that I think is important is, as I said in my testimony, this was all the pre-September 11 world, where a lot of Al

Haramain's support for terror was focused on jihads in Chechnya, in Bosnia, in the Philippines, in Uzbekistan, and other far-flung places. Focusing on these various far-flung jihads and supporting them doesn't necessarily translate into a real need to recruit inmates from the U.S. prison system for terror plots. And in fact, they may have thought that doing so would be counterproductive because we were able to operate very freely in the pre-September 11 world. You saw the kind of literature that made its way into prisons, never once being questioned. If they were seen as trying to actively subvert the United States or do violence to it, that may have, in their view, somewhat undermined their cause.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you. Senator Carper.

Senator CARPER. Thanks, Madam Chairman. I just want to say, we have had a lot of witnesses come before us. These are three of the best. That is why I want to do this for a living. I thank you very much for coming and for your testimony and for your response to our questions. I see in the audience sitting behind the witnesses my friend Thurgood Marshall, Jr. Welcome. I can just barely see your lips move when he testified, so you have that down pretty good. [Laughter.]

I want to go back to the issue of how few imams there are in these prisons. It is really striking. In our own prison system in Delaware, I am aware that there are a number of folks who come to our prisons on a fairly regular basis of different faiths. They do it in many cases on a volunteer basis, but they are there.

I am Protestant. I think the Chairman is Catholic. In the New Testament, there is a verse which is actually pretty well known where we are exhorted, like when people are sick, we should visit them. When people are naked, we should clothe them. When they are hungry, we should feed them. When they are thirsty, we should give them a drink. And when they are sick and in prison, we should go visit them. A number of people in our faith take that seriously. Is there a similar kind of urging within the Qur'an to do that kind of thing? I presume that there is, but I just don't know. We see it as sort of a Biblical injunction, what we should do as part of our faith, rather than just to talk a good game, but actually do it, and part of it is to visit people in prison.

Mr. GARTENSTEIN-ROSS. Certainly within the Islamic faith, you can find a number of different injunctions that ask you to care for those who are less well off. There is a lot of ways, including Muhammad's kind of elevation of the social status of slaves during that time and the like, that I think would give Muslims a similar sort of desire to help out within the prison system.

One thing that has served as a barrier in the past is the certification process. For Federal prisons, there were only two organizations for a long time, both of which had at least some sort of Wahhabi or Salafi ties, that were allowed to certify Federal prison chaplains. Likewise, there often is not a situation where there is trust necessarily between members of the Muslim community and the prison system. But in the end, the fact that there are so few imams does indeed, as Mr. Cilluffo said, open the door for radicals to come forward when Muslim chaplains and Muslim imams who are more moderate in orientation aren't really spearheading efforts to do so.

Senator CARPER. Let me stay with this issue for just a moment. What should we be doing at the Federal level or State or local level to encourage folks of the Muslim faith to come forward, people who are not jihadists but mainstream? What can we do to encourage them, to make them feel welcome, if you will?

Mr. CILLUFFO. Senator Carper, if I can expand because this is a differentiator between maybe the way the United States handles this issue and some of our allies overseas in Europe. I think if you look throughout Europe, and there are a number of phenomenal studies that have been done, perhaps the best one was actually done after the Van Gogh murder in the Netherlands, their intelligence service put together "Violent Jihad in the Netherlands: Current Trends and the Islamist Terrorist Threat." I think the Europeans are looking at this from a top-down perspective. I think that the reason we are to some extent more inoculated from the crisis that they arguably are facing is because we need to look at it from the bottom up and from the top down.

The bottom line here is that is that this is going to be as big of a role for a governor, for a mayor, and for county executives as it is going to be from the Federal perspective. And actually, the Federal Bureau of Prisons, in large part thanks to Congressional leadership in hearings held on the Judiciary Committee, did take some proactive actions after some hearings as well as an Inspector General's report and have closed some of the holes in terms of some of the imams that were finding their way, and the Muslim chaplains, into the prison system. But it is not an issue of just making sure we are weeding out some of the more radicalist preachers but finding others to participate, and that is where relief organizations and the like are going to play a big role.

But here again, you have that vetting challenge. Do you know who you know? To me, that is largely going to be part of a larger discussion that is going to have to occur at the community level, from the bottom up as well as from the top down, and ultimately information and intelligence and knowledge. So it is bringing all these pieces together. That is what is so difficult with this challenge; you can't look at it only through a law enforcement or national security lens. That part is actually kind of easy, comparatively speaking. It is then looking to what we really mean by solution sets.

Senator CARPER. All right. Thank you.

Dr. Saathoff, I think it was you who mentioned information technology, and I think you said fully integrated. Would you just go back and tell us again what you were saying there?

Dr. SAATHOFF. I was referring to the disparate information technology systems looking at inmates. There are some systems where visitors, for example, within a State at least are identified by name so it is possible to find out where visitors are going. There is no question but that visitation is really a crucial and very constructive element of prison rehabilitation, but there are some State systems that would not be able to tell you through data mining whether or not there are certain individuals who are just going to one prison and visiting family members, for example, or perhaps going to disparate prisons and visiting people that they don't know.

So looking at patterns, I think it is important for us to be able to just understand and shine a light, and because of the way information technology has advanced over time, what we have are different systems that don't necessarily communicate.

I would like to just add to Mr. Cilluffo's statement with regard to your really vital question, and that has to do with welcoming and bringing in the constructive aspects that religion brings. I focused to some extent on how technology and information technology is a problem. The images that are seen in prison can certainly mobilize inmates in negative ways, but there are also ways in prisons, for example, that information technology is a real success.

For example, we have inmates in the prisons that I work in who have very serious diseases, and because of the rarity of their disease, it may not be possible to bring a specialist, a top physician, to that prison to examine the patient. It may also be difficult for security reasons to transport the patient on a weekly basis. However, through telemedicine, we can bring top-quality professionals into the prison setting for very personal, direct contact.

And so I think as we look at this confusing set of circumstances, just as information technology can be identified as a problem, ultimately, I think it really is going to be a solution in terms of really opening up more options for constructive, important interactions with regard to religion.

Senator CARPER. Thank you. Madam Chairman, I just have a thought here. You mentioned the telemedicine and what a great use of technology that can be in the prison system. We have a situation where we don't have very many imams who can come in and proselytize and deliver the sort of message, responsible message, that most of us would welcome. Has there been any use of the kind of technology that we are talking about in providing better medical care to allow mainstream imams to come in without physically being present in the prison but to be able to deliver a message that really reflects what is in the Qur'an? Is anybody doing that?

Dr. SAATHOFF. Senator, I am not aware of that.

Senator CARPER. Just take a moment and react to that idea. It may be a bad idea, but on Sunday mornings, you turn on the TV, and there are plenty of televangelists on the airways. There might be a good idea there.

Mr. CILLUFFO. Senator Carper, I do think that is something worth exploring, and we did identify that to some extent as something a commission could look at, not specifically as it pertains to some of the telebroadcasts, but there really is no standard for what is acceptable and what is unacceptable material that is being disseminated throughout our systems. We know some literature that arguably does not reflect, and I would suggest doesn't reflect, the Qur'an has found its way. So how do we build some of that capacity? I think information technology could be part of the solution.

Senator CARPER. All right. Thanks very much.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you. I want to thank this panel of witnesses very much. You have helped increase our understanding of the challenges that we face, and we look forward to continuing to work with you, so thank you for your participation.

I would now like to call forth the witnesses on our second panel.

Our first witness is Dr. John Vanyur. He is the Assistant Director of the Correctional Programs Division of the Federal Bureau of Prisons. He directs the security, intelligence, case management, mental health programs, religious services, community programs, and private prison management for the 113 correctional facilities and approximately 192,000 inmates nationwide. He has held a variety of positions during his 25-year career with the Department of Justice.

Our second witness is Donald Van Duyn. He joined the FBI in August 2003 after 24 years of service in the CIA as an analyst and manager of analysts. He currently serves as the Deputy Assistant Director of the Counterterrorism Analysis Branch in the Counterterrorism Division.

Our third witness, Javed Ali, serves as the Senior Intelligence Officer for the Chief of Intelligence in the Department of Homeland Security. Prior to joining DHS, he served as an intelligence officer with the Defense Intelligence Agency's Joint Intelligence Task Force on Combatting Terrorism.

We welcome all of you to the hearing today, and Dr. Vanyur, I would ask that you start.

**TESTIMONY OF JOHN M. VANYUR,[1] ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, CORRECTIONAL PROGRAMS DIVISION, FEDERAL BUREAU OF PRISONS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

Dr. VANYUR. Thank you. Chairman Collins and Members of the Committee, I am pleased to appear before you today to discuss the efforts of the Bureau of Prisons and what we are taking to ensure that we are preventing the recruitment of terrorists and extremists in our Federal prisons.

The Bureau of Prisons is committed to providing inmates with the opportunity to practice their faith while at the same time ensuring that Federal prisoners are not radicalized or recruited for terrorist causes. We understand the importance of controlling and preventing the recruitment of inmates into terrorism. We know that inmates are particularly vulnerable to recruitment by terrorists and that we must guard against the spread of terrorism and extremist ideologies.

Our practices in institution security and inmate management are geared toward the prevention of any violence, criminal behavior, disruptive behavior, or other threats to institution security or public safety. We have taken a number of measures over the last several years, and we are actively engaged in several ongoing initiatives to ensure that Federal inmates are not recruited to support radical organizations or terrorist groups. We have eliminated most inmate organizations in order to control the influence that outside entities have on Federal inmates. We also have enhanced our information and monitoring systems, our intelligence gathering and sharing capabilities, and our identification and management of disruptive inmates.

We have been managing inmates with ties to terrorism for over a decade by confining them in secure conditions and by monitoring their communications. We have established a strategy that focuses

[1] The prepared statement of Dr. Vanyur appears in the Appendix on page 66.

on the appropriate levels of containment and isolation to ensure that inmates with terrorist ties do not have the opportunity to radicalize or recruit other inmates. The most dangerous terrorists are confined under the most restrictive conditions allowed.

We monitor and record telephonic communication involving inmates with terrorist ties, and we share any relevant information with the FBI, the National Joint Terrorism Task Force, and other agencies. In addition, our institutions work closely with the local joint terrorism task forces to share information and intelligence about these inmates.

The Bureau of Prisons has two full-time employees assigned to the National Joint Terrorism Task Force to facilitate our involvement on this task force and to coordinate the exchange of intelligence related to corrections. These two members of the NJTTF also manage the Correctional Intelligence Initiative, a nationwide NJTTF special project involving correctional agencies at the Federal, State, and local levels designed to detect, deter, and disrupt the radicalization and recruitment of inmates.

In addition to containing and isolating inmates who could attempt to radicalize other inmates, we help inmates become less vulnerable to any such attempts. Experts have identified the societal marginalization of inmates as the key factor in their becoming radicalized. The Bureau of Prisons provides inmates with a broad variety of programs that have proven to assist in the development of key skills, thereby minimizing the likelihood of the inmates being marginalized.

Moreover, we are well aware of the important role religious programs can play in preparing inmates to successfully reintegrate into society. Religious programs and chaplaincy services are provided to the approximately 30 faiths represented within the Federal prison population. Full-time civil service chaplains in the Bureau of Prisons lead worship services and provide pastoral care and spiritual guidance to inmates, and they oversee the breadth of religious programs and monitor the accommodations provided by the contract spiritual leaders and community volunteers.

We screen all of our civil service staff, volunteers, and contractors to avoid hiring or contracting with anyone who will pose a threat to institution security. Bureau of Prisons civil service chaplains must meet all of the requirements for employment as a Federal law enforcement officer. And like all Bureau of Prisons employees, chaplains are strictly prohibited from using their position to condone, support, or encourage violence or other inappropriate behavior.

Our religious contractors and volunteers are also subject to a variety of security requirements prior to being granted access to our institutions, and we have and continue to work closely with the FBI and the National Joint Terrorism Task Force to improve our screening of contractors and volunteers. Information on staff chaplains, contractors, and volunteers is checked against databases supported by the FBI. We have also enhanced the supervision of programs and activities that take place in our chapels over the last 3 years, and we have trained nearly all of our staff on recognizing the signs of potential radicalization.

Chairman Collins, this concludes my formal statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or other Members of the Committee may have.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you. Mr. Van Duyn.

**TESTIMONY OF DONALD N. VAN DUYN,[1] DEPUTY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, COUNTERTERRORISM DIVISION, FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

Mr. VAN DUYN. Madam Chairman, Ranking Member, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you on the issue of prison radicalization in the United States.

Before I begin, I would like to emphasize that Islam itself is not the problem, but rather how Islam is used by violent extremists to inspire and justify their actions. The FBI does not investigate individuals for their religious beliefs, but we investigate the activities of individuals who want to do harm to the citizens and interests of the United States and abroad.

The FBI and the Bureau of Prisons analysis shows that radicalization and recruitment in U.S. prisons is still an ongoing concern. Prison radicalization occurs mostly through anti-U.S. sermons provided by contract, volunteer, and staff imams, radicalized inmates who gain religious influence, and extremist media. Ideologies that radicalized inmates appear most often to embrace include or are influenced by the Salafi form of Sunni Islam and an extremist view of Shiia Islam similar to that of the government of Iran and Lebanese Hezbollah.

There are two groups of concern involved in prison radicalization and recruitment. The first group consists of inmates. These radicalized inmates either feel discriminated against in the United States or feel that the United States oppresses minorities and Muslims overseas. The feeling of perceived depression, combined frequently with their limited knowledge of Islam, especially for the converts, makes this a vulnerable population for extremists looking to radicalize and recruit.

Radicalized inmates are of concern for a number of reasons. Influential inmates could urge other prisoners to attend certain mosques or Islamic centers in the United States or overseas upon their release that may present opportunities for the further proselytizing of radical Islam. Influential inmates could also pose a risk to prison security by urging inmates under their influence to disobey prison authorities and possibly incite violence within the facility. Inmates who have acquired skills used in terrorism activities could pass them on to other prisoners.

The second group consists of contract, volunteer, and staff personnel, the majority of which are imams who enter correctional facilities with the intent to radicalize and recruit. Particularly for Muslim converts, but also for those born into Islam, an extremist imam can strongly influence individual belief systems by speaking from a position of authority on religious issues. Extremist imams have the potential to influence vulnerable followers at various locations of opportunity, can spot and assess individuals who respond

[1] The prepared statement of Mr. Van Duyn appears in the Appendix on page 74.

to their messages, and could potentially guide them into increasingly extremist circles after release.

Aside from individuals providing radical messages, there is also extremist media in the form of literature and videos being circulated within the prison population that appears to be a significant factor in prison radicalization.

The majority of cases involving radicalization have not manifested themselves to date as a threat to national security. There have been, however, instances where charismatic elements within the prison have used the call of global jihad as a source of inspiration to recruit others for the purpose of conducting terrorist attacks in the United States. You referred to the JIS group in California, which is probably the most well-known case at this point in time, and that was certainly a wake-up call, I think in general, for both the FBI and the Bureau of Prisons in how we approach this problem, and I won't go into further detail on that.

The FBI and the Bureau of Prisons have been actively engaged in efforts to detect, deter, and disrupt efforts by extremist groups to radicalize and recruit in U.S. prisons since February 2003. These activities have been organized through the Correctional Intelligence Initiative, which you referred to earlier. I would like to stress that we have extended this initiative beyond just the Federal system, but into the State and local correctional facilities, and we realize the need to do that further.

The CII program focuses first on improving intelligence collection, so that we truly understand the problem; detecting, deterring, and disrupting efforts by terrorist, extremist, or radical groups to radicalize or recruit in Federal, State, local, territorial, tribal, or privatized prisons; providing training and support materials that can be used by our field offices, JTTFs, and correctional institutions for training and outreach at State and local correctional institutions.

All of these elements have helped to identify numerous factors responsible for the spread of radicalization and recruitment in prisons. A recent comprehensive assessment based on a survey of nearly 2,000 State and local correctional facilities identified the following trends. Most cases of prison radicalization and recruitment appear to be originated by domestic extremists with few or no foreign connections. Some radicalized Islamic inmates are current or former members of street or prison gangs, indicating an emerging crossover trend from gang member to Islamic extremist. Radicalization activity appears to be higher in high-population areas on the West Coast and the Northeastern United States.

The FBI and Bureau of Prisons assessment identified best practices for correctional institutions to follow to combat the spread of radicalization and recruitment. Some of these are: Establish systemwide vetting protocols for all contractor and volunteer applicants; create systemwide databases of contractors and volunteers providing direct inmate services; improve monitoring capabilities; coordinate inmate transfers; share information among all levels of law enforcement and correctional personnel.

Numerous FBI analytical products as well as operational highlights have been disseminated to our foreign liaison partners, from classified products to unclassified assessments for a wide audience.

The feedback from these products has helped us to better drive our analytical and investigative perspectives and identify services where bilateral exchanges could prove beneficial on this issue.

I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to address this important issue and look forward to answering your questions.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you.

Senator Carper, I know that you have to leave shortly. Do you have any questions you would like to pose?

Senator CARPER. If I could. I apologize. The new President of Amtrak is waiting in my office to meet with me. It is a meeting we have sought, and I don't want to keep him waiting.

Could I ask the same question of each of you, if I may. What advice do you have specifically for us on this Committee and for us in the Senate on what we should be doing to address these concerns?

Dr. VANYUR. Before I answer that, let me just mention, getting back to your suggestion on technology, this is a little lower tech than your suggestion, but what we did in the Bureau of Prisons is we had our imams, our civil service imams, videotape 125 jumma prayer sermons and over 70 Islamic study group sessions, and we distributed those throughout our system so that if we have inmate-led groups, which I am sure we will probably get into a little bit later, they have a plug-and-play appropriate——

Senator CARPER. That is the kind of thing we do in our adult Sunday school classes in my church, and I am sure you are familiar with that in other faiths. Go ahead.

Dr. VANYUR. I think the best thing is training, particularly pushing down training to the State and local levels, and so the appropriate resources for the development and the appropriate funding for the delivery of that training throughout all corrections—tribal, private, local, State, and Federal—to me would be the most effective strategy for this Committee.

Senator CARPER. Thank you.

Mr. VAN DUYN. I certainly concur with Dr. Vanyur's assessment of the need for training and the greater awareness throughout the system so that people are aware of the problems that they are facing. And then in addition, I think to the degree to which we can integrate systems for vetting and information systems so that various institutions can talk to one another and exchange data easily would be the second thing that would be highest on my agenda.

Senator CARPER. Good. Thank you. There is a national organization of State correctional secretaries or commissioners, and so they have a great forum to share that kind of stuff.

Mr. Ali, I am sorry I am going to miss your testimony, but just give me one or two take-aways, if you will.

Mr. ALI. Sure. Just to add to the comments that have already been made, I think two other important points that cross-cut various aspects of this radicalization issue, not just prison radicalization, outreach and dialogue with communities identified at potential risk of being exposed to these radical beliefs, whether in the prison system or not, I think that is certainly an effort that we need to further develop at the Federal level, and also continued dialogue at the State and local level to have contact with officials

who are really seeing these experiences and activities on the ground. I know just from our DHS perspective, our understanding of just the prison radicalization issue has been incredibly enhanced by having direct interaction with State and local officials, and that is the perspective we just did not have at the national level. So those things from our perspective are very important.

Senator CARPER. Our thanks to all of you, and I apologize for having to leave. Madam Chairman, thanks so much for giving me the opportunity to ask those questions. Thank you.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you. Mr. Ali, you can proceed with your statement.

**TESTIMONY OF JAVED ALI,[1] SENIOR INTELLIGENCE OFFICER, OFFICE OF INTELLIGENCE AND ANALYSIS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

Mr. ALI. Thank you. Chairman Collins, Senator Carper, I know you are leaving, thank you for the opportunity to share perspectives from the Department of Homeland Security on the topic of prison radicalization.

Since 2004, a spate of activities in Western Europe carried out or supported by radicalized homegrown Sunni extremists, including the March 2004 attacks in Madrid and the July 2005 attacks in London, have really focused national attention on the overseas phenomenon of radicalization or homegrown extremism. But more recently, developments here in the United States and Canada, including the disrupted JIS incident, which we have discussed and heard about here in California, but also the Toronto 17, those arrests in June, have also focused the same kind of attention on the phenomenon in North America. Against the backdrop of our larger efforts to understand radicalization here, activity occurring in some prison systems, such as last year's JIS incident, has become of keen interest.

In early 2006, the Department of Homeland Security Office of Intelligence and Analysis formed a team to develop a comprehensive intelligence-focused project that seeks to address how, why, and where radicalized ideas and beliefs develop over time in the United States. This project is part of a broader DHS approach in addressing the issue of radicalization and will help inform the Department-wide effort to understand and mitigate the phenomenon.

We are conducting our study in a phased approach, focusing on examining radicalization dynamics in key geographic areas throughout the country. Our first phase focused on assessments in California and New York. Our second phase is focusing on the Midwest and the National Capital Region, and we hope to, beyond these first two phases, conduct other regional or State-specific assessments with the goal that all of these assessments will provide the building blocks for a larger national picture on radicalization.

Thus far, we have found that the relationships between radicalization nodes and radical actor/groups vary across ideological and ethno-religious spectrums, different geographic regions, and socio-economic conditions throughout the country. Further, we have found several diverse pathways to radicalization in the United

[1] The prepared statement of Mr. Ali appears in the Appendix on page 79.

States through an examination of these nodes, and from our perspective, nodes are the conduits that facilitate and support the radicalization process, and they can be several things. They can be physical institutions, such as prisons; they can be virtual communities; they can be charismatic individuals; they can be written or recorded material, or even shared experiences or what we call a rite of passage.

Further, we are also finding that radicalization in the United States is not a one-way street and that individuals and groups who can radicalize can just as easily deradicalize depending on a very complex set of factors. This particularly holds true when looking at the prison radicalization issue.

Our research and discussions indicate that radicalization within prisons has occurred predominately, but not exclusively, among the African-American inmate population and those affiliated with gangs. Looking at that data set, inmates have been radicalized through charismatic, religiously radical inmates; by clerics, contractors, and volunteers who serve as religious authorities; and through extremist propaganda created both inside and outside of prison walls.

As a result, from our perspective, there appear to be both bottom-up and top-down influences shaping the prison radicalization dynamic, although it is difficult to assign percentages as to which influence is greater.

We judge that the current radicalization dynamics in some U.S. prison systems do not yet present the level of operational threat seen in other parts of the world. That said, last year's incident with the JIS in California suggests that small motivated clusters of like-minded individuals exposed to radical beliefs within prisons could potentially cause harm once released.

We have worked with partners at the Federal, State, and local levels to enhance our understanding on this issue of prison radicalization. At the Federal level, we have worked with the FBI and the Bureau of Prisons, amongst others, and at the State and local levels, as I indicated before, we have held discussions with officials in a variety of locations, to include New York, California, Illinois, and Ohio, regarding their particular unique perspectives on radicalization and will also soon hold similar meetings with representatives from Texas, Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, DC.

In conclusion, our work on radicalization, including the examination of the extent and depth of the phenomenon within prisons in the United States, is preliminary and by no means complete. Continued dialogue and relationship building with Federal, State, local, and even foreign partners are critical aspects of this work. We hope our efforts on radicalization will help enhance the Department's perspectives on this issue and help policy makers throughout the Federal Government make the most informed judgments about how best to address the phenomenon inside the United States.

Madam Chairman, thank you again for giving me the opportunity to speak with you and Members of the Committee, and I welcome your questions.

Chairman COLLINS. Thank you very much.

Dr. Vanyur, you anticipated what my first question was going to be in your comment to Senator Carper. In your testimony, you

talked about screening all of the civil service staff, volunteers, and contractors, that each Bureau of Prisons civil service chaplain has to meet certain requirements for employment, that there is a field investigation, a reference check, a panel interview. But we know that due to the shortage of imams going into our prisons, that a lot of Islamic groups within prisons are led by inmates. Is there a system for screening inmate-led religious discussions or services to ensure that the radicalized form of Islam is not being taught? I am told by law enforcement officials that there is even a nickname for it of Prislam, that it is that common.

Dr. VANYUR. The answer is yes, and let me just mention, to look at the 11 civil service imams is really underestimating who is delivering Islamic services throughout the Federal system. There are also 56 contract imams that are not employees of ours, but are on a contractual pay basis, delivering Islamic services inside Federal prisons, and over 20 Islamic volunteers.

But that said, there is a substantial portion of Islamic services being led by inmates. A lot of that has to do with where we have built prisons in many of the States and in the Federal system over the last 20 years. Many of them are in very rural and remote areas where there is just not a large Islamic population in that area.

What we do with inmate-led groups is a few things. First, any inmate-led group has to have 100 percent constant staff supervision. So anytime there is an inmate-led group or an inmate-led study or jumaa prayer, there is a staff member in that room 100 percent of the time.

We require all of our religious services to be in English except for that part of the service that has some formulaic prayer. So in a jumaa service, you have got a piece of it that is a formulaic prayer, for lack of a better word, that needs to be in Arabic. But then the sermon or homily, we require that to be in English so that our staff member can understand what is going on.

We require that the inmate-led groups rotate the inmate who is leading that group week to week so that we don't have one individual who is dominating the group or trying to steer the group in a particular direction.

We also ensure that we have standardized headgear and procedures for inmates. Years ago, we would let inmates have their own religious headgear, so they would use that as a sign of leadership, different color kufis and other religious headgear. Now we have standardized all that to take away any trappings of leadership or direction that an inmate can bring on.

So we think with that really intense monitoring, the requirement of English, and then that piece I mentioned earlier where we provide a lot of videotapes and study guides that are the appropriate, accurate form of Islam, that we have very good control over the inmate-led groups.

Chairman COLLINS. You heard on our previous panel the discussion that I had, and I am going to ask that the posterboards be put back up, that had some very disturbing radicalized quotes on an extremist version of Islam that was part of literature sent into prisons by the group Al Haramain, which was later designated as a sponsor of terrorism. This particular copy of this very disturbing book was ordered by my staff on amazon.com. It is a used version

of it. If an inmate ordered this book today, would there be any review of it by prison officials or would it most likely get to that inmate?

Dr. VANYUR. Every incoming publication is reviewed, but there is a different standard for the publications that we place in our chapels that we control, which is totally discretionary in what the Bureau of Prisons wants to place in that chapel, and what an inmate can get. And so the standard for an inmate is much lower, and the standard is generally if a publication presents a threat to institution security, deals with drug introductions, criminal activity, then we would reject the publication.

It gets very difficult when you talk about what are sort of religious-political rhetoric in terms of whether that crosses the line of threatening institution security or being part of criminal activity. So I can't comment specifically on that book, but it is a difficult issue, I think, on the publications because of the First Amendment rights that inmates still have. So my response, Senator, is that, yes, we would review the book, but I couldn't tell you without further review whether we would reject it across the board or not.

Chairman COLLINS. What standard is used to decide whether literature should get through to an inmate?

Dr. VANYUR. Again, the standard is very clear in Federal regulation, if it is detrimental to the security, good order, or discipline of an institution or facilitates criminal activity, and that is the standard that is in Federal regulation that would cause us to reject a particular piece of correspondence or a publication.

Chairman COLLINS. I guess I need to go to some of the specific language in this to understand whether this would meet that standard. As this chart shows, it says "the last hour will not appear unless Muslims fight the Jews and kill them." The earlier posterboard said, "If someone makes any obstacle in the way of propagation, Muslims are allowed by Allah to fight them until Islam becomes the governing authority." Is that kind of language sufficient to block this literature from reaching an inmate?

Dr. VANYUR. I believe this last quote would be because you are talking about killing other individuals.

Chairman COLLINS. Right.

Dr. VANYUR. And we try to push out literature that disparages other religions, also, but these are difficult decisions to be made at the local level, and to be honest with you, the more difficult decisions are not in Islamic text. We have a lot of white supremacist literature and Christian identity movement and a number of other types of literature that come in that we are constantly making these decisions on. So I believe, particularly based on that last quote, we would reject that book.

Chairman COLLINS. Do you involve experts, religious experts of all faiths, in reviewing literature related to a particular faith to decide what should come in and what shouldn't? You have mentioned, and obviously I mentioned in my opening statement, some white supremacist groups that have very violent literature that could come in under the guise of religion. Do you involve clergy, mainstream clergy, from various faiths to help you do this kind of review?

Dr. VANYUR. We do. We have over 200 civil service chaplains, and we designate some as subject matter experts for their particular religion that we use to review many of these materials. In the case particularly of Islam because our number of imams is so low, we have reached out to a number of universities and other Islamic study centers to try to assist in this. But I would agree with the three speakers in the last panel that the amount of outreach and contact can be greatly improved.

Chairman COLLINS. It is my understanding that the Bureau of Prisons is doing an inventory of books in both chapel libraries and in the main libraries of prisons. Is that correct?

Dr. VANYUR. That is correct.

Chairman COLLINS. And that is ongoing?

Dr. VANYUR. That is ongoing, and it is showing us some of the problems that we are going to confront because the number of entries so far in our database exceeds 20,000. So there is a lot of material that is out there.

One of the changes we just recently made is we have for the first time taken specific publishers and any materials produced by those publishers, we have removed from any of our libraries and frozen, and that is different than the way we used to handle business, where it was on a text-by-text basis. The majority of those publishers, by the way, are not Islamic publishers. They are primarily white supremacist. So we have tried to take a broader approach in terms of materials coming in.

We also work with our partners on what is coming in, and the Qur'an that was discussed earlier was a piece of literature that we received notification from the FBI had some issues, and we removed that particular version of the Noble Qur'an from all of our libraries. So it is a cooperative effort across our law enforcement and other corrections partners, also.

Chairman COLLINS. When you find extremist literature like this, whether it is Islamic or Christian or any other kind of extremist literature, do you share that information with State and local correctional facilities? The Federal Government has the resources and the knowledge to do this kind of review. Probably a large State like California or New York does, as well. But smaller States simply don't have the expertise or the resources. So do you maintain a list of extremist literature that can be shared with your State and local counterparts?

Dr. VANYUR. We have not. We do a lot of sharing with the State and local counterparts, particularly through the National Institute of Corrections, which is a wing of the Bureau of Prisons that deals specifically with State and locals, but I don't believe we have actually put on their website or put out to the States specific publications that we have eliminated.

Chairman COLLINS. I think that would be something for you to look at. When I think of a State like mine, a small State with very limited resources with a population that has very few Muslims, for example, it would be extremely difficult, I think, for prison officials in my State to make that kind of assessment. But it would also be very helpful regardless of whether it is religious in nature or not for States like Maine to have a list of extremist literature to be on the lookout for. It also, I think, would give more comfort to State

and local officials that they are making the right decision in what is admittedly a very difficult area because of concerns of protecting civil liberties and religious freedoms. So that is something I would encourage you to pursue.

Dr. VANYUR. We will, Senator. I concur.

Chairman COLLINS. Mr. Van Duyn, I want to turn to the JIS case out of California that I discussed in my opening statement. In the indictment, there is mention of a document or protocol that Kevin James clandestinely distributed, and this document apparently set forth his bizarre teachings about Islam including "justification for killing non-believers." Do you know how he was able to distribute that document?

Mr. VAN DUYN. I don't have the specifics on just mechanically how it was done. My sense is he did up copies that he handed out. I know he gathered some of his materials from the Internet. That is where he got some of the ideas. Then he pulled it together. Some of the materials were hand-written, so he would have had to make copies and then basically pass them around. But I would have to check on the actual mechanics.

Chairman COLLINS. Mr. Ali, do you happen to know how he was able to distribute that information?

Mr. ALI. The description that Mr. Van Duyn made is fairly accurate, that some of this material was obtained through the open source, through Internet, through information that he brought into the prison system. Some of it was his own sort of musings or writings that he wrote down by hand and then he put together his own manual and then apparently just passed that out by hand. I don't think it went out beyond the hard copy dissemination.

When we were in California earlier this year, actually, in Sacramento, we sat through a presentation with prison officials, and they showed via PowerPoint slides certain pages of the manual that he had written, and it is fairly alarming stuff just from the sense of the ideas that were being shared within this small group of individuals, and there are other groups active just like that within the prison systems there.

Chairman COLLINS. Mr. Van Duyn, do you know whether copies of these documents that Kevin James circulated were found in California prisons?

Mr. VAN DUYN. Yes, they were.

Chairman COLLINS. Do you know how many?

Mr. VAN DUYN. I know the materials were found in his cell, and then some other materials were found in other places because I know after the arrest—that you refer to from the cell phone, it led them to the house, and some of the materials were found there, and then subsequently to him, but I don't know the specifics of where they were all found.

Chairman COLLINS. I know that the FBI led the investigation that eventually traced this cell phone back to the prison to the plot to Kevin James. Prior to what really was a lucky break of one of the perpetrators happening to drop a cell phone, was there any knowledge that you are aware of among the FBI or prison officials or State and local officials that such a plot had been hatched in prison?

Mr. VAN DUYN. Before the incident of the arrest, the fact of the plot was not known. The group, however, was known. It was being treated mainly as a prison gang prior to the arrest for the robberies. It was on the discoveries emanating from the arrest after the robberies that then led people to the plot. That was the first knowledge of the plot per se.

Chairman COLLINS. I guess that worries me because here you have a group of inmates led by a charismatic leader apparently who was able to propagate his perverted version of Islam and incite inmates to violence once they were released, and yet it seems to have been under the radar, something that was not detected. What do you think prison officials could have done to be more aware of what was essentially homegrown terrorists in their midst?

Mr. VAN DUYN. I think many of the measures that Dr. Vanyur already discussed in terms of better monitoring of meetings, of activities, of literature, material that were there. In particular, I think monitoring of meetings so that there are not meetings that are being held without officials present. I think, just in general, better monitoring and better intelligence gathering in general inside the prisons, and I think the case of the JIS, I mean, really pointed that up, and also because that was a State prison, it also raises the issue of we need to have very good communications between all levels in the correctional systems.

Chairman COLLINS. Mr. Ali, I note that you indicated that DHS is in the initial stages of its work on the radicalization issue. In your testimony, you referred to nodes where radicalization could take place, of which prisons are one. Do you have yet any sense of how significant a node prisons are for radicalization versus radical mosques or Internet chat sites, etc., or do you not have enough information yet?

Mr. ALI. Madam Chairman, that is a great question. We are trying to get to that through this research, and by doing it with the regional approach of looking at States or different regions, we are trying to drill down to two or three levels below the national level perspective to get that more enhanced perspective. So you can make an argument that if you looked at what is going on in California right now, potentially within just California specifically, prisons and some of the activity within some of the prisons there seems to be of more concern or greater interest—or there is more activity in that particular node than potentially prisons in Illinois, where other nodes may have a greater impact. So that is the comparative look we are trying to develop.

At a broad macro level throughout the country, though, I think we could say, at least from our initial perspective, that prisons don't seem to have the same level of concern that we have from DHS that other nodes have in terms of a conduit in which radical ideas are either developed or passed or shared, not to say that they are not of concern, but in terms of a priority scale at a national level, they seem to be a little bit lower down. But certainly we are focusing attention on them.

Chairman COLLINS. That is something that I think we need to get a better understanding of, is how radicalization and recruitment occurs not only in prisons, but elsewhere in our society. If you look at the attempted terrorist or actual terrorist attacks that have

occurred worldwide since September 11, you see that more and more, they are being done by homegrown terrorists. All of the border security in the world is not going to help to address the problem of radicalization within our borders. That is why we have undertaken this investigation, starting with looking at prisons where, at the risk of using a bad pun, you do have a captive audience for radicalization and you have a population that has a propensity to violence and alienation already.

So my hope is that we can continue to work with you, but I would also encourage you to work with your State and local counterparts. Frankly, I think the Federal Government is starting to move on this issue, has a good understanding of it, and is expanding its expertise with each passing day. But I am really worried about our State prisons, which is, after all, where most inmates are incarcerated. It is overwhelmingly at the State level. I worry that States lack the kinds of programs that you have talked about, the ability to screen individuals or literature, and the intelligence sharing of information that is just vital to addressing this problem.

So I salute you all for the good work that you are doing, but I really encourage you to reach out to the Muslim community for help and to also reach out to your State and local counterparts so that we can share information about specific individuals, about radical literature, whether Islamic or otherwise, and about the techniques, such as the monitoring of religious services, that you have found to be valuable at the Federal level. I really think we need to have a major outreach effort in this area.

I hope you will continue to keep in touch with the Committee and to work closely with us as you pursue your investigations and work in this area, and I want to thank you all for sharing your knowledge and expertise and insights with the Committee today.

I want to again stress that our concern is not with inmates converting to Islam. In many cases, that can be exactly what a prisoner needed to put his or her life back on the right path, to shun violence and future criminal activity. What I am talking about is the extremist conversion, the radicalization of Islam that is adopted by some inmates, and in some cases, without any knowledge of prison authorities that this is going on. Obviously, we have seen that prisons for decades have been fertile grounds for radicalization in other areas and for the creation of gangs. So this is a further evolution of that trend, but indeed one that raises a great deal of concern about the potential threat to our homeland security.

Again, thank you all for working with us, and we will be continuing to investigate this area.

The hearing record will remain open for 15 days for the submission of any additional questions. I know many of my colleagues were tied up at other hearings today. That doesn't reflect a lack of interest in the subject, and I think you can probably expect both panels will receive some additional questions for the record.

Thank you very much for your participation. I also want to thank the members of my staff, particularly Jen Boone and David Porter, who have worked hard on this issue.

The Committee hearing is now adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:56 a.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

# APPENDIX

## PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR LIEBERMAN

Thanks, Madam Chairman, and thank you for holding this hearing on a subject of growing interest and importance to our war against terror here at home. The idea of homegrown terrorism—terrorism that is born not deep in the Hindu Kush or in a desert cave but right here among us—is a frightening concept to most Americans. It eliminates the buffer of oceans and continents and even tightened immigration controls that have kept our neighborhoods and institutions relatively free of terrorist ideology. Home grown terrorism is now a grave enough concern that we must consider whether to focus more attention and resources toward it. I hope this hearing helps us to sort that out.

Experience tells us that we need to consider and then work together to prevent the next terrorist attack, not the last one. Since September 11, we've spent billions of dollars to improve airline security and prevent terrorists and their tools of destruction from entering the country and we need to do more. But we must also be on the lookout for ruthlessness we have not yet experienced—terrorism spawned right here among us.

The men who plotted and carried out last year's bombings of the London Underground, for example, were converted to terrorist ideology in their home country, the United Kingdom—just as the perpetrators of deadly rail explosions in Madrid and Mumbai might have been homegrown.

We will hear from our witnesses this morning of the developing concern that American prisons are potential breeding grounds for terrorism in this country. I say—potential—because there is no evidence to suggest U.S. prisons are churning out terrorists—yet. But nor can we afford to wait until production is in full swing before we address the conditions that could lead to that occurring. The missed opportunities leading up to the 9-11 attacks have been chronicled at length. So, again, I thank the Chairman for holding this hearing today so we can hear about a potential problem that can no longer be ignored.

The study we will hear about today shows that the American prison systems—Federal, State, and local—are environments that are permissive to the proliferation of radical ideologies. That permissiveness, quite naturally, is exploited by those wishing to fill out their ranks and win new recruits to the cause. The study's authors—Mr. Cilluffo and Dr. Saathoff, together with their formidable team of experts from across the professional spectrum—have done outstanding work to identify potential loopholes that could be exploited by radical groups and to provide thoughtful, well-reasoned ways to close some of those loopholes. Our final witness on the first panel is someone who actually did exploit those loopholes. Mr. Gartenstein-Ross joined Al Haramain, a radical organization with terrorist ties. He was personally responsible for outreach to the prison populations in the United States and sent thousands of pieces of radical literature to prisoners. And although Al Haramain has been shut down, in large part due to Mr. Gartenstein-Ross's cooperation with the FBI, there could be other similar groups still operating out there.

The fundamental questions we must ask are what would cause a person to convert to a radical ideology condoning terrorism? What is the process by which a prisoner might convert to such an ideology? What are the conditions under which a conversion might take place? And what controls can we put into place to curtail such conversions? Dr. Saathoff, with his extensive experience in psychiatric evaluations of prisoners, will offer a glimpse into the behavioral science behind radicalization, and what factors might make the prison environment conducive to the recruitment of terrorists. And Mr. Cilluffo, who has lent his tremendous expertise in Homeland Security policy to this study, will offer insights on how the government, across levels and jurisdictions, can begin to close gaps in the system.

The value of spirituality for inmates requires that a range of religious services be available. Our adherence to the principle of freedom of worship, in fact, allows

for any inmate to request services in the religion of his or her choice. And since Islam is the second most widespread religion in the world, it is understandable and proper that it be represented proportionately among the chaplains employed by the prison system and among those who contract or volunteer to provide religious services to inmates.

Unfortunately, the number of qualified Islamic chaplains, or Imams, is insufficient. Although over 80 percent of religious conversions in prison are to some form of Islam, only ten of the 200 chaplains in the Federal system are devoted to Islam. This staggeringly disproportionate number cannot possibly fulfill the need for expertise in cultural traditions and linguistics—not to mention offering a meaningful presence—in a system with a total population of nearly 200,000. The report states that radical prison groups have been able to use Arabic as a code for passing secret information. A greater corps of educated and certified Muslim chaplains and expert staff, with the ability to detect dangerous materials, teachings, and communications, seems key to controlling radicalization.

As we will hear, radical Islamic literature may contain incendiary language against Jews, Christians, and others who are considered non-believers. Does that mean that extreme views, whether religious or political, naturally imply a proclivity toward violence? I don't think so. There are no restrictions on thought in this nation. Freedom of ideas, freedom of expression, and freedom of religion are among the most cherished birthrights of our democracy. The First Amendment does not stop at the prison wall.

But controls must exist to prevent the freedom of individual thought from devolving into a hateful ideology that promotes or incites violence. While it may be legal to hold such beliefs, it is decidedly illegal to act on them. Within the confines of correctional facilities, where a higher requirement for order exists, the interest of safety and security demands that these beliefs be discouraged.

I hope that our second panel of witnesses can tell us today what controls are currently in effect in Federal prisons to stem the spread of hateful ideology and what additional controls should be instituted to halt recruitment and stop the radicalization process before it is manifested in terrorism. I also hope that this panel will speak to Federal efforts and plans to increase information sharing—a critical element in controlling the spread of radical ideology. The task force report starkly describes the challenges to sharing information between institutions, jurisdictions, levels of governments, and agencies in the correctional system. Dangerous religious service providers may move freely between jurisdictions, radical and charismatic inmates may be transferred untracked between prisons, and intelligence gained at the Federal level lacks a sufficient means for dissemination to State and local levels. The State of California has taken admirable strides in forming its Prison Radicalization Working Group, which draws together officials from all levels of government in monthly dialogues to address the problem. I hope similar efforts take root across the nation, with Federal leadership to assist in the sharing of information that is so essential in improving homeland security.

I thank both panels of witnesses for taking the time to share their wisdom and experience today and I look forward to their testimony. The topic is an important one: Our dialogue today, and even more importantly, the dialogues that I hope will ensue, can only serve to increase our awareness and active vigilance against an ever-changing enemy in the war on terror.

**Prison Radicalization: Are Terrorist Cells Forming in U.S. Cell Blocks?**

**Testimony of Frank J. Cilluffo**
**Director, Homeland Security Policy Institute**
**The George Washington University**

**Before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**
**September 19, 2006**

Chairman Collins, Senator Lieberman, and distinguished members of the Committee, it is a privilege to be afforded the opportunity to testify before you today. Your leadership in examining the issue of prison radicalization is to be commended. It has not been among the many homeland security matters that have received extensive scrutiny to date. Your initiative in pushing this issue to the fore is crucial – proactive consideration of this challenge and a carefully calibrated response, implemented in timely fashion, will place the United States ahead of the curve and bolster national security. Let us not wait until we are faced with the need to manage a crisis.

Prison radicalization is, of course, a subset of the more general phenomenon of radicalization that has manifested itself in a series of terrorist attacks and activities including the bombings in Madrid (3/11) and London (7/7), and operations recently uncovered in Canada. The larger terrorist threat is the tapestry against which prisoner radicalization must be studied, but that fabric is ever changing. Al Qaeda in its classic form is now a degraded entity, with many of its remaining key figures on the run. However, it has franchised itself across the globe, with its franchisees prepared to act locally, and largely independently – in effect a network of networks. Recently, we have seen the emergence of a leaderless movement, marked significantly by self-enlistment, and taking its inspiration from "Al Qaeda classic" to join the global Salafi jihad. The internet has fuelled this development by encouraging and accelerating the formation of stronger initial bonds inside chat rooms than would occur through face-to-face interaction, and facilitating the re-affirmation of aberrant attitudes – building in essence a virtual umma. Ironically, it is when homegrown groups attempt to reach out to Al Qaeda that they have been caught in key instances; fortunately, these groups have not yet attained a higher level of competence. The internet has also provided an avenue for participation in jihad for women who could not otherwise become involved.[1]

Whether beyond prison walls or inside them, it is essential to better understand the life cycle of a terrorist – specifically, the process by which an individual becomes motivated to listen to radical ideas, read about them, enlist oneself or respond to terrorist recruiting efforts, and ultimately, undertake terrorist activity. This issue of how an inspired sympathizer turns into an activist who then goes on to kill innocents will be addressed in greater detail later this morning by my fellow witness, Dr. Gregory Saathoff, who

[1] Interview with Scott Atran, Professor of Psychology and Public Policy, University of Michigan.

possesses a wealth of behavioral science expertise. Dr. Saathoff will also elaborate on some of the terms of art that are used in this context. For my own part, I will add only that the term "radicalization" should here be taken to mean "the process by which inmates...adopt extreme views, including beliefs that violent measures need to be taken for political or religious purposes."[2]

Prison radicalization is not a new threat. To the contrary, prisons have always been an incubator for radical ideas, in part because there is a captive audience. Recall that Hitler wrote *Mein Kampf* while in prison; and Stalin, while himself incarcerated, recruited inmates to power the Bolshevik Revolution. Zeljko Raznatovic, the founder of Arkan's Tigers, took part in the ethnic cleansing of Bosnia in the 1990s, was just a petty criminal until he spent time in Western Europe's prisons. The spiritual philosopher of Al Qaeda, Sayyid Qutb, wrote the radical Islamist manifesto *Ma'alim fi al-Tariq (Milestones Along the Road)* while in an Egyptian prison; and Abu Musab al-Zarqawi recruited followers while imprisoned. Of course, religious radicalization is not unique to Islam – and remains the exception rather than the rule, irrespective of the faith at issue. What follows is a distillation of the most salient findings on the subject of religious radicalization of inmates, as generated by a unique partnership and multi-disciplinary joint undertaking which I co-chaired with Dr. Saathoff.

Some months ago, Dr. Saathoff and I were asked to brief, in a closed door session, a bipartisan panel of congressional members on the very issue before us today. That discussion, a spirited one, and other conversations with representatives of both sides of the aisle, served to reinforce our belief that there was a real need to explore the question of prisoner radicalization in order to sharpen our sense of the nature and scale of the problem, and thereby serve as a spur to action. Indeed, congressional leadership and political will in connection with this challenge has been manifestly evident, and for this you should all be recognized for your proactive leadership. Getting ahead of the curve requires the courage to assume risk, and those who embrace risk in the interest of furthering public safety should be supported in their efforts to serve the public interest.

Against this background, The George Washington University's Homeland Security Policy Institute (HSPI) and the University of Virginia School of Medicine's Critical Incident Analysis Group (CIAG) blended their expertise and networks, and jointly convened a dedicated volunteer task force of subject matter experts to examine radicalization in prisons from a multi-dimensional perspective. Rather than studying the issue through a single lens or solely from a traditional law enforcement and/or intelligence perspective, the task force interviewed and received briefings from imams and chaplains, and brought together officials at all levels of government with scholars of religion and behavioral science experts. The aim was to integrate insights from each of these professions (received under "Chatham House rules" and in the experts' individual rather than institutional capacity), and recast their distinct lenses on this issue as a prism. Each community represented is a critical part of the solution and no analysis would be

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[2] *A Review of the Federal Bureau of Prisons' Selection of Muslim Religious Services Providers*, Department of Justice, Office of The Inspector General, April 2004.

complete without the benefit of their insights and input. The task force report is a product of its members' collective talents and I would be remiss if I did not express my gratitude for their willingness to join in this endeavor and share their valuable insights.

To date, select cases that have revealed connections between former/current prisoners and terrorism have each held the potential to be a high-consequence event:

- In 1985, a group called El Rukn brokered a deal with the Libyan government to carry out attacks on US police stations, government facilities, military bases, and passenger airplanes in exchange for $2.5 million and asylum in Tripoli. El Rukn was founded by a Chicago gang leader who converted to Islam while imprisoned in 1965.

- When the compound of the extremist Christian group Covenant, Sword and Arm of the Lord (CSA) was raided, authorities discovered landmines, US Army anti-tank rockets, and a large amount of cyanide apparently intended to poison a city's water supply. CSA's founder had earlier received spiritual tutelage in prison from a fellow inmate – a leader in the radical "Christian Identity" movement.

- John King and Russell Brewer were convicted of murdering African-American James Byrd Jr. in 1998. The two had entered prison as petty criminals, but left startlingly transformed, having joined a white supremacist group and covered their bodies with racist tattoos. King's own attorney "...admitted the significance of the prison experience. 'What I do know is [King] wasn't a racist when he went in. He was when he came out'."[3]

- Richard Reid, apprehended while attempting to detonate a bomb on a US-bound commercial flight in December 2001, is believed to have been radicalized by an imam while incarcerated in Britain.

- A recently foiled plot to attack numerous government and Jewish targets in California was devised inside New Folsom State Prison. Two men implicated in the scheme were recruited from a local mosque by a former prisoner.

- Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, the emir of Egypt's Gama'at al Islamia (the Islamic Group), is the radical cleric who plotted to bomb New York City landmarks in 1993. Upon being sentenced to a life term, he issued a decree from federal prison, declaring of Americans that "Muslims everywhere [should] dismember their nation, tear them apart, ruin their economy, provoke their corporations, destroy their embassies, attack their interests, sink their ships,...shoot down their planes, [and] kill them on land, at sea, and in the air. Kill them wherever you find them." Osama bin Laden later claimed that this fatwa provided religious authority for the 9/11 attacks. Abdel Rahman has continued trying to run his organization while

[3] Anti-Defamation League, *Dangerous Convictions: An Introduction to Extremist Activities in Prisons* (2002), p. 2.

incarcerated – and three defendants were convicted of terrorism charges in 2005 for helping him do so.

These cases would appear to be just the tip of the iceberg, however. According to authorities who briefed the task force, numerous other examples exist, but due to the sensitive nature of ongoing investigations, cannot be discussed publicly in detail. In short, we have snippets of data but do not currently have a sense of how these various "pixels" fit together as a mosaic – the big picture as it now stands is fuzzy, and needs to be brought into focus in order for effective response measures to be formulated and implemented.

That said, officials in California confirm that "for every rock they turn over" in this context, they "find something there." While resource and personnel constraints have inhibited further investigation of many of those leads, at least the bounds of what we do not know may be apparent to those authorities. Potentially even more disturbing is the further scenario in which we do not know what we do not know. In short, there is a dearth of data in this area which inhibits a fulsome assessment of the threat posed by religious radicalization of inmates in the US correctional system. Further, social scientists and other academicians interested in examining the issue have been largely unsuccessful to date in gaining access to prison facilities to conduct research, and prisoner radicalization therefore remains a poorly understood phenomenon.

The task force set out to determine what is currently known about radicalization and recruitment in the US prison system at the federal, state and local levels. From the outset, however, I should emphasize that the problem is by no means unique to the US. In Europe, for instance, the number of Muslim inmates has been growing for decades, and their numbers incarcerated are not in proportion to their representation in the general population.[4] By comparison to American Muslims, Muslims living in Europe are more socio-economically marginalized, and therefore more vulnerable to radical messages, religious and otherwise. Indeed, the *Washington Post* recently reported that whereas Muslims living in the United States "tend to be more educated" and "have higher incomes than the average American," the reverse is true for Muslims in Britain.[5]

The European experience is relevant to our own in at least two ways, though: as a containment challenge and a learning opportunity, respectively. First, inmates radicalized in Europe may travel to the US or participate in networks with individuals inside the US; and indirect internet access, which may be accorded to prisoners in the US, facilitates such cross-border networking. Second, and more encouragingly, the European experience offers us a chance to learn and adapt lessons, and craft effective tailored strategies to the US context <u>before</u> the problem manifests itself here to the extent that it

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[4] N.H. Ammar et al., "Muslims in Prison: A Case Study from Ohio State Prisons," *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, Volume 48, Number 4 (2004), pp. 416-17.

[5] 59% of US Muslims hold a Bachelor's degree or more, versus 27% in the US overall; and 52% of US Muslims earn $50,000 or more, versus 45% in the US overall. Geneive Abdo, "America's Muslims Aren't as Assimilated as You Think," *Washington Post* (August 27, 2006).

has overseas. In point of fact, the problem is a global one and, moving forward, information-sharing between and among the US and other countries will be crucial.

Within the US, the potential scope of the challenge is considerable: America's prison population is the world's largest at over two million, and our incarceration rate is the world's highest at 701 out of every 100,000.[6] The overwhelming majority of these inmates, that is ninety-three percent, are in state and local prisons and jails.[7] As a result, the threat of prisoner radicalization gains even greater salience here than at the federal level. The figures for California alone are staggering. There, thirty-three adult prisons contain an inmate population in excess of 170,000. With facilities hugely overcrowded – operating at 200% capacity – staffing, management, funding, and logistics pose a tremendous challenge, and wardens there understandably have their hands full dealing with day-to-day operations alone. All of these inmates must be fed, clothed, housed and, most importantly, supervised and secured. Concerned with dangerous inmates and hardened criminals, prison officials simply do not have the manpower to oversee every prayer service or investigate every lead. Further, prisoners with extremist religious views often conduct themselves as model prisoners, hence, wardens (and other prison staff) who are already overburdened may have little incentive to focus on these inmates.

Notwithstanding such overstretch, officials at the state level have demonstrated an impressive level of resolve and commitment to countering prisoner radicalization. The issue has been identified as a priority, and a concerted investigative effort is underway in California (within the bounds of prevailing resources). A deliberate effort to identify and remedy key gaps in the state's prevention and response posture has given rise to a number of noteworthy initiatives including pilot programs intended to draw on the expertise developed over time by institutional gang investigators, and model terrorism and training awareness courses under development for correctional officers. State liaison officers posted at each prison meet monthly to share information across facilities. Beyond the prison-to-prison network, the long term and crucial process of building relationships and trust between and among officials at different levels of government is furthered by monthly meetings of a collective including prison staff, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD), the Los Angeles Police Department, the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Agency, and the Assistant US Attorney for the area. Notably, California is not alone in doing good work – Arizona and New York have also been forward-leaning in their approach to this problem, and they too should be commended for their proactive efforts.

Even in California, however, publicized successes may be due in no small part to luck. For instance, while the LASD in conjunction with the area's Joint Terrorism Task Force managed to foil the New Folsom plot referenced above, it was the fact that one of the plotters carelessly left a cell phone behind during a robbery that provided the key break in the case. While strides have been made in the wake of this episode, disconnects remain – crucially, local information has yet to fully find its way into regional and national

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[6] Roy Walmsley, *World Prison Population (5th Ed.)* (Home Office Publication 234, 2003).
[7] Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Prison Statistics*, August 15, 2006; http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/correct.htm (September 13, 2006).

intelligence processes and networks, and strategic analysis is not yet fused with investigatory efforts so that synergies emerge. Significant cultural obstacles also hinder the information-sharing process, highlighting further the complexities of working across jurisdictions. Bureaucratic infighting continues to hamper information sharing even between and among federal agencies, in part because of differing views on tradecraft – while some agencies are inclined to string people up at a relatively early stage, others are predisposed to stringing them along in order to tease out additional valuable information.

The implications are deeply disturbing. Radical preachers might be caught in one prison, fired, and simply move on to work at another prison. Radicalized prisoners might be transferred between prisons, giving them an opportunity to spread their message to new audiences, without prison officials on the receiving end knowing the threat posed by their new charges. Radical groups might be communicating between different prisons, coordinating their efforts, without prison officials being aware of links between them. The importance of information and intelligence sharing cannot be overstated, in part because it is essential that operations be intelligence-driven. Complicating the matter, there is currently no database to track inmates after they have served their sentence or to identify prisoners associated with radical groups. Further, there is no comprehensive database that tracks religious service providers that have exposed inmates to radical religious rhetoric. The sort of database that is truly needed is one that encompasses both the prison context and beyond, and covers who joins jihad, when, and how.[8] In any case, it is critical that information regarding the radicalization of prisoners in state, local, and federal correctional facilities be included as part of the body of information shared through the Information Sharing Environment called for by the *Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act* of 2004.

Compounding the threat posed by Islamic radicalization is the established presence of violent gangs and extremist Christian groups in prisons. Gangs have a long history of organizing, recruiting, and violence within prisons, giving Muslim extremist groups an opportunity to learn lesson organizational lessons. Many terrorist groups use crime, including extortion, kidnapping, robbery, document fraud, drug smuggling and arms trafficking to fund their enterprises[9], offering an opportunity for the groups to cooperate to their mutual benefit. More ominous is the potential for cooperation with right-wing Christian extremist groups, which not only have a history of terrorist attacks on US soil, but also a longstanding relationship with prisoners. These groups, which ascribe to "Christian Identity" ideology, include Posse Comitatus, The Order, and Aryan Nations. Some of these groups have found common cause with extremist Muslim groups, who share their hostility towards the US government and Israel – the "enemy of my enemy is my friend" effect. Most recently, a number of white supremacist groups vocalized their support for Hezbollah. Furthermore, radical Islamic groups have already begun adapting practices of gangs and extremist Christian groups. Where White Supremacist gangs use

[8] Scott Atran and Marc Sageman, "Connecting the Dots," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (August 2006).
[9] Steven C. McCraw, Assistant Director, Office for Intelligence, Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Narco-Terrorism: International Drug Trafficking and Terrorism – A Dangerous Mix," Testimony before the Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, delivered on May 20, 2003.

ancient runes or Masonic symbols as secret codes, radical Muslim groups increasingly use Arabic language and script to communicate in secret while imprisoned.

A key factor in the growth of prisoner radicalization is the shortage of suitably qualified Muslim religious service providers available for work in prisons. Prisoners have a legal right to practice their religion, and prisons are legally bound to provide for inmate worship. This has opened the door to under-qualified and, dangerously, radical preachers to enter prisons. Strikingly, the Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBOP) currently employs only ten Muslim chaplains for the entire federal prison system, while the California state prison system employs twenty Muslim chaplains for its 300,000 prisoners and parolees. This handful of chaplains cannot possibly tend to the religious needs of every Muslim prisoner or oversee every religious service. As a result, prisoners often take on the role of religious service providers and prayer leaders. A 2004 survey of 193 wardens of state correctional facilities showed that half the institutions allowed inmates themselves to act as spiritual leaders.[10] Radical prisoners who volunteer for religious functions and assume religious authority benefit from a captive audience which may, in large part, have had no prior exposure to Islam, and no way to put the radical message into context. Hence, the only version of their religion that they have ever known is a "cut-and-paste" version of the Qur'an that incorporates violent prison gang culture, known as "Jailhouse Islam" or "Prislam". (It should go without saying, however, that in general terms religion may have a tremendously constructive impact upon inmates, imbuing them with a sense of discipline and purpose, among other things). Radical prisoners who want the role of religious leader for themselves have also been known to intimidate suitably qualified religious service providers into ceding their role.

The FBOP has attempted to deal with this problem by instituting new standards for prison religious service providers, and identifying a national organization that could vet religious service providers, ensuring a certain level of education and experience, as well as weeding out potential radicals who would incite violence. However, there has been no such national organization identified by the FBOP. As a result, prayer leaders and religious service providers only require endorsement by local organizations, making it more difficult to identify and track radical preachers, who often move between prisons freely. The situation at the state level is by no means more comforting. By way of illustration, there is no standard policy for vetting religious service providers in California prisons, leading potentially to thirty-three different policies in thirty-three different prisons. Without standard policies, it is possible for a chaplain to be removed from one prison for spreading radical ideas and inciting violence, only to find work at another prison, with officials none the wiser.

Due to the lack of proper religious authorities and academically credentialed experts available to review all materials entering the prison system, no consistently applied standard or procedure exists to determine what reading material is appropriate. In the absence of monitoring by authoritative Islamic chaplains, materials that advocate

[10] George W. Knox, "The Problem of Gangs and Security Threat Groups in American Prisons Today: Recent Research, Findings From the 2004 Prison Gang Survey," (National Gang Crime Research Center, 2005)

violence have infiltrated the prison system undetected. The lack of individuals with a thorough knowledge of Islam, the Qur'an and other religious materials entering prisons offers an opportunity for recruiters outside of prisons to paint a violent picture of Islam. Radical literature and extremist translations and interpretations of the Qur'an have been distributed to prisoners by groups suspected or known to support terrorism. The use of Arabic language materials obscures the content to untrained prison officials. Radicals often do not even need to rely on secret codes or foreign languages to smuggle in radical tracts. The Noble Qur'an, a Wahhabi/Salafi version written in English, is widely available in prisons. A recent review in *The Middle East Quarterly* characterized this version as reading more "...like a supremacist Muslim, anti-Semite, anti-Christian polemic than a rendition of the Islamic scripture."[11] Of particular concern is its appendix, entitled "The Call to *Jihad* (Holy Fighting in Allah's Cause)." Another text of concern is Saeed Ismaeel's *The Differences Between the Shee'ah and Muslims Who Follow the Sunnah*, written in plain English. Extremist interpretations of the Qur'an use footnotes and supplements to lead the reader to a radical interpretation of the scripture. The FBOP is now requiring that Islamic teaching materials and study guides be prepared by Islamic chaplains who are full-time FBOP staff,[12] but FBOP represents only a small fraction of the US prison system.

The threat posed by prisoner radicalization does not end when inmates are paroled or released. Former inmates are vulnerable to radicalization and recruitment because many leave prison with very little financial or social support. To the extent that radical groups may draw upon funding from well-financed, extremist backers, they can offer much more support to released prisoners than other more legitimate community programs that would facilitate genuine reintegration into society. By providing for prisoners in their time of greatest need, radical organizations can build upon the loyalty developed during the individual's time in prison. If connections are made with a radicalized community group, the recently released inmate may remain at risk for recruitment or continued involvement in terrorist networks.

Moving forward, the most fundamental imperative, in my view as well as that of the task force, is for Congress to establish a Commission to investigate this issue in depth. An objective risk assessment is urgently needed in order to better understand the nature of the threat, and to formulate and calibrate proactive prevention and response efforts accordingly.[13]

For a proper appreciation of the proposed Commission and its course of work, two additional caveats are essential. First, all relevant perspectives must feed into the process – as emphasized above, solutions in this context must be reflective of the complexity of the problem and, therefore, no one profession alone is equipped to analyze and

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[11] Khaleel Mohammed, "Assessing English Translations of the Qur'an," *Middle East Quarterly*, Volume 12, Number 2 (Spring 2005).

[12] *Department of Justice Anti-Terrorism Efforts Since Sept. 11, 2001.* Department of Justice Fact Sheet, 5 September 2006 <http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2006/September/06_opa_590.html>.

[13] It should be noted that the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security are also conducting their own strategic assessments regarding the scope of radicalization and recruitment in US prisons from a law enforcement-centric point of view.

recommend change. Law enforcement must come together with a range of non-traditional partners in order to get us to where we need to be on this issue. Second, it is crucial that balance be injected into this exercise, specifically, that the practice of religious freedom be given fulsome consideration and weight while means of preventing the spread of radical ideology in a religious context are studied.

While the task force would not presume to instruct the Commission on how to go about doing its work, we would urge that the following core issues be accorded priority status:

As a corollary to assessing the risk posed by the influence of radical groups within the prison system, there should be a companion assessment of current levels of information sharing between and among agencies at all levels of government involved in managing inmates and monitoring radical groups.

Equally crucial is the identification of steps to ensure the legitimacy of Islamic endorsing agencies so as to ensure a reliable and effective process of providing religious services to Muslim inmates.

Steps to effectively reintegrate former inmates into the larger society should also be identified, with an eye to diminishing the likelihood that former prisoners will be recruited by radical groups posing as social service providers, or act upon radical tendencies learned behind bars.

Fortunately, we are not building entirely from scratch: lessons can and should be learned and adapted from present and past efforts to combat gangs and right-wing extremists in prisons. Existing prison programs designed to prevent radicalization and recruitment or to disrupt radical groups – whether at the local, state, federal, or international level – should be evaluated to determine a set of best practices that can be used to develop a comprehensive strategy to counter radicalization. Knowledge must be translated into action across the board. Awareness, education, and training programs must be developed for personnel who work in prison, probation, and parole settings.

Finally, broader avenues of dialogue with the Muslim community should be identified and pursued to foster mutual respect and understanding, and ultimately trust. Prison radicalization is but one subset of the battle of ideas, and it is only by challenging ideas with ideas – both within and beyond prison walls – that hearts and minds may ultimately be changed, and radical ideas moderated. Just as we cannot win the global war on terrorism abroad by military means alone, we will not win the battle against extremism domestically through law enforcement alone.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I would also like to recognize the Committee and their staff for their professionalism. Please note that I am submitting for the record the HSPI-CIAG Prisoner Radicalization Task Force Report entitled *Out of the Shadows: Getting Ahead of Prisoner Radicalization.* I would be pleased to try to answer any questions that you may have.

*The George Washington University Homeland Security Policy Institute (HSPI) is a unique, nonpartisan "think and do tank" that builds bridges between theory and practice to advance homeland security, through a multi and interdisciplinary approach. By convening policymakers and practitioners at all levels of government and the private sector, HSPI creates innovative strategies and solutions to current and future threats to the nation.*

**Religious Radicalization Behind Bars**

**Testimony of Gregory B. Saathoff**
**Executive Director, Critical Incident Analysis Group**
**University of Virginia School of Medicine**

**Before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**
**September 19, 2006**

Chairman Collins, Senator Lieberman, and distinguished members of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, I would like to thank you for inviting me to testify before you today on this subject of national importance. Your collaborative leadership on homeland security issues examines national vulnerabilities. The issue of religious radicalization in U.S. prisons pertains not only to your interest in Homeland Security, but also your committee's interest in health and public safety, ethics, government management and information technology.

I would like to echo the testimony of the opening speaker on this panel, Frank Cilluffo. I am especially appreciative to have previously shared the opportunity to brief a bipartisan Congressional panel. This was very helpful in identifying the key issues that concern policy makers. It has also been a privilege to serve with Mr. Cilluffo as the co-chair on the Prisoner Radicalization Task Force. His Homeland Security Policy Institute, at The George Washington University, was a critical partner in enabling us to build the network of expertise responsible for producing the report that we have released today***: Out of the Shadows: Getting Ahead of Prisoner Radicalization.*** We began with a strong foundation of multidisciplinary expertise and experience. This was essential through the course of our many briefings by government leadership, law enforcement officials and religious prison experts.

Throughout the last decade, I have assisted in the coordination of briefings between behavioral science experts in the FBI and an international group of religion scholars. During these yearly meetings of the American Academy of Religion, I have become convinced that the most enigmatic issues faced by law enforcement require a multidisciplinary approach. When religion is a focus of concern, insights of religion scholars are often essential.

During the last fifteen years, as a member of the faculty of the University of Virginia's School of Medicine, I have provided consultation in more than ten state prisons, federal prisons and jails. In that time I have performed more than twenty thousand separate assessments for more than 5,000 inmates. It is an opportunity for teaching of psychiatry to medical students. In their subsequent medical careers, some have gone on to provide treatment to inmates as a result of that exposure. I have been fortunate to consult to institutions with good safety records. In my experience, the vast majority of correctional employees are conscientious and professional in their approach to meeting the needs of inmates, despite the challenges of working under often difficult conditions.

Through this work, I have had an opportunity to evaluate and treat inmates for mental illness, but also to witness the importance of the media, the power of social networks, the changing role of information technology, the response to health care, the benefits of structure, the importance of family, and the often vital role that religion plays in rehabilitation, if not redemption. In my brief remarks today, I will speak to the issue of radicalization from a behavioral science perspective.

Within any system, there is the potential for corruption and abuse, and the prison system is no exception. For example, although most inmates appreciate the value of good medical care, there are some who use symptoms as tactics in order to gain special advantage in the system, using the cover of illness to obtain unnecessary medication, or evade responsibility, or to attempt escape. Access to radio and television programming is often constructive, although some are susceptible to the violent and sexual content, and react in kind. Affiliation with others on work crews and sports teams can prepare inmates for life in society. Affiliation of course can be destructive, though when inmates join violent groups and gangs that achieve identity by advocating violence and demonizing others. Volunteers in prison can provide an enormous benefit toward the rehabilitation of inmates, and this can not be overstated. As with other valuable enterprises, the volunteer system within prisons can be exploited by those who would use it to build a violent network. This is particularly true when systems within states and localities do not confirm and share information about the vast number of volunteers and visitors who daily enter our jails and prison.

In the same way that medical care, communications, affiliation and the volunteer system can be exploited within prisons, so too can be religion if it is used as a means to advocate violence or antisocial behavior. The Constitutional protections given to speech and religion provide a strong foundation for our society, as well as our prison system in the United States. In order to safeguard these rights, we must insure that religious protections are not exploited in order to radicalize and recruit inmates toward violence.

While the federal prison system has made strides in addressing the issue of religious radicalization and recruitment within prisons, our level of awareness and understanding is still quite limited, particularly at the level of state prisons, community corrections and local jails. This is significant, because the vast majority of the greater than two million incarcerated inmates are held in these state and local systems, rather than the federal system.

Indeed, in Director Mueller's 2005 testimony to the Senate Intelligence Committee, he stated that "prisons continue to be fertile ground for extremists who exploit both a prisoner's conversion to Islam while still in prison, as well as their socioeconomic status and placement in the community upon their release."[1] In addition, The FBI's Assistant Director for the Counterterrorism Division, John Pistole, testified that "Some of these terrorists seek to exploit our freedom to exercise religion, we believe, to their advantage

[1] Mueller, Robert, Testimony Before the Senate Committee on Intelligence of the United States Senate, February 16, 2005.

by using radical forms of Islam to recruit operatives. Unfortunately, U.S. correctional institutions are a viable venue for such radicalization and recruitment."[2]

In order to understand issues that face current prisons and prisoners, we must be sure that we have an adequate understanding of the modern prison system. Those of us who are old enough to remember the politically motivated violence in prisons of the 1960's and 1970's should be aware that prison violence could again become a central point of discussion and galvanize public opinion. But unlike the politically motivated, secular upheaval of the last generation, we face a great risk of religiously motivated violence.

Since the 1990's, religiously motivated terrorism has resulted in intense acts of violence, creating greater numbers of fatalities than the more calculated violence perpetrated by secular terrorist organizations. These differences were noted by Bruce Hoffman, Mark Juergensmeyer and other scholars even before September 11, 2001. Hoffman explained the increased level of violence through examination of religious terrorism's "radically different value systems, mechanisms of legitimization and justification, concepts of morality, and world-view embraced by the religious terrorist, compared with his secular counterpart"[3]. According to Hoffman, religious terrorists see their acts as divine duties to the point that they constitute "sacramental acts." Rather than seeking sympathizers, they are much more alienated and therefore more destructive as they engage in total war.

In addition, Juergensmeyer wrote presciently before 9/11 about the concept of "performance violence," in which opponents are demonized and perpetrators become martyrs. In his interviews with jailed religious terrorists, he detailed an embrace of violence within various radicalized religions.[4] The shift in society from secular to religious violence internationally has also been reflected nationally in our prison system.

**U.S. Prisoners Today**

In order to understand how the process of radicalization might affect prison inmates, it is important to know about the types of people that we are incarcerating in the United States. State and local correctional systems provide an ideal backdrop for radicalization of young men and women. Research on the characteristics of terrorist recruits abroad has identified youth, unemployment, alienation, a need for a sense of self-importance, and a need to belong to a group as common factors, all of which are present among U.S. prison populations.[5] These inmates are vulnerable to extremist versions of the religion. The threat of terrorist recruiting in U.S. prisons was highlighted in October 2003 during a hearing before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Terrorism, Technology and Homeland

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[2] Pistole, John, Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Technology and Homeland Security of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, October 14, 2003.
[3] Hoffman, Bruce, Inside Terrorism, Columbia University Press, New York, 1998.
[4] Juergensmeyer, Mark, Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence, University of California Press, 2000.
[5] Hudson, R.A. 1999. The Sociology and Psychology of Terrorism: Who Becomes and Terrorist and Why? Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. p. 24.

Security,[6] which identified two major areas of concern in the U.S. federal prison system. First, a variety of socioeconomic and psychological factors make inmates vulnerable to radical ideology. Second, groups known to support terrorist causes have distributed radical literature to the prison population. Witnesses stated that serious problems with the screening of religious service providers have created an opportunity for radicalization.

For a variety of reasons, new prisons have increasingly been built in rural areas. This may decrease the opportunities for prisoners to maintain contact with family and decrease the opportunities for religious instruction. When in remote locations, it is more difficult to contract for qualified religious service providers. This is important with regard to religious radicalization, because it leaves a void that may be filled by poorly qualified religious practitioners who bring their own brand of religious radicalization within prison walls.

The social and psychological backgrounds of many prisoners reflect a vulnerability to recruitment by groups that advocate violence. While not a justification for criminal behavior, family histories of inmates include more abandonment, abuse and neglect than non-incarcerated Americans. Violence is the norm. Inmates often see themselves as victims of society and therefore seek retribution. Because structure is often lacking in their development, the prison environment can be a vehicle for new growth in that it holds and contains the individual, providing time and space for either constructive or destructive pursuits.

American prisons have seen an increase in population, largely due to the longer sentences given to drug offenders. Despite the prison building boom, some state and local facilities remain overcrowded, housing many more inmates than originally designed. Although the numbers of inmates have increased, rehabilitation programs within prisons have not always kept pace, and have arguably fallen behind.

Prisons have always been a repository for society's unsolved problems. Perhaps one of the most serious challenges to prisons has been the influx of inmates who suffer from serious mental illness. The promises of deinstitutionalization have not been kept by society. Instead, we have seen trans-institutionalization of patients. Mentally ill have been shifted from mental hospitals to the streets and then to prison. This is relevant because the necessary emphasis on mental health care has further stretched the resources of prisons, thus limiting the capabilities for investigation and intelligence collection.

**Behavior is Contagious**

The landscape of prison life has also changed dramatically, in that the 24-hour news cycle available within prisons acts as a force multiplier. Why is this important? Behavior is contagious, whether it occurs in exuberant fans crowding onto a sports field after victory, or angry inmates who riot within a facility. I learned this myself when I was

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[6] Terrorism: Radical Islamic Influence of Chaplaincy of the U.S. Military and Prisons, Tuesday, October 14, 2003. United States Senate, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Technology and Homeland Security, Committee on the Judiciary.

called to see an inmate who had set his cell on fire. It was only after I treated him that I realized that the image of a raging fire on television provoked him to torch his cell. This can also occur on a macro level. Two days after the World Trade Center attack, I consulted to a prison that I thought I knew well. Anxious inmates informed me that that the televised images of the 9-11 attack were cause for celebration among many of the inmates. In fact, they estimated that a third of the inmates praised the attacks, and their cheers could be heard in cellblock after cellblock.

Of course, access to radio and television can have a significant positive impact within prisons. Technology advances and culture follows in its wake. However, one of the byproducts of our smaller, more information connected world is the globalization of grievance. Images of distant conflicts are burned into the memories and identities of impressionable inmates. While these images make for compelling television, they also provide the opportunity for inmates to ultimately adopt and embrace a chosen trauma[7] that will fuel future rage into succeeding generations. Television transmissions of bombings and beheadings have immense power, and their impact within the prison environment cannot be overstated.

The internet has been a boon for religious radicalization and recruitment. Training for recruits that previously occurred in terrorist training camps can now be accomplished via electronic, globally accessible correspondence courses. The web can capture and rapidly disseminate information to the world. We have not begun to fully grasp the implications of this in our society, but the internet is perhaps the most potent vehicle for training and information sharing. It is increasingly being used by individuals and groups seeking affirmation and identity through the use of violence.

Just as the internet has revolutionized the way that we look at communication in modern society, it has acted as dramatic means in prison for broadening social networks. Although I am not aware of any correctional system that currently provides direct unregulated internet access for inmates, there has been a dramatic increase in indirect use of the internet. During the past decade, pen pal correspondence between prison inmates and the public has rapidly gained acceptance on the internet. The days when inmates were limited by the time and delay of individual letters have now passed. Currently, the inmate who had access to 5 pen pals can just as easily have access to 50 or 500. Although one state passed a law banning inmates' access to the internet, this state law has been overturned in Federal Court.[8]

**Radicalization: What do we know?**

More than 200 years ago, Thomas Jefferson looked to France when he drew up plans for the proposed Richmond penitentiary based on a model from a prison in Lyon, France.[9] Today, it would be wise to look to France, Great Britain, and other European countries to learn from their experience. Radicalization in prisons is a global problem and threatens

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[7] Volkan, V., Bloodlines, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997, pp. 48-49.
[8] *Canadian Coalition Against the Death Penalty v Terry L. Stewart, 2002.*
[9] Boyd, J, The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, Princeton, N.J., 1953.

the national security of the U.S. Information sharing between and among the U.S. and other countries is crucial. The task force report released today examines these issues from the perspective of European prisons.

**Defining Terms**[10]

For consistency, I would like to refer to the task force report, ***Out of the Shadows: Getting Ahead of Prisoner Radicalization*** for the following definitions of radicalization and recruitment. Our report provides the background for definition development on relevant issues related to radicalization. The following definitions are taken directly from the report.

Radicalization - refers to the process by which inmates...adopt extreme views, including beliefs that violent measures need to be taken for political or religious purposes. By "extreme views," this report specifies beliefs that are anti-social, politically rebellious and anti-authoritarian.

Recruitment - "is used to mean the solicitation of individuals to commit terrorist acts or engage in behavior for a terrorism purpose." Non-radicalized inmates may be persuaded to participate in actions that directly benefit the terrorist network. Therefore, a recruited individual would include anyone in the prison environment who provides support to terrorists. Many members of a terrorist network may not be fully aware of the value that their actions bring to the network, as in the case of a prisoner who is coerced through blackmail to smuggle cell phone parts into a prison.

Individual radicalization – results from exposure to a radical religious service provider or charismatic inmate espousing radical ideas. This type of individual may decide to pursue violence on his own, becoming a "lone-wolf" terrorist. He would not necessarily have the support of a network, but may seek out a network in the future, and may be at risk for recruitment at some later date.

Organized radicalization – a process supported by external groups who seek to influence vulnerable inmates. These groups coordinate the entry of radical religious service providers into prisons and jails. They provide inmates with reading materials that include non-traditional or extremist interpretations of the Qur'an. Once released, inmates are also directed to supportive groups that espouse violence, such as radical mosques. The social services offered by radical groups act as a vehicle for "top-down recruiting," also known as "scouting". This involves radical groups identifying released inmates with valuable skills who can be recruited to carry out specific actions in support of the group's radical agenda. This process occurs over the long term and direct recruiting may result long after the inmate has become radicalized.

Gang radicalization - makes use of pre-existing prison gangs or networks to attract inmates. A principal reason for joining an existing gang is the belief that membership in

[10] F. Cilluffo, G. Saathoff, et. al., Out of the Shadows: Getting Ahead of Prisoner Radicalization, HSPI/CIAG Task Force on Prisoner Radicalization. 2006.

such a group confers physical protection and psychological support. Gangs also give disillusioned youth a sense of belonging. Once these groups become radicalized, their money, communications networks and intimidation factor can be used to recruit others and support terrorist networks.

Most prisoners who join Islamic gangs for protection adopt Islam temporarily out of necessity, a phenomenon called "Prislam" by officials of the New York Police Department. In contrast, a small but influential proportion of the prisoners who adopt Prislam later become engaged in terrorist activity.

Para-radicalization - takes place when non-radicalized individuals, including inmates, correctional officers, or other prison staff, aid or abet radicalized networks. Wittingly or not, they are an important part of terrorist network operations in the prison setting. Using bribery and intimidation, radical inmates can obtain, for example, smuggled communications devices, pass messages, and cause the strategic transfer of particular inmates.

**The Problem**

**Overview of the Process of Radicalization**

As previously discussed, prison inmates in general are particularly vulnerable to radical religious ideology due to their anti-social attitudes and the need to identify with other inmates sharing the same background, beliefs, or ethnicity. When there has been little exposure to organized religion in the community, the inmates' understanding of religion is dependent upon the religious leadership and materials at their facilities. Radical rhetoric may therefore exploit the inmate's vulnerabilities and lack of grounded religious knowledge by providing validation to the inmate's disillusionment with society and by creating an outlet for their violent impulses. Psychological factors that increase vulnerability include high level of distress, cultural disillusionment, lack of intrinsic religious beliefs or values, dysfunctional family system, or dependent personality tendencies.[11] From an ideological standpoint, radical religious groups allow inmates to demonize their perceived enemies and view themselves as righteous. Inmates may also be drawn to radical groups out of the need for protection or to gain status among other prisoners.

Occasionally, I am asked to describe the typical radicalized inmate. While it seems a reasonable question, I would suggest that focusing only on individual inmates is not an appropriate solution. In fact, terrorism is a team sport. Social bonding is not only the magnet but also the glue that holds groups together. Hypotheses like brainwashing are simple, attractive and wrong. Thoughtful comparisons between violent radical religious groups and new religious movements, sometimes known as cults, reveal that we can best

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[11] S. Gerwehr and S. Daly, *Al-Qaida: Terrorist Selection and Recruitment*, (McGraw-Hill Homeland Security Handbook, 2006), Chapter 5, p. 84.

understand terrorist groups through an understanding of networks.[12] The most effective terrorists are team players, who play different positions on a radicalized field. Our overcrowded prisons provide an opportunity for a deep bench. Even more importantly, para-radicalization occurs in prison. In this exploitative environment, inmates, visitors and even prison employees can be unwitting players who can be cajoled, bribed or coerced into transmitting messages and materials without being aware of their real purpose.

In order to effectively understand a business, we must appreciate the capabilities of not only its employees, but also the needs and interests of its customers. In a similar way, it is not enough to understand terrorism in prison by learning only about the inmates. One must also have an understanding of those who visit and volunteer in prisons. Although prisons may appear to be closed systems, the walls are in fact quite permeable. A state prison system with 30,000 inmates may easily host 300,000 visitors and volunteers.

Studies have suggested that terrorist recruitment methods are not always expected to yield a high number of recruits.[13] Radical messages may be delivered to many prisoners with the understanding that most will resist radicalization. As demonstrated in the New Folsom plot, detailed in the prisoner radicalization task force report, a single radicalized inmate can be a significant threat. Even if the radical message resonates with only a few inmates, they could then be targeted for more intense one on one instruction. The New Folsum plot also demonstrates the communication that occurs between the prison and community. The impact and destructive potential of a prison-directed terrorist cell is enormous.

There is a difference between a radicalized prisoner, who holds radical religious or political beliefs, and a prisoner who has been recruited by a terrorist group and who has chosen to commit violence. A sequence from radicalization to violence occurs, beginning with the conditions of the prison setting and first exposure to radical ideas, and ending with the decision to become a terrorist. Only a few who become radicalized go on to actively pursue terrorism. An important resource for combating terrorism would be to determine which factor or factors influence some radicalized prisoners to make the specific leap from radical beliefs to violence in the name of those beliefs.

**Diverse and Dispersed**

Prison systems are administered at the federal, state and local levels. While there are good reasons to have a decentralized prison system, our prisons have not adapted to share information with other facilities and agencies. Currently, 3500 jails are city or county operated facilities. Some of these are huge, dwarfing many prisons in size. For example, more than 25 jails house more than 3,000 inmates. While most prison and jail systems are separate, some states combine their jail and prison systems under the state department

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[12] M Sageman, Understanding Terror Networks, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2000, pp 124-130.

[13] S. Gerwehr and S. Daly, *Al-Qaida: Terrorist Selection and Recruitment,* (McGraw-Hill Homeland Security Handbook, 2006), Chapter 5, p. 84.

of corrections. In the era of privatization, more private companies are running prisons. State governments operate nearly a thousand facilities, private companies run more than 150 facilities.[14] Coordination and collaboration between publicly and privately managed facilities has not yet been achieved, and presents a serious problem in the national struggle against radicalization and terrorism.

**The Research Search**

The history of research within U.S. prisons has been marked by human subject research abuse. As a result of these abuses, Congress passed special federal regulations governing research on human subjects in these facilities. Nationally recognized scholars who are interested in doing further research are often constrained, if not denied outright.

While maintaining rights of prisoners and maintaining the security of institutions is a primary obligation, we cannot forget that without the light afforded by good research, we are left with the heat of case-related investigations by government and the media. Effective policy should be driven by good research on radicalization rather than through random case reports.

We have an obligation to inmate populations, but also to those who are charged with maintaining safe prisons. Good intelligence needs to be provided not only in a top-down fashion, but also generated from the bottom-up. Just as we seek to protect our soldiers by providing them with the most up-to-date intelligence, we are also obligated to use our enhanced knowledge to safeguard the lives of our correctional officers.

As we have stated in our task force report, we currently lack the necessary data to determine both the extent and patterns of radical religious recruitment for incarcerated prisoners and released inmates. Even if a religious provider is removed from one facility, that provider can simply apply to enter into a prison in another state. No database exists to track inmates after release or to identify inmates associated with radical groups. No comprehensive database exists to track religious service providers who are known to expose inmates to radical religious rhetoric.

**First Describe, Then Prescribe**

A compelling case can be made for a review of our prison system, particularly at the state and local levels. In order to defeat a networked opponent, our prisons need to be "networked" through information technology systems that are truly integrated. This will facilitate much needed research into not only the "what" of religious radicalism, but also the "how" and "why." Improved intelligence will be beneficial not only in limiting religious radicalization and recruitment within prisons, but also in assisting in better determination of how criminal gangs operate within a prison environment. This intelligence will prepare us for future threats that we encounter within our prisons. When serious symptoms present, it is tempting to try to reach for a treatment before we

[14] C Bell, Correctional Psychiatry, in Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry, Eighth Edition, Kaplan and Sadock, Lippincott, Williams and Wilkins, Philadelphia, Vol 2, 2005, p 4002.

have a diagnosis. History reveals that government works best when it first shines light rather than heat upon concerns that involve religious questions and conflict.

Government must be proactive. We must base our operations on real intelligence, rather than gut reactions. Unless we understand the nature and extent of the problem of religious radicalization in prison, we are likely to first neglect it, and then over-react in a way that unnecessarily antagonizes and polarizes our prison population. In addition to being an assault on civil liberties, an aggressive over-reaction by government in the absence of good intelligence would lose hearts and minds to radicalization and recruitment, playing into the very hands of those who want to subvert our system.

Although at one point the issue may have involved "connecting the dots", many of those dots are now widening blots, bleeding through prison walls into the community. Our briefings revealed that while the New Folsum plot was discovered in the community accidentally by virtue of a dropped cell phone, the response of the Joint Terrorism Task Force in Los Angeles was superb. Federal, state and local leadership rapidly deployed personnel in order to determine the extent of a serious operation that had grown over time. Expecting the Joint Terrorism Task Force to be the primary force for dealing with this complex problem is like expecting emergency rooms to provide all medical care. A rapidly mobilized Joint Terrorism Task Force response to a serious threat is like an emergency medical response for patients with critical symptoms. It is necessary but not sufficient. Proactive, integrated intelligence-sharing systems are critical to identify blots before they become plots.

**Conclusion**

In my role as a consulting psychiatrist to prisons, I also teach the medical students who accompany me. Prison can be a humbling place, where teachers once again find themselves to be students.

I will never forget one of the first challenges that faced me in prison. A suicidal inmate was to be placed in a stripped cell without any possessions. As he was led from my office, he begged me to allow him to keep just one possession – his Bible. At such a time, it appeared obvious to me that this request could easily be granted. Without hesitation, I instructed the officer to give him his Bible. Before doing so, the officer flipped through the pages, reached into the book of Revelations, and pulled out a razor blade. "Doc", he said. "Do you want him to have this too?" The inmate smiled weakly and said "I guess I don't need my Bible after all."

Unfortunately, we are living in more complex times. An officer who can easily identify and remove a razor blade from a Bible will most likely not be able to identify the razors of radicalization – jihadist material that advocates violent measures against innocent civilians, gangs who are willing to masquerade their violence as religion, and radicalized individuals who are willing to take the last step towards terrorism.

In closing, I would like to recognize the Committee and their staff for their professionalism, and the School of Medicine at the University of Virginia and its resources within the Critical Incident Analysis Group. I would especially like to thank the Homeland Security Policy Institute at the George Washington University for their dedication to this process. I would like to extend to you an open offer to continue to work closely with them. Thank you and I would be pleased to try to answer any questions you may have.

*The Critical Incident Analysis Group (CIAG) at the University of Virginia School of Medicine represents a collaborative, multidisciplinary "think-net" that examines critical issues through a multidisciplinary lens of crisis analysis. As a flexible network, the Critical Incident Analysis Group benefits from the intersecting perspectives of government, academe and the private sector. By volunteering their time and counsel, CIAG participants distill current knowledge, providing opportunities to identify and build productive networks and policies that enhance resilience while safeguarding our liberties.*

**Prison Radicalization: Are Terrorist Cells Forming in U.S. Cell Blocks?**
**Testimony of Daveed Gartenstein-Ross**

**Senior Consultant, The Gerard Group International**
**Co-Chairman, The Counterterrorism Foundation**

**Before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee,**
**September 19, 2006**

Chairman Collins, Senator Lieberman and distinguished members of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, thank you for inviting me to testify before you today. The Committee is to be commended for tackling an important issue like prison radicalization, where there is manifest reason to believe that there is a serious problem—but where there is also a dearth of available information for experts in the public sector to accurately assess the full extent of the threat. I am honored to testify alongside distinguished experts like Frank Cilluffo and Dr. Greg Saathoff. Their testimony will provide you with more of a big-picture understanding of the problem of prison radicalization. Mine will tackle the issue from a different angle: it will provide an inside look at how access to the prison system can be exploited by radical Islamic charities intent on fostering their vision of the faith. The core of this testimony is based on my experiences working for the U.S. headquarters of the Al Haramain Islamic Foundation, which was an international charity devoted to Wahhabism, the austere vision of Islam that originated in what is now Saudi Arabia. In this capacity, I helped extremist literature reach the U.S. prison system.

I will begin with some information about my background, since that provides context for the unusual perspective of my testimony. I currently work as a counterterrorism consultant; I am a senior consultant for the Gerard Group International and co-chairman of the Counterterrorism Foundation. But I entered the field in an idiosyncratic way. My introduction came as an employee of a radical Islamic charity that is now designated as a sponsor of terrorism by the Treasury Department.

I grew up in Ashland, a small town in Southern Oregon. As my name suggests, both of my parents are from Jewish backgrounds. They weren't happy with traditional Judaism, however, and they encouraged me to find my own spiritual path. I found this path in college when I converted to Islam. Impressed by a Muslim friend whose sincere religious beliefs guided his political activism, I took my *shahada*—the declaration of faith that brings one into the fold of Islam—in the fall of 1997. My first job after college was with the U.S. headquarters of the Al Haramain Islamic Foundation.

Al Haramain's U.S. headquarters were located in my hometown. In the summer of 1998, while in Ashland visiting my parents, I went to the local mosque. I had encountered the local Muslim community once before, but by the summer of 1998 the group had moved to a new venue, a mansion-sized blue building on the south end of town. The impressive size of the building and the property surrounding it made it obvious that the group had more money than ever before. This was because, shortly before my visit, the local Muslim congregation had become affiliated with Saudi Arabia's Al Haramain Islamic Foundation.

Since the local Muslim community had seen me before, the apparent leader of the congregation, Pete Seda, took an interest in me. He took me on a long tour of the property, a tour that ended up being a sales pitch encouraging me to apply for a job with Al Haramain. Pete Seda is today under federal indictment for a money-laundering scheme that federal investigators believe was used to fund the *mujahideen* of Chechnya, who were waging war against the Russians.

I worked for Al Haramain from December 1998 until August 1999. I had a number of responsibilities during this time. Most relevant to this testimony, I oversaw our prison *dawa* program (*dawa* being Islamic evangelism), which was designed to educate U.S. prisoners about what Al Haramain considered to be "true" Islam.

I left the Islamic faith for Christianity prior to 9/11. By the time the FBI's investigation of Al Haramain kicked into high gear in February 2004, I was ready to assist the Bureau. I write about the experience of working for the Al Haramain Islamic Foundation—including the process of radicalization that I went through while at the charity—in my forthcoming book *My Year Inside Radical Islam*, which will be published on February 1, 2007. I have provided advance copies of the book to some of the Committee's staff members.

**The Al Haramain Islamic Foundation**

I would like to briefly examine the Al Haramain Islamic Foundation's connections to international terrorism in order to demonstrate the charity's ideological orientation. Ultimately, the story of Al Haramain's *dawa* program is one of missed opportunities for the charity and its terrorist backers. The program was set up in such a way that it could have been used as a major vehicle for terrorist recruitment. The program was not used in that way. But Al Haramain's connections to terrorism mean that it wouldn't be unreasonable to think that the prison *dawa* program might be used in that manner.

The international Al Haramain organization was originally formed as a private charity in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in 1992. At the time I worked for the group, it had offices in more than fifty countries and an annual budget of $40 to $50 million. Today, however, Al Haramain no longer exists as a separate entity. It was eventually merged, along with other charities, into the Saudi National Commission for Relief and Charity Work Abroad.

Al Haramain's terrorist connections begin with the Ashland branch, for which I worked. As I have mentioned, the Ashland branch has been designated a terrorist sponsor by the Treasury Department. Two directors, Pete Seda and Soliman al-But'he, were indicted for their roles in a complicated and somewhat bizarre money-laundering scheme in which al-But'he smuggled about $130,000 in traveler's checks out of the country without declaring them. Federal investigators believe that this money funded the Chechen *mujahideen*. Neither Seda nor al-But'he has been tried in U.S. court. Both men are currently fugitives from the law. Seda is reportedly in Iran. Al-But'he is living in Riyadh; he was recently promoted to assistant general manager of the parks and recreation department, and he keeps himself busy by filing lawsuits against the U.S. government.

Evidence has come to light about possible Al Haramain involvement in the 1998 embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania. The U.S. Treasury has designated Al Haramain offices in Kenya and Tanzania as sponsors of terrorism for their role in the plot.[1] The Treasury designation lists multiple connections between Al Haramain and the embassy bombings, including the Al Haramain offices' involvement in planning the attacks, funding by a wealthy Al Haramain official, and a former Tanzanian Al Haramain director's role in making preparations for the advance party that planned the bombings. The Al Haramain branch office in the Comoros Islands was also designated because it "was used as a staging area and exfiltration route for the perpetrators of the 1998 bombings."[2]

Nor was this Al Haramain's only connection to terrorism. The *New York Times* reported in 2003 that Al Haramain's Indonesian office had been a conduit for funds to Jemaah Islamiyah, the terrorist group responsible for the October 2002 bombings in Bali, Indonesia that killed 202 people, primarily foreign tourists.[3] In designating the office a sponsor of terrorism, the Treasury Department also noted that it provided financial support to al-Qaeda, and that money donated to the Indonesian office may have been diverted to weapons procurement.[4]

A number of other Al Haramain branches were similarly designated by Treasury after 9/11. The Afghanistan office was designated for supporting the bin Laden-financed Makhtab al-Khidemat terrorist group prior to 9/11, and for its involvement with a group training to attack foreigners in Afghanistan after the Taliban were toppled.[5] The Albania office was designated because of its ties to al-Qaeda and the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, which led the Treasury Department to conclude that the office "has been used as cover for terrorist activity in Albania and in Europe." The Bangladesh office was designated after one of its officials sent an operative to conduct surveillance on U.S. consulates in India for a potential terrorist attack.[6] The branch in Ethiopia was designated because of its support for al-Ittihad al-Islamiya, a terrorist group that has carried out attacks on Ethiopian defense forces. And the Pakistan office was designated for supporting the Taliban and the terrorist groups Lashkar e-Taibah and Makhtab al-Khidemat. The Pakistan office also had several employees suspected of being al-Qaeda members, including one who was thought to have financed al-Qaeda operations, and another who reportedly planned to carry out terrorist attacks in the U.S.

In addition to terrorist connections, Al Haramain has also been at the center of controversies concerning the radicalization of Muslim populations throughout the world. This was an issue in Bosnia, where Saudi charities were disappointed in the kind of Islam that

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[1] United States Department of the Treasury Office of Public Affairs, *Treasury Announces Joint Action with Saudi Arabia Against Four Branches of Al-Haramain in the Fight Against Terrorist Financing* [hereinafter *Treasury Announces Joint Action*], Jan. 22, 2004, http://www.ustreas.gov/press/releases/js1108.htm.

[2] United States Department of the Treasury, *Additional Background Information on Charities Designated Under Executive Order 13224*, http://www.ustreas.gov/offices/enforcement/key-issues/protecting/charities_execorder_13224-a.shtml#ahkentan.

[3] Jane Perlez, *Saudis Quietly Promote Strict Islam in Indonesia*, NEW YORK TIMES, July 5, 2003, at A3.

[4] *Treasury Announces Joint Action*, *supra* note 1.

[5] United States Department of the Treasury Office of Public Affairs, *Additional Al-Haramain Branches, Former Leader Designated by Treasury as Al Qaida Supporters*, June 2, 2004, http://www.treas.gov/press/releases/js1703.htm.

[6] *Id.*

Bosnian Muslims practiced and made it their mission to usher them toward Salafism.[7] It was also an issue in the Netherlands, where Dutch intelligence found "financial, organisational and personnel interconnection" between Al Haramain and the radical El Tawheed mosque in Amsterdam. El Tawheed is the mosque where Muhammad Bouyeri reportedly prayed. (Bouyeri brutally killed Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh after van Gogh directed a film called *Submission*, which dramatized the mistreatment of women born into Muslim families. He shot van Gogh six times, slit his throat with a kitchen knife, then used the knife to impale a five-page note to van Gogh's chest.)

**Al Haramain's Prison *Dawa* Program**

Al Haramain had a prison *dawa* program that was ideally structured for terrorist recruitment. Although the program wasn't used to recruit terrorists, it had enough clear potential for terrorist recruitment that federal investigators were immediately intrigued when they saw how the program was structured.

Prisoners themselves would initiate contact with the U.S. branch of Al Haramain by writing to us requesting that we send them Islamic literature. There were several ways they might learn about Al Haramain. They might learn about it from their chaplains, or through word-of-mouth from other prisoners. Also, Al Haramain's name and contact information was stamped in all literature that we sent to prisons.

After prisoners wrote to us, they would be sent a number of pamphlets and also a questionnaire. The questionnaire asked a variety of informational questions, including the inmates' names, prisoner numbers, release dates and address outside of prison. It also included a number of questions designed to determine the inmates' level of Islamic knowledge. Some of these questions were basic, including "Who is Allah?" and "Who is Jesus?" Other questions were far more difficult, such as "What are the ten *sunan al-fitra*?" When the prisoners sent back the questionnaires, they were graded on a scale from zero to ten on their answers. Ten was the highest score; a three was the lowest score an inmate could get and still be considered Muslim in our book.

It is what happened next with the questionnaires that caught investigators' interest. After we graded the questionnaires, all of the information—the inmates' names, their prisoner numbers, the facilities where they were held, their release date, the address they would be released to—was entered into a massive database. The database contained over 15,000 names.

The contours of the database are significant because of the potential for terrorist recruitment. Knowledgeable observers have stated that the prison population is "ripe" for terrorist recruiting.[8] This is because, as inmates enter prison, they are disaffected. Many of them, perhaps most, feel bitterness toward the society imprisoning them. Many inmates are looking for an excuse and a purpose. They can find this in radical Islam. And it's known that several individuals involved in past terrorist plots experienced critical developments in their movement toward radical Islam while imprisoned. The most dramatic example is the terror plot that was

[7] DORE GOLD, HATRED'S KINGDOM: HOW SAUDI ARABIA SUPPORTS THE NEW GLOBAL TERRORISM (2003).

[8] Brian Ross, *Terror Plot Hatched in California Prison*, ABC NEWS, Aug. 16, 2005, http://abclocal.go.com/kgo/story?section=state&id=3356111 (quoting retired prison administrator Edward Cohen).

hatched in a California state prison by Kevin James, an inmate who founded the Jam'iyyat Ul-Islam Is-Saheeh, a secretive organization designed to promote his radical interpretation of Islam. On August 31, 2005, a six-count indictment charged Kevin James and his co-conspirators with plotting to attack military and Jewish targets in the Los Angeles area, including military bases and recruitment centers, synagogues, the Israeli consulate, and El Al airline facilities.

Richard Reid, who was arrested in December 2001 after attempting to blow up an airplane with explosives hidden in his shoe, experienced critical religious developments under the tutelage of a radical imam while he was in a British prison. And Jose Padilla, who is accused of plotting to set off a "dirty bomb" on U.S. soil, is believed to have either converted to Islam or else come to embrace radical Islam while in prison.

So there have already been instances of people who either converted to Islam or else experienced critical religious development while imprisoned later becoming involved in terrorist plots. Thus, a database like the one boasted by Al Haramain would surely catch the interest of investigators because it was perfectly designed to allow follow-up with prisoners—and potentially to allow for terrorist recruitment. By distributing literature and exchanging letters with prisoners, Al Haramain could have established ongoing relationships with them. And the database contained critical information to allow for follow-up after the prisoners were released. Their release dates were known, as were the addresses to which they planned to return. Al Haramain could have worked with ideologically sympathetic organizations to make sure inmates stayed in touch with radical groups after they were let out of prison. Such methods of follow-up have been used by radical groups in the past to recruit Americans for jihads overseas, and in particular have been directed at members of the U.S. armed forces.

There are two methods that Al Haramain could have used to determine which inmates were the best targets for terrorist recruitment. One method is the questionnaires themselves. Although the questionnaires were ostensibly designed to assess an inmate's Islamic knowledge, there was in fact a strong ideological component. Certain concepts that are more important to those of a Wahhabi or Salafi bent were emphasized in the questions; these forms could thus be used to gain an understanding of an inmate's theological views. A second method is assessing an inmate's attitudes through correspondence. I only heard my boss, Pete Seda, make one pun during my time at Al Haramain: he referred to inmates as a "captive audience." This is true. With all the time prisoners have on their hands, it wasn't uncommon for us to receive five- or ten-page letters which provided a great deal of insight about the prisoners' personal theological views and also the Islamic community in the prisons where they were held.

**Al Haramain's Islamic Literature**

The cornerstone of Al Haramain's prison *dawa* program was the literature that the group distributed to inmates. There can be no doubt about the radical orientation of this literature.[9]

At the heart of any concerted Islamic literature program is distribution of the Qur'an. Al Haramain distributed a Wahhabi/Salafi version, known as the Noble Qur'an, that was translated

[9] I have previously written about Al Haramain's distribution of literature to the U.S. prisons in Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, *Wahhabi Prison Fellowship*, WEEKLY STANDARD, Sept. 26, 2005, at 17. Portions of this section are adapted from that article.

into English by Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din Al-Hilali and Muhammad Muhsin Khan. This version was known for containing numerous interpolations not present in the original Arabic. Although ostensibly designed to explain the verses, these interpolations in fact pushed the meaning in a radical direction, one which was suffused with contempt for non-Muslims (particularly Jews and Christians), and one which was dedicated to fostering the global jihad.

One example of this occurs in an early footnote in the translation, which states:

> *Al-Jihad* (holy fighting) in Allah's Cause (with full force of numbers and weaponry) is given the utmost importance in Islam and is one of its pillars (on which it stands). By *Jihad* Islam is established, Allah's Word is made superior, . . . and His Religion (Islam) is propagated. By abandoning *Jihad* (may Allah protect us from that) Islam is destroyed and the Muslims fall into an inferior position; their honour is lost, their lands are stolen, their rule and authority vanish. *Jihad* is an obligatory duty in Islam on every Muslim, and he who tries to escape from this duty, or does not in his innermost heart wish to fulfil this duty, dies with one of the qualities of a hypocrite.

This passage thus rules out nonmilitary interpretations of jihad by insisting on "full force of numbers and weaponry." It also endorses jihad as a means of propagating Islam, and specifies that it is required of "every Muslim."

But most chilling was a 22-page appendix that was included in the translation that Al Haramain distributed to prisons. This appendix, written by former Saudi Arabian chief justice Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Humaid, was entitled "The Call to *Jihad* (Holy Fighting in Allah's Cause) in the Qur'an"—and true to its title, the appendix was nothing less than an exhortation to violence.

In it, bin Humaid argues at length that Muslims are obligated to wage war against non-Muslims who have not submitted to Islamic rule. He explains,

> Allah . . . commanded the Muslims to fight against all the *Mushrikun* as well as against the people of the Scriptures (Jews and Christians) if they do not embrace Islam, till they pay the *Jizyah* (a tax levied on the non-Muslims who do not embrace Islam and are under the protection of an Islamic government) with willing submission and feel themselves subdued.

*Mushrikun* refers to all nonbelievers who are not classified as people of the Scriptures; bin Humaid thus advocates war with the entire non-Muslim world.

And once again, the appendix appeals to the reader to volunteer for jihad:

> *Jihad* is a great deed indeed and there is no deed whose reward or blessing is as that of it, and for this reason, it is the best thing that one can volunteer for. . . . [I]t (*Jihad*) shows one's patience, one's devotion to Islam, one's remembrance to Allah and there are other kinds of good deeds which are present in *Jihad* and are not present in any other act of worship.

Nor was the Wahhabi/Salafi translation of the Qur'an the only piece of radical literature that Al Haramain distributed to prisons. Another widely-distributed volume was Muhammad bin Jamil Zino's *Islamic Guidelines for Individual and Social Reform.*[10] Like the translation of the Qur'an that Al Haramain distributed, one of the themes in Zino's book was jihad. As early as page two, Zino states that Islam "commends the *Halal* [lawful] money in possession of a pious person who pays a share of it in charity and for *Jihad* (fighting in the way of Allah)."

This advocacy of jihad is reinforced by repetition. Zino instructs his readers that children should be indoctrinated in the glories of jihad from an early age:

> Teach your children the love of justice and revenge from the unjust like the Jews and the tyrants. Consequently our youth would know that Palestine should be freed and Jerusalem must be of the Muslims. They have to learn about Islam and Jihad as per the Qur'an and that the holy fighting for justice is supported by Allah the Almighty.

And he further specifies the objects and means of jihad: "The *Jihad* against the disbelievers, communists and the aggressors from Jewish-Christian nations can be either by spending on *Jihad* or by participating in it in person."

Indeed, the "Jewish-Christian nations" are special objects of ire throughout the literature that Al Haramain distributed to prisons. Virulent anti-Semitism and hatred of non-Muslim governments are recurring themes. On a page headed "Act upon these *Ahadith*," the *hadith* being sayings and traditions attributed to Muhammad, Zino's very first injunction reads: "The Last Hour will not appear unless the Muslims fight the Jews and kill them." Zino also imputes conspiracies to the Jews. In a passage denouncing fortunetellers, he writes, "If they know the Unseen, let them talk about the secret schemes of the Jews so that we combat them."

More sweepingly, Zino denounces "belief in man-made destructive ideologies such as atheistic communism, Jewish masonry, Marxian socialism, secularism or nationalism" as nullifying an individual's adherence to Islam. This is in keeping with the views of another writer whose works Al Haramain sent to prisons: Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips. In *The Fundamentals of Tawheed (Islamic Monotheism)*, Philips excoriates the acceptance of non-Islamic rule in place of *sharia* law in Muslim lands. Philips describes acquiescence to non-Islamic rule as an act of idolatry and disbelief. "Un-Islamic government," he writes, "must be sincerely hated and despised for the pleasure of God."

**Al Haramain's Reception**

Although the literature that Al Haramain distributed was unapologetically radical, it wasn't subjected to a significant degree of scrutiny by the prisons to which it was distributed. I know of only a few instances in which prisons rejected the literature we attempted to distribute—and it was never because of the literature's radicalism. In one instance, a prison chaplain refused to distribute a pamphlet that outlined the difference between the Nation of Islam and Sunni Islam. The pamphlet was vehement in tone, and the chaplain's main concern was its potential for causing conflict between various Islamic sects in the prison. There had previously been some

[10] MUHAMMAD BIN JAMIL ZINO, ISLAMIC GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL REFORM (1996).

instances of violence involving the Nation of Islam, and he didn't want to risk stoking the fires. In another case, a literature shipment was rejected because it was sent in a large manila envelope with the metal clasp still on it. The screeners wouldn't allow the package because they felt the clasp could be used as a weapon.

But very little question was raised about the message in the literature. We were able to forge relationships with a number of Muslim prison chaplains who willingly distributed Al Haramain's literature and questionnaires to inmates. Of course, the fact that they did so doesn't necessarily mean they were radical. In some cases, the chaplains may just have been happy that there was a Muslim charity willing to send literature to prisoners. Some of the chaplains may not have screened the literature, and may have been largely unaware of its contents. But I know from conversations with chaplains in which I had some involvement that at least some of the Muslim prison chaplains were on the same page as Al Haramain ideologically and were supportive of the worldview that the group fostered.

There was an even stronger reception among inmates. In some Muslim prison communities, certain inmates will serve as lay leaders. I know from a source who taught in a New York state prison that the inmates who served as lay leaders there favored the Noble Qur'an translation. Their comments on the translation echoed a common refrain that you can hear from several radical Islamic institutions in the U.S., such as the Bridgeview mosque in Chicago: they believed that the Noble Qur'an was more "accurate," and that they could "trust" that translation where they did not trust others.

Beyond these lay leaders, the inmates who tried to correspond with us obviously took what they read quite seriously. With little education and a desire to find an ideology that provided them with comprehensive answers, many inmates latched onto a legalistic interpretation of the faith. We would regularly receive letters that consisted of long strings of theological questions. Some of these questions were quite telling. In one case, an inmate asked whether he should kill a homosexual if he were to encounter one. Other inmates would send letters filled with vitriol toward Shia Muslims, Jews and Christians. In particular, there was a lot of animus directed at Catholicism.

**Conclusion**

Fortunately for all of us, Al Haramain's database was never used for the terrorist recruitment purposes that it could have served. The reason why it was never used in this manner continues to puzzle investigators, and the answer is likely complex. One reason is that higher-ups at Al Haramain probably never realized the program's full potential. They wanted to spread their Islamic ideology in the West, and failed to understand that prisoners were more prone to embracing Islamic radicalism than others. At the time that I worked for the U.S. headquarters, the head office in Riyadh was more interested in converting rich white people to Islam than prisoners.

A second reason that Al Haramain's program was not used for terrorist recruitment was resource constraints. Although Al Haramain was a massive operation, with offices around the world and an annual budget that may have reached $50 million, the U.S. headquarters was fairly small. There were only three full-time employees during my time there, and all of us had other

responsibilities beyond the prison projects. Moreover, Al Haramain didn't do much to work with other U.S.-based Islamic organizations to create opportunities for follow-up with the prisoners. That is one of the strategic drawbacks of having an ideology as rigid as Al Haramain's: virtually every American Islamic organization was seen as doctrinally deficient, even if they largely shared Al Haramain's radical worldview.

A final and more complex reason that the prison *dawa* program wasn't used for terrorist recruitment involves Al Haramain's motivations. The organization had jihadist views, as the bin Humaid appendix to the Noble Qur'an definitively demonstrates. Al Haramain strongly supported the Chechen *mujahideen*, and most of Al Haramain's leadership favored the Taliban in Afghanistan. As my discussion of the charity's ties to terror demonstrates, Al Haramain's branch offices had a tendency to make the world's hot spots that much hotter. But this was the pre-9/11 world, and at that time support for jihads in Bosnia, Chechnya, the Philippines or Uzbekistan wouldn't necessarily translate into a burning desire to recruit terrorists from U.S. prisons.

This should leave you with a somewhat chilling thought. When Al Haramain's prison *dawa* program was in effect, there were a number of jihads going on in various regions. Although these jihads were connected, someone sitting in Saudi Arabia and directing an Islamic charity wouldn't necessarily see the U.S. as the main enemy. In fact, it might be seen as strategically wise to *avoid* terror attacks against the U.S. because of the potential to raise funds and gain political influence in America. But now, in the post-9/11 world, the United States is the focal point of the global jihad. So the question we must ask is whether, if a radical Islamic organization wished to establish a prison *dawa* program along the lines of Al Haramain's but had a purpose more expressly devoted to terrorist recruitment, could it be stopped? Or are our prisons still vulnerable—at a time when the stakes are higher?

In closing, I would like to recognize the Committee and the staff for their professionalism. I would like to extend an open offer to continue to work closely with them. I am pleased to try to answer any questions you may have.

# Department of Justice

**STATEMENT**

**OF**

**JOHN M. VANYUR**
**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**
**CORRECTIONAL PROGRAMS DIVISION**
**FEDERAL BUREAU OF PRISONS**

**BEFORE THE**

**COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY**
**AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS**
**UNITES STATES SENATE**

**CONCERNING**

**PRISON RADICALIZATION: ARE TERRORIST CELLS**
**FORMING IN U.S. CELL BLOCKS**

**PRESENTED ON**

**SEPTEMBER 19, 2006**

STATEMENT OF JOHN M. VANYUR
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, CORRECTIONAL PROGRAMS DIVISION
FEDERAL BUREAU OF PRISONS
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

September 19, 2006

Chairman Collins and Members of the Committee:

I am pleased to appear before you today to discuss the efforts the Bureau of Prisons is taking to ensure we are preventing the recruitment of terrorists and extremists in our Federal prisons.

Of the roughly 2.2 million incarcerated persons in the United States, the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) is responsible for the custody and care of 192,000 inmates confined in 113 Federal prisons and in facilities operated by private companies and by State and local governments. Our mission is to protect society by confining offenders in the controlled environments of prisons and community-based facilities that are safe, humane, cost-efficient, and appropriately secure; and to provide work and other self-improvement opportunities to assist offenders in becoming law-abiding citizens.

The BOP is committed to providing inmates with the opportunity to practice their faith while at the same time ensuring that Federal

prisoners are not radicalized or recruited for terrorist causes. The support that has been provided by the FBI, the agencies represented on the National Joint Terrorism Task Force (NJTTF), other components of the Department of Justice, and many other members of the law enforcement and intelligence communities has been invaluable in our efforts in this area.

We understand the importance of controlling and preventing the recruitment of inmates into terrorism. We also acknowledge that this is an evolving issue, especially as it relates to the relationships between terrorism, certain radical or extremist ideologies, and the penchant of those who adhere to these ideologies to recruit others to their positions.

We know that inmates are particularly vulnerable to radical recruitment and we must guard against the spread of terrorism and extremist ideologies. Our practices in institution security and inmate management are geared toward the prevention of any violence, criminal behavior, disruptive behavior, or other threats to institution security or public safety, including the radicalization of inmates.

Over the last several years, our agency has taken a number of significant measures, and we are actively engaged in several

ongoing initiatives to ensure that Federal inmates are not recruited to support radical organizations or terrorist groups. For example, we have eliminated most inmate organizations in order to control the influence that outside entities have on Federal inmates. We also have enhanced our information and monitoring systems, our intelligence gathering and sharing capabilities, and our identification and management of disruptive inmates.

For over a decade, we have been managing inmates determined to have ties to terrorism by confining them in secure conditions and by closely monitoring their communications. We have established a strategy that focuses on the appropriate levels of containment and isolation to ensure that inmates with terrorist ties do not have the opportunity to radicalize or recruit other inmates.

All inmates determined to have terrorist ties are clearly identified and tracked in our information systems. The most dangerous terrorists are confined under the most restrictive conditions allowed, and many of these inmates are housed in our most secure facility, the Administrative Maximum United States Penitentiary in Florence, Colorado.

We monitor and record all telephone communication (except attorney-client conversations) involving inmates with terrorist ties and, following established procedures, we share any relevant information with the FBI, the NJTTF, and other agencies. In addition, our institutions work closely with the local Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTF) to share information and intelligence about these inmates.

The Bureau has worked diligently, particularly since 9/11, to enhance our intelligence gathering and sharing capabilities in order to ensure a seamless flow of intelligence information between our agency and other law enforcement and counter-terrorism agencies. We have two full-time employees assigned to the NJTTF to facilitate our involvement on this task force and to coordinate the exchange of intelligence related to corrections.

These two members of the NJTTF also manage the Correctional Intelligence Initiative (CII), a nationwide NJTTF special project involving correctional agencies at the Federal, State, and local levels, designed to detect, deter, and disrupt the radicalization and recruiting of inmates. This initiative involves training of correctional administrators by each local JTTF; exchange of intelligence; communicating best practices to local JTTFs in order to detect, deter, and disrupt radicalization; and

coordination of liaison and intelligence-sharing activities between local JTTFs and corrections agencies.

Most importantly, through the CII, intelligence regarding any attempts by inmates, religious providers, or others to radicalize any segment of the population is gathered and shared, and appropriate interdiction action is taken by the proper correctional authority.

In addition to containing and isolating inmates who could attempt to radicalize other inmates, we help inmates become less vulnerable to any such attempts.

Experts have identified the societal marginalization of inmates as a key factor in their becoming radicalized. The Bureau of Prisons provides inmates with a broad variety of programs that have been proven to assist in the development of key skills, thereby minimizing the likelihood of the inmates being marginalized.

The programs we provide include work in prison industries and other institution jobs, vocational training, education, substance abuse treatment, religious programs, and other skills-building and pro-social values programs.

Moreover, we are well aware of the important role religious programs can play in preparing inmates to successfully reintegrate into society following release from prison.

Religious programs and chaplaincy services are provided to the approximately 30 faiths represented within the Federal prison population. Within the constraints of security, we provide worship services, study of scripture and sacred writings, and religious workshops; and we make accommodations to facilitate observances of holy days. Full-time civil service chaplains in the Bureau of Prisons lead worship services and provide pastoral care and spiritual guidance to inmates, and they oversee the breadth of religious programs and monitor the accommodations provided by contract spiritual leaders and community volunteers. The overwhelming majority of inmates participate in religious programs in a positive, healthy, and productive way.

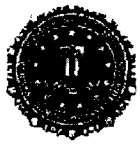
We screen all of our civil service staff, volunteers, and contractors to avoid hiring or contracting with anyone who would pose a threat to institution security. Each BOP civil service chaplain must meet all the requirements for employment as a Federal law enforcement officer, including a field investigation, criminal background check, reference check, drug screening, a pre-employment suitability interview, and a panel interview. In

addition, chaplains must meet requirements unique to their employment and the scope of their duties. Like all BOP employees, chaplains are strictly prohibited from using their position to condone, support, or encourage violence or other inappropriate behavior.

Our religious contractors and volunteers are also subject to a variety of security requirements prior to being granted access to the institution including: criminal background checks; law enforcement agency checks to verify places of residence and places of employment; a fingerprint check; gathering information from employers from over the previous 5 years; and drug testing.

The Bureau continues to work closely with the FBI and the NJTTF with regard to the screening of religious service providers. Information on staff chaplains and on contractors and volunteers (whether the contractor or volunteer is being considered to help provide religious services or not) is checked against databases supported by the FBI. We have also enhanced the supervision of programs and activities that take place in our chapels over the last 3 years; and we have trained nearly all our staff on recognizing the signs of potential radicalization.

Chairman Collins, this concludes my formal statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or other Members of the Committee may have.



# Prison Radicalization: The Environment, the Threat, and the Response

## Statement to Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

**Donald Van Duyn**
**Deputy Assistant Director**
**Counterterrorism Division**
**Federal Bureau of Investigation**

**September 19, 2006**

**Prison Radicalization: The Environment, the Threat, and the Response**

**Statement to Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**

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**September 19, 2006**

Madam Chairman, Ranking Member and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you on the issue of prison radicalization in the United States. Before I begin, I would like to emphasize that Islam itself is not the problem but rather how Islam is used by violent extremists to inspire and justify their actions. Additionally, the FBI does not investigate individuals for their religious beliefs. Rather, we investigate the activities of individuals who want to do harm to the citizens and interests of United States and those of our allies abroad. The FBI fully recognizes and is committed to protecting prisoners' civil liberties, including religious rights. These activities have led us to believe that prisons continue to present opportunities for the proselytizing of both Sunni and Shia forms of radical Islam. Moreover, domestic groups such as white supremacists recruit in prisons as well.

**The US Prison Environment**

FBI and the Bureau of Prisons analysis shows that radicalization and recruitment in US prisons is still an ongoing concern. Prison radicalization primarily occurs through anti-US sermons provided by contract, volunteer, or staff Imams, radicalized inmates who gain religious influence, and extremist media. Ideologies that radicalized inmates appear most often to embrace include or are influenced by the Salafi form of Sunni Islam (including revisionist versions commonly known as "prison Islam") and an extremist view of Shia Islam similar to that of the Government of Iran and Lebanese Hizballah.

There are two groups of concern involved in prison radicalization and recruitment.

The first group consists of inmates, the majority of whom are minority group members. Although most are converts to Islam, there is a smaller number who were born into the Muslim faith. These radicalized inmates either feel discriminated against in the United States or feel that the United States oppresses minorities and Muslims overseas. The feeling of perceived oppression, combined with their limited knowledge of Islam, especially for the converts, makes this a vulnerable population for extremists looking to radicalize and recruit.

Radicalized inmates are of concern for a number of reasons:

- Influential inmates could urge other prisoners to attend certain mosques or Islamic centers in the United States or overseas upon their release from prison that may present opportunities for the proselytizing of radical Islam.

- Influential inmates could also pose a risk to prison security by urging inmates under their influence to disobey prison authorities and possibly incite violence within the facility.

- Inmates who have acquired skills used in terrorism activities could pass them on to other prisoners.

The second group consists of contract, volunteer, and staff personnel, the majority of which are Imams, who enter correctional facilities with the intent to radicalize and recruit.

Particularly for Muslim converts, but also for those born into Islam, an extremist imam can strongly influence individual belief systems by speaking from a position of authority on religious issues. Extremist imams have the potential to influence vulnerable followers at various locations of opportunity; can spot and assess individuals who respond to their messages; and can potentially guide them into increasingly extremist circles.

Aside from individuals providing radical messages there is also extremist media in the form of literature and videos being circulated within the prison population that appears to be a significant factor in prison radicalization.

In some cases, these radicalization efforts expand beyond prison walls resulting in potential threats to society at large.

**The Threat**

The majority of cases involving prison radicalization and recruitment have not manifested themselves as a threat to national security. There have been, however, instances where charismatic elements within prison have used the call of Global Jihad as a source of inspiration to recruit others for the purpose of conducting terrorist attacks in the United States.

In July 2005, the FBI became aware of a Sunni Islamic extremist group in California operating primarily in state prisons, without apparent connections or direction from outside the United States and with no identifiable foreign power nexus. Members of this group, the Jam'iyyat Ul-Islam Is-Saheeh (JIS), or the "Authentic Assembly of Islam," were involved in almost a dozen armed gas station robberies in Los Angeles with the goal of financing terrorist operations in furtherance of JIS goals.

JIS founder Kevin Lamar James, an inmate in the California prison system, was the principal recruiter for the group. Recruitment of participants to the Los Angeles JIS cell began in prison with the recruitment of Levar Washington by James in December 2004. James allegedly instructed Washington to recruit five people to train in covert operations,

acquire firearms with silencers, and find contacts with explosives expertise or who could learn to make bombs that could be activated from a distance. Upon release from prison, Washington recruited other co-conspirators, Gregory Patterson and Hamad Samana, to begin fulfilling James' wishes.

On August 31, 2005, James, Washington, Patterson, and Samana were indicted by a federal grand jury for conspiracy to levy war against the U.S. Government through terrorism and conspiracy to possess and discharge firearms in furtherance of crimes of violence. Washington, Patterson, and Samana were also charged with conspiracy to kill members of the U.S. government uniformed services and conspiracy to kill foreign officials. Washington and Patterson were further charged with interfering with commerce by robbery and for using and carrying a firearm in connection with a crime of violence. All members are currently in custody awaiting trial.

The JIS case provides valuable insight into an increasing phenomenon in many of our terrorism cases here in the United States, as well as those around the world, and highlights the importance of cooperation at all levels of the law enforcement community in order to effectively fight terrorism.

**The Response**

The FBI and the Bureau of Prisons have been actively engaged in efforts to detect, deter, and disrupt efforts by extremist groups to radicalize and recruit in US prisons since February 2003, these activities have been organized through the Correctional Intelligence Initiative (CII).

The CII program focuses on:

- Improving intelligence collection.
- Detecting, deterring and disrupting efforts by terrorist, extremist or radical groups to radicalize or recruit in federal, state, local, territorial, tribal or privatized prisons.
- Providing training and support materials that can be used by Field Offices and JTTFs for training and outreach at state and local correctional institutions.

All of these elements have helped identify numerous factors responsible for the spread of radicalization and recruitment in prisons. A recent comprehensive assessment based on a survey of nearly 3,000 state and local correctional facilities identified the following trends:

- Most cases of prison radicalization and recruitment appear to be originated by domestic extremists with few or no foreign connections.
- Some radicalized Islamic inmates are current or former members of street or prison gangs, indicating an emerging "crossover" trend from gang member to

Islamist extremist.

- Radicalization activity levels appear to be higher in high population areas on the West Coast and in the northeastern United States.

Aside from trends, the assessment identified "Best Practices" for correctional institutions to follow to combat the spread of radicalization and recruitment. Some of these are:

- Establish System-wide Vetting Protocols for All Contractor and Volunteer Applicants
    - The FBI provides assistance by conducting criminal history checks against all FBI indices for contract, volunteer, and staff personnel entering correctional facilities. Relevant information is passed on to correctional officials for appropriate action.
- Create System-wide Databases of Contractors and Volunteers Providing Direct Inmate Services
- Improve Monitoring Capabilities
- Coordinate Inmate Transfers
- Share Information among all levels of law enforcement and correctional personnel. FBI Joint Terrorism Task Forces can facilitate this process.

Numerous FBI analytical products, as well as operational highlights, have been disseminated to foreign liaison partners, from classified products to unclassified assessments meant for a wide audience. The feedback from the latter has helped us better drive analytical perspectives and identify services where bi-lateral exchanges could prove beneficial on this issue.

At this time, I would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to address this important issue.

**Statement for the Record of**

**JAVED ALI**

**Senior Intelligence Officer**
**Office of Intelligence and Analysis**
**Department of Homeland Security**

**"PRISON RADICALIZATION: ARE TERRORIST CELLS FORMING IN U.S. CELL BLOCKS?"**

**U.S. Senate**
**Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs**

**19 September 2006**

## INTRODUCTION

Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to share perspectives from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on the topic of prison radicalization. Since 2004, a spate of terrorist activities in Western Europe carried out or supported by radicalized "homegrown" Sunni extremists, including the Madrid and London attacks, focused national attention on the overseas phenomenon. More recent developments in the United States and Canada, including the disrupted California prison-based Jam-iyyat ul-Islam As-Saheeh (JIS) cell and the "Toronto 17"--have focused attention on the phenomenon in North America. Against the backdrop of our larger efforts to understand radicalization here, activity occurring in some prison systems--such as last year's incident with the JIS--has become of keen interest.

## DHS RADICALIZATION STUDY

In early 2006, Department of Homeland Security Office of Intelligence and Analysis formed a team to develop a comprehensive intelligence-focused project that seeks to address how, why, and where radicalized ideas and beliefs develop over time in the United States. This OI&A project is part of a broader DHS approach in addressing the issue of radicalization, and will inform the Department-wide effort to understand and mitigate the phenomenon. We are conducting our study in a phased approach, focusing on examining radicalization dynamics in key geographic regions throughout the country. Our first phase focused on assessments in California and the New York/New Jersey area, while our second phase focuses on the Midwest and National Capital Region. We hope to conduct other regional or state assessments in future phases, with the goal that these will provide the building blocks for a broader national assessment.

We are identifying and examining the various entities--which we describe as "nodes"--that individuals or groups pass through or come in contact with during the radicalization process. Nodes may be physical institutions, virtual communities, charismatic individuals, written or recorded material, or even shared experiences. Prisons, and the

spread of various interpretations of Islamic extremist beliefs within them, in particular have emerged as a key issue of interest.

## KEY FINDINGS

Thus far we have found that relationships between radicalization nodes and radical actor/groups vary across ideological and ethno-religious spectrums, different geographic regions, and socio-economic conditions. Further, we have found several, diverse "pathways" to radicalization in the United States through an examination of various "nodes". From our perspective, nodes are conduits that facilitate and support the radicalization process, and may be physical institutions, virtual communities, charismatic individuals, written or recorded material, or even shared experiences. Further, we are finding that radicalization is not a "one- way street," and that individuals and groups can radicalize or "de-radicalize" based on a variety of factors. This holds particularly true when examining the prison radicalization issue.

Our research and discussions indicate that radicalization within prisons has occurred predominantly--but not exclusively--among the African-American inmate population and those affiliated with gangs. Inmates have been radicalized through charismatic, religiously radical inmates; clerics, contractors, and volunteers who serve as religious authorities; and extremist propaganda created both inside and outside of the prison walls. As a result, there appear to be both "bottom-up" and "top-down" influences shaping the prison radicalization dynamic, although it is difficult to assign percentages as to which influence is greater.

We judge that current radicalization dynamics in some U.S. prison systems, while of concern and keen interest, do not yet present the level of operational threat that seen in other parts of the world; that said, last year's incident with the JIS in California suggests that small, motivated clusters of like-minded individuals exposed to radical beliefs within prisons could potentially cause harm once released.

## PARTNERSHIPS

We have worked with partners at the Federal, State, and local level to enhance our understanding on prison radicalization. At the Federal level, we have worked with the Department of Justice (DOJ), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the Bureau of Prisons (BOP), amongst others. At the State and local level, we have held discussions with officials in New York, California, Illinois, and Ohio regarding their perspectives on prison radicalization, and will soon hold similar meetings with representatives from Texas, Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, DC. We are studying ways to strengthen our partnership with officials from these varied constituencies on prison radicalization.

## CONCLUSION

Our work on radicalization-- including our examination of the extent and depth of the phenomenon within prisons in the US-- is preliminary and by no means complete. Continued dialogue and relationship-building with Federal, State, local, and even foreign partners, are critical aspects of this work. We hope our efforts on radicalization will help enhance the Department's perspectives on this issue, and help policymakers make the most informed judgments about how best to address the phenomenon inside the United States.

Madam Chairman, thank you again for giving me the opportunity to speak with you and the members of the Committee. I welcome your questions.

## *Jihâd*

## (Fighting in the Cause of Allah)

*Jihâd* is obligatory on every Muslim in two ways: by spending one's wealth or offering oneself for fighting in the cause of Allah.



### 1. *Jihâd* as an Individual Duty:

This type of *Jihâd* becomes a must when the enemy of Muslims enters their land, like the Jews who settled in Palestine. Every Muslim will be guilty unless he expels the Jews by money or physical fighting.

(p. 130)

**2. *Jihâd* as a Collective Duty:**

This type is the one if some people do it, it suffices and no need for all to perform. For example, propagation of Islam or call to Islam until all countries embrace it and make it their way of life. If someone makes any obstacle in the way of propagation, Muslims are allowed by Allah to fight them until Islam becomes the governing authority. *Jihâd* in this sense will not stop until the Day of Judgement....

(p. 130)

## Act upon these *Ahadith*

1. "The Last Hour will not appear unless the Muslims fight the Jews and kill them."

(p. 167)

# Out of the Shadows:

## Getting Ahead of Prisoner Radicalization

*A Special Report by*
*The George Washington University*
*Homeland Security Policy Institute*

*The University of Virginia*
*Critical Incident Analysis Group*

THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON DC

CIAG

# Homeland Security Policy Institute (HSPI) and Critical Incident Analysis Group (CIAG) Prisoner Radicalization Task Force*

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## About The Homeland Security Policy Institute

The George Washington University Homeland Security Policy Institute (HSPI) is a unique, nonpartisan "think and do tank" that builds bridges between theory and practice to advance homeland security through a multi and interdisciplinary approach. By convening policymakers and practitioners at all levels of government and the private sector, HSPI creates innovative strategies and solutions to current and future threats to the nation.

## About The Critical Incident Analysis Group

Critical incidents have the potential for creating social trauma and undermining social trust in government - ultimately impacting community life and even the practice of democracy. The Critical Incident Analysis Group works to understand the impacts of critical incidents on government and the societies they serve and to counteract these effects through the study of past incidents.

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## Executive Summary

The potential for radicalization of prison inmates in the United States poses a threat of unknown magnitude to the national security of the U.S. Prisons have long been places where extremist ideology and calls to violence could find a willing ear, and conditions are often conducive to radicalization. With the world's largest prison population (over 2 million – ninety-three percent of whom are in state and local prisons and jails)[1] and highest incarceration rate (701 out of every 100,000)[2], America faces what could be an enormous challenge – every radicalized prisoner becomes a potential terrorist recruit. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales recently stated that "[t]he threat of homegrown terrorist cells – radicalized online, in prisons and in other groups of socially isolated souls – may be as dangerous as groups like al Qaeda, if not more so. They certainly present new challenges to detection."[3] The London transit bombings of 2005 and the Toronto terrorist plot of 2006, to name just two incidents, illustrate the threat posed by a state's own radicalized citizens. By acting upon international lessons learned, the U.S. may operate from a proactive position.

Under the leadership of The George Washington University's Homeland Security Policy Institute (HSPI) and The University of Virginia's Critical Incident Analysis Group (CIAG), a task force of diverse subject matter experts was convened to analyze what is currently known about radicalization and recruitment in U.S. prison systems at the federal, state and local levels. The goal of this diverse, multidisciplinary group was to give unbiased and well-informed recommendations for further action. The task force performed an extensive literature review and received briefings from professionals with expertise in this area. Federal, state and local officials provided background information on radicalization and ongoing efforts to decrease the threat of terrorist activity in prisons. The task force sought and received perspectives from religious service providers in prisons and jails, behavioral and social scientists, and members of the national security and intelligence communities. Researchers of radicalization in foreign prisons provided first hand accounts of radicalization and terrorist activities overseas.[4] Due to the sensitive nature of many of these briefings and the desire of some briefers to remain anonymous, this report makes reference to information for which no source is cited. All information provided, where no source is provided, originates from task force briefings with subject matter experts and officials with personal experience in dealing with prisoner radicalization.

This report focuses on the process of radicalization in prison. Radicalization "refers to the process by which inmates...adopt extreme views, including beliefs that violent measures need to be taken for political or religious purposes."[5] By "extreme views," this report includes beliefs that are anti-social, politically rebellious, and anti-authoritarian. This report focuses,

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[1] Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Prison Statistics*, 15 August 2006, <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/correct.htm> (13 September 2006).
[2] Roy Walmsley, *World Prison Population (5th Ed.)* (Home Office, Publication 234, 2003).
[3] Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales, "Stopping Terrorists Before They Strike: The Justice Department's Power of Prevention," Testimony before the World Affair Council of Pittsburgh, delivered on April 16, 2006.
[4] See Appendix A.
[5] A Review of the Federal Bureau of Prisons' Selection of Muslim Religious Services Providers, Department of Justice, Office of The Inspector General April 2004, p. 6.

in particular, on religious radicalization in conjunction with the practice of Islam. Radical beliefs have been used to subvert the ideals of every major religion in the world. Just as young people may become radicalized by "cut-and-paste" versions of the Qur'an via the Internet[6], new inmates may gain the same distorted understanding of the faith from gang leaders or other influential inmates. The task force recognizes the potentially positive impact of religion on inmates, and it should be noted that inmates have a constitutional right to practice their religion,[7] a right reinforced by further legislation.[8] Prison facilities bear the burden of proof if they wish to deny an inmate's request for any service or activity related to religion. Plainly, inmate conversion to Islam, or any other religion, is not synonymous with radicalization.

Prison gangs may adopt a form of Islam, unique to prison, that incorporates values of gang loyalty and violence. Several Imams interviewed in the course of producing this report characterized this phenomenon as "Jailhouse Islam" – a significant threat to security in prisons.

In addition to radical Muslim influence, U.S. prisons have borne the imprint of right-wing extremist groups and cults known to participate in criminal activity. These groups share certain characteristics, interests, and goals with each other, and insights about terrorism can be gained from an examination of operations and recruitment. Some radical right-wing groups have found common ideological cause with Muslim extremists, exemplified by their shared hostility towards Israel.

A number of terrorist groups have used narcotics trafficking and other illegal activities to support their operations.[9] On occasion, terrorists and criminal gangs have cooperated to achieve their own ends, as was the case in 2004 when terrorists, supported by traditional criminals, attacked the Madrid rail system. Radical Muslim gangs are growing more sophisticated as they adapt the practices of existing gangs.

There have been a number of publicized connections between former prisoners and terrorism:

- Jeff Fort, a gang leader in Chicago, Illinois, converted to Islam while incarcerated in 1965. Fort went on to found a group called El Rukn, which made a name for itself in 1985 when it brokered a deal with the Libyan government to carry out attacks on U.S. police stations, government facilities, military bases, and passenger airplanes in exchange for $2.5 million and asylum in Tripoli.[10]

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[6] Zeyno Baran, Director, International Security and Energy Programs. The Nixon Center "Combating al-Qaeda and the Militant Islamic Threat," Testimony before the Committee on Armed Services.
[7] United States Constitution, First Amendment
[8] The Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000
[9] Steven C. McCraw, Assistant Director, Office for Intelligence, Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Narco-Terrorism: International Drug Trafficking and Terrorism – A Dangerous Mix," Testimony before the Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, delivered on May 20, 2003.
[10] Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism: Terrorism Knowledge Base, Group Profile: El Rukn.

- James Ellison, the founder of the extremist Christian group Covenant, Sword and Arm of the Lord (CSA), met Robert G. Millar while incarcerated.[11] Millar, a leader in the radical "Christian Identity" movement, became Ellison's spiritual advisor in prison. After Ellison was released, he recruited for CSA and established a compound with his followers. When the compound was eventually raided, authorities found homemade landmines and U.S. Army anti-tank rockets. In addition, they found a large supply of cyanide that the CSA was apparently planning to use to poison a city's water supply.

- Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, the emir of Egypt's Gama'at al Islamia (the Islamic Group), is the radical cleric who plotted to bomb New York City landmarks in 1993. Upon being sentenced to a life term, he issued a decree from federal prison, declaring of Americans that "Muslims everywhere [should] dismember their nation, tear them apart, ruin their economy, provoke their corporations, destroy their embassies, attack their interests, sink their ships, . . .shoot down their planes, [and] kill them on land, at sea, and in the air. Kill them wherever you find them." Osama bin Laden later claimed that this fatwa provided religious authority for the 9/11 attacks. Abdel Rahman has continued trying to run his organization while incarcerated - and three defendants were convicted of terrorism charges in 2005 for helping him do so.

- Richard Reid is believed to have converted to Islam and been radicalized by an Imam while incarcerated in Great Britain. He was later apprehended while attempting to detonate a bomb on a U.S. commercial flight in December 2001.

- A recently foiled plot to attack numerous government and Jewish targets in California was devised inside New Folsom State Prison. The perpetrators were members of an inmate-founded group called Jami'iy yat Ul-Islam Is Saheeh (Assembly of Authentic Islam). The leader of this group, Kevin Lamar James, advocated jihad against the U.S. government and supporters of Israel. Two men implicated in the plot were recruited from a local mosque by a disciple of James who had been released from the prison.

There exists a number of other examples, but due to the sensitive nature of ongoing investigations, they cannot be discussed in detail.

Radicalization is occurring in prisons throughout the world. There has been growing concern about the presence of radical Islam in European prisons. French officials report that radical Islamic views are being preached in a majority of French prisons.[12] The ethnic and socioeconomic background of the prisoners, as well as the political environment, presents unique challenges in each country. Despite these differences, much can be learned from international experiences, especially those of Western Europe, due to Europe's large Muslim

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[11] Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism: Terrorism Knowledge Base, Group Profile: Covenant, Sword and Arm of the Lord (CSA).

[12] Pascale Combelles Siegel, *"Radical Islam and the French Muslim Prison Population,"* Terrorism Monitor, *Volume 4, Issue 15 (July 27, 2006).*

populations and significant numbers of incarcerated Muslims. While the U.S. must be concerned about the ability of radicalized inmates released in Europe to enter this country, or participate in transatlantic terror networks, we must also be vigilant with regard to radicalization in our own prisons. A greater understanding of the susceptibility of particular inmates to radicalization and the process by which they become radicalized can act as a force multiplier for those agencies currently combating terrorism.

## Key Findings

- Radicalization is neither unique to Islam nor a recent phenomenon, and remains the exception among prisoners rather than the rule. Right-wing extremist groups are also present in prisons and have an extensive history of terrorist attacks.

- "Jailhouse Islam", based upon cut-and-paste versions of the Qur'an, incorporates violent prison culture into religious practice.

- The inadequate number of Muslim religious services providers increases the risk of radicalization. Further, upon release from prison, the inability to track inmates coupled with lack of social support to reintegrate them into the community gives rise to a vulnerable moment in which they may be recruited by radical groups, posing as social support organizations that are more interested in their own extremist agendas than in the welfare of released prisoners.

- Information collection and sharing between and among federal, state and local prison systems is integral to tracking radical behavior of prisoners and religious services providers. Significant strides have been made at the federal level, but change at the state and local level, where the overwhelming majority of inmates are incarcerated, is much more difficult to assess.

- Resource limitations – both in terms of manpower and financing – hinder efforts to combat prisoner radicalization. Officials in California report that every investigation into radical groups in their prisons uncovers new leads, but that they simply do not have enough investigators to follow every case of radicalization.

- Radicalization in prisons is a global problem and bears upon the national security of the U.S. In Europe, Latin America and elsewhere the threat has progressed farther than it has in the U.S., giving officials the opportunity to learn from foreign prison radicalization cases so as to confront the problem here in its early stages. Information sharing between and among the U.S. and other countries is crucial.

- At present there is insufficient information about prisoner radicalization to qualify the threat. There is a significant lack of social science research on this issue. No comprehensive records currently exist, for example, on the religious affiliations of inmates when they enter prison. This can be improved by policies that promote good research while continuing to secure the rights of inmates who are involved in these studies.

- Prison officials are understandably stretched thin by the need to maintain order in overcrowded and under-funded facilities. Nevertheless, because information is an essential precursor to action, investigation of radicalization in prisons must become a homeland security and counterterrorism priority.

- Religious radicalization within prisons is a complex problem. No one profession alone is equipped to analyze and recommend change. A multi-disciplinary approach that includes perspectives of religion, criminal justice, intelligence, law, and behavioral sciences is necessary for proactive analysis of the phenomenon.

- Knowledge must be translated into action. Awareness, education and training programs must be developed for personnel working in prison, probation and parole settings.

- The Intelligence Reform Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 calls for the establishment of the Information Sharing Environment (ISE) to support our nation's counter-terrorism efforts. It is critical that information regarding the radicalization of prisoners in state, local, and federal correctional facilities be included as part of the body of information shared through the ISE.

## Key Recommendation

- Congress should establish a Commission to investigate this issue in depth. An objective risk assessment is urgently needed in order to better understand the nature of the threat, and to formulate and calibrate proactive prevention and response efforts accordingly. Enhanced information would enable officials to address this issue now, rather than forcing them to manage a crisis later.

## Background Information

Prisons have long been places where extremist ideology and calls to violence could find willing recruits. Recently, the spiritual philosopher of al Qaeda, Sayyid Qutb, wrote the radical Islamist manifesto *Ma'alim fi al-Tariq* (Milestones along the Road) while in an Egyptian prison. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was an unaccomplished Jordanian revolutionary until his imprisonment, where he recruited followers and controlled prison life in a manner similar to that of a powerful gang leader. Speaking of their time together in prison, a follower of Zarqawi said that "in each prison it was possible for us to have letters sent out and books brought in...The government imprisons us, and God gives us everything we need...prison makes our fight stronger."[13]

Since September 11, 2001, several individuals who were radicalized while incarcerated have been involved in terrorist operations. This has increased awareness and concern about the spread of radical religious beliefs and their potential impact on terrorist recruiting in the U.S. prison system. Prior to recent efforts by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBOP), the dissemination of religious materials and teachings in federal prisons was not monitored in a consistent or systematic fashion. The process of radicalization amongst incarcerated Muslims remains poorly understood and the limited amount of extant research hinders the development of effective intervention techniques.

Prison provides an ideal environment for radicalization of young men and women. Research on the characteristics of terrorist recruits abroad has identified youth, unemployment, alienation, a need for a sense of self-importance and a need to belong to a group as common factors, all of which are present among U.S. prison populations.[14] Although they may have had some exposure to mainstream Christianity, many inmates have not had prior experience with Islam before they are incarcerated. Lacking an understanding of mainstream interpretations of Islam, these inmates are vulnerable to extremist versions of the religion. The threat of terrorist recruiting in U.S. prisons was highlighted in October 2003 during a hearing before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Terrorism, Technology and Homeland Security, which identified two major areas of concern in the U.S. federal prison system.[15] First, a variety of socioeconomic and psychological factors make inmates vulnerable to radical ideology. Second, groups known to support terrorist causes have distributed radical literature to the prison population. Although the extent of the problem was not determined, witnesses stated that serious problems with the screening of religious services providers have created an opportunity for radicalization.

There have been a number of publicized connections between former prisoners and terrorism:

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[13] Jean-Charles Brisard. *Zarqawi: The New Face of Al-Qaeda* (Other Press, New York: 2005; p. 44).
[14] R.A. Hudson,, "The Sociology and Psychology of Terrorism: Who Becomes and Terrorist and Why?," Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1999, p. 24.
[15] John Pistole, Assistant Director, Counterterrorism Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Terrorist Recruitment and Infiltration in the United States: Prisons and Military as an Operational Base," Testimony before the Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, delivered on October 14, 2003.

- Jeff Fort, a gang leader in Chicago, Illinois, converted to Islam while incarcerated in 1965. Fort went on to found a group called El Rukn, which made a name for itself in 1985 when it brokered a deal with the Libyan government to carry out attacks on U.S. police stations, government facilities, military bases, and passenger airplanes in exchange for $2.5 million and asylum in Tripoli.[16]

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[16] Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism: Terrorism Knowledge Base, Group Profile: El Rukn.
[17] Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism: Terrorism Knowledge Base, Group Profile: Covenant, Sword and Army of the Lord (CSA).
[18] A Review of the Federal Bureau of Prisons' Selection of Muslim Religious Services Providers, Department of Justice, Office of The Inspector General April 2004, p. 6.
[19] See Appendix A.

For this reason, prisoner radicalization and its implications warrant study. While some literature on the characteristics of terrorist recruits exists, there is little thorough work in the U.S. context. Individual or environmental factors involved in the distinct processes from religious conversion to radicalization to recruitment by a terrorist organization are, ultimately, not completely understood.[20]

## Defining Terms[21]

For consistency, the task force adopted the following definitions of radicalization and recruitment. The first two are adapted from a report by the Department of Justice's Office of the Inspector General (OIG), released in April 2004 following Senate hearings on the confluence between terrorism and crime.[22] Other definitions are terms used by FBI personnel or were developed by the members of the task force, deriving from their collective and diverse subject matter expertise.[23]

*Radicalization* - "refers to the process by which inmates...adopt extreme views, including beliefs that violent measures need to be taken for political or religious purposes." By "extreme views," this report specifies beliefs that are anti-social, politically rebellious and anti-authoritarian.

*Recruitment* - "is used to mean the solicitation of individuals to commit terrorist acts or engage in behavior for a terrorism purpose."[24] Non-radicalized inmates may be persuaded to participate in actions that directly benefit the terrorist network. Therefore, a recruited individual would include anyone in the prison environment who provides support to terrorists. Many members of a terrorist network may not be fully aware of the value that their actions bring to the network, as in the case of a prisoner who is coerced through blackmail to smuggle cell phone parts into a prison.[25]

*Individual radicalization* - results from exposure to a radical religious services provider or charismatic inmate espousing radical ideas. This type of individual may decide to pursue violence on his own, becoming a "lone-wolf" terrorist. He would not necessarily have the support of a network, but may seek out a network in the future, and may be at risk for recruitment at some later date.

*Organized radicalization* - a process supported by external groups who seek to influence vulnerable inmates. These groups coordinate the entry of radical religious services providers into prisons and jails. They provide inmates with reading materials that include non-

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[20] S. Gerwehr and S. Daly, *Al-Qaida: Terrorist Selection and Recruitment,* (McGraw-Hill Homeland Security Handbook, 2006), Chapter 5, p. 73-89.

[21] Definitions of radicalization, particularly as applied to prison settings, inevitably raise questions regarding what constitutes extreme and what is constitutionally permissible for government to limit. The task force encourages further review and possible revision of this definition by the commission that the task force is recommending be established (see the Findings and Recommendations sections of this report).

[22] Department of Justice, OIG Review, 2004.

[23] See Appendix A.

[24] Ibid., p.6.

[25] Ibid., p.6..

traditional or extremist interpretations of the Qur'an. Once released, inmates are also directed to supportive groups that espouse violence, such as radical mosques. The social services offered by radical groups act as a vehicle for "top-down recruiting," also known as "scouting". This involves radical groups identifying released inmates with valuable skills who can be recruited to carry out specific actions in support of the group's agenda. This process occurs over the long term and direct recruiting may result long after the inmate has become radicalized.

*Gang radicalization* - makes use of pre-existing prison gangs or networks to attract inmates. A principal reason for joining an existing gang is the belief that membership in such a group confers physical protection and psychological support. Gangs also provide a sense of belonging to disillusioned youths. Once these groups become radicalized, their money, communications networks and intimidation factor can be used to recruit others and support terrorist networks.

Most prisoners who join Islamic gangs for protection adopt Islam temporarily out of necessity, a phenomenon called "Prislam" by officials of the New York Police Department.[26] In contrast, a small proportion of converted prisoners later become engaged in terrorist activity.

*Para-radicalization* - takes place when non-radicalized individuals, including inmates, correctional officers or other prison staff aid or abet radicalized networks. Wittingly or not, they are an important part of terrorist network operations in the prison setting. Using bribery and intimidation, radical inmates can obtain, for example, smuggled communications devices, pass messages and cause the strategic transfer of particular inmates.

## The Problem

### OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS OF RADICALIZATION

Inmates in general are particularly vulnerable to radical religious ideology due to their anti-social attitudes and the need to identify with other inmates sharing the same background, beliefs or ethnicity. When there has been little exposure to organized religion in the community, the inmate's understanding of the religion is dependent upon the religious leadership and materials at their facilities. It is during this period that radical rhetoric may exploit the inmate's vulnerabilities and lack of grounded religious knowledge by providing validation to the inmate's disillusionment with society and creating an outlet for their violent impulses. Possible psychological factors increasing vulnerability include a high level of distress, cultural disillusionment, lack of intrinsic religious beliefs or values, dysfunctional family system or dependent personality tendencies.[27] These factors are prevalent among prison populations. From an ideological standpoint, radical religious groups allow the inmates to demonize their perceived enemies and view themselves as righteous. Prisons are inherently violent environments and therefore fertile ground for radicalization. Inmates are

[26] See Appendix A.
[27] S. Gerwehr and S. Daly, *Al-Qaida: Terrorist Selection and Recruitment*, p. 84.

drawn to radical groups out of the need for protection or to gain status amongst other prisoners.

Studies have suggested that terrorist recruitment methods are not always expected to yield a high number of recruits.[28] Radical messages may be delivered to many prisoners with the understanding that most will resist radicalization. As demonstrated in the New Folsom plot, a single radicalized inmate can be a significant threat. Even if the radical message resonates with only a few inmates, they could then be targeted for more intense one-on-one instruction.

It should be noted that there is a difference between a radicalized prisoner, who holds radical religious or political beliefs, and a prisoner who has been recruited by a terrorist group and who has chosen to commit violence. A cycle or sequence from radicalization to violence exists, beginning with the conditions of the prison setting and first exposure to radical ideas, and ending with the decision to become a terrorist. Only a few who become radicalized go on to actively pursue terrorism. An important resource for combating terrorism would be to determine which factor or factors existing in prison influence some radicalized prisoners to make the specific leap from radical beliefs to violence in the name of those beliefs.

## RADICALIZATION IN U.S. PRISONS

### *I. Religious Services*

The recruitment of Muslim chaplains has been limited by the lack of recognized national religious organizations to administer the vetting process. Compounding the problem, has been the controversy over imams espousing violent views, as has been seen in several New York cases. The lack of well-trained Muslim chaplains has led to a reliance on religious contractors and volunteers, especially in state and local facilities. A 2004 survey of 193 wardens of state correctional facilities showed that only half of religious services were physically supervised and just over half used any sort of audio or video monitoring capabilities.[29] Half the institutions allowed inmates themselves to act as spiritual leaders. Prison facilities bear the burden of proof if they wish to deny an inmate's request for any service or activity related to religion.

Currently, chaplains "must have a Master of Divinity degree from an accredited residential seminary or theology school."[30] However, that alone does not confirm that they have sufficient religious education to qualify them to fulfill Muslim religious needs. The same point applies to a contracted Muslim religious services provider or volunteer. Given the relatively small number of chaplains, contracted Muslim religious service providers cannot be routinely supervised by chaplains. Lack of education is a significant problem; contracted religious services providers and volunteers are not required to have formal religious education. Prisoners may find it difficult to fulfill their basic religious obligations because of

[28] Ibid.
[29] George W. Knox, "The Problem of Gangs and Security Threat Groups in American Prisons Today: Recent Research, Findings From the 2004 Prison Gang Survey," (National Gang Crime Research Center, 2005)
[30] A Review of the Federal Bureau of Prisons' Selection of Muslim Religious Services Providers, Department of Justice, Office of The Inspector General April 2004, p. 17.

the limitations of the services offered. Even when they are available, some qualified Muslim religious leaders have been intimidated by radical inmates who consequently assume the role of religious services provider for themselves. In the absence of qualified Muslim religious services providers, inmates can become attracted to radical views and the politico-religious messages coming from other inmates who assume informal positions of religious leadership.

Due to the lack of proper religious authorities and academically credentialed experts available to review all materials entering the prison system, no consistently applied standard or procedure exists to determine what reading material is appropriate. In the absence of monitoring by authoritative Islamic chaplains, materials that advocate violence have infiltrated the prison system undetected. The lack of individuals with a thorough knowledge of Islam, the Qur'an and other religious materials entering prisons offers an opportunity for recruiters outside of prisons to paint a violent picture of Islam. Radical literature and extremist translations and interpretations of the Qur'an have been distributed to prisoners by groups suspected or known to support terrorism.[31] The Noble Qur'an, a Wahabbi/Salafist version written in English, is widely available in prisons. A recent review in the Middle East Quarterly characterized this version as reading "...like a supremacist Muslim, anti-Semite, anti-Christian polemic than a rendition of the Islamic scripture."[32] Of particular concern is its appendix, entitled "The Call to *Jihad* (Holy Fighting in Allah's Cause)." Saeed Ismaeel's *The Differences Between the Shee'ah and Muslims Who Follow the Sunnah*, written in plain English, is another such example of radical material.

Radical Muslim prison groups use Arabic language and script as codes – a practice adopted from existing prison gangs and the use of ancient scripts as code by right-wing extremist groups – to communicate secretly and to smuggle radical materials undetected.[33] Some prisoners have indirect access to the Internet, which opens up another avenue for prisoners to access radical materials. These materials end up in the hands of inmates acting as prayer service leaders, who then use the materials to recruit inmates to follow the radical views expressed.

Extremist interpretations of the Qur'an use footnotes and supplements to lead the reader to a radical interpretation of the scripture. For example, in April 1993 a riot, involving approximately 450 prisoners took place in a maximum security facility in Lucasville, Ohio. Many prisoners feared that correction officials would force them to have tuberculosis vaccinations, which Muslim inmates perceived would violate their faith; some inmates also desired to settle old disputes with other prisoners. Following the riot, in which ten died and more than forty million dollars worth of damage was caused, the investigating authority found radical materials (books and unauthorized audio materials) in Muslim inmates' cells. Prison authorities later banned all of these materials.[34]

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[31] See Appendix A.

[32] Khaleel Mohammed, "Assesing English Translations of the Qur'an", *Middle East Quarterly*, Volume 12, Number 2 (Spring 2005).

[33] Criminal Investigative Division, "Gangs Use Ciphers and Secret Codes to Communicate," Federal Bureau of Investigation Intelligence Bulletin (Unclassified), 20 July 2006.

[34] *See Lucasville Prison Riot*, Ohio Historical Society, 2005, See also, "End to Prison Riot Possible, Officials Say," *Tulsa World*, April 18, 1993, Page A8; See also, "Inmates End Standoff: 5 Guards Freed," *Tulsa World*, April 22, 1993, Page A1.

*II. Support after Release*

Although just over two million inmates are incarcerated in U.S. jails and prisons, a substantially greater number have served time and have returned to society. According to a recent report released by the Commission on Safety and Abuse in America's Prisons, "13.5 million people spend time in jail or prison, and 95 percent of them eventually return to our communities."[35] Both incarcerated and released individuals are vulnerable to radicalization and recruitment, the latter because many inmates leave prison with very little financial, emotional, or family support. To the extent that radical groups may draw upon funding from well-financed extremist backers, they can offer significantly more social and financial support to released prisoners than other legitimate community support programs. Much community support is faith-based, and in many cases can assist in successful reintegration with society. However, when inadequate formal support is provided for inmate transition, radical religious groups may fill the void by offering both financial and emotional support. By providing for prisoners in their time of greatest need, these organizations can build upon the loyalty developed during the individual's time in prison. If connections are made with a radicalized community group, the recently released inmate may remain at risk for recruitment or continued involvement in terrorist networks. Released inmates have significant potential value for terrorist networks that have recruited them.

We currently lack the necessary data to determine both the extent and patterns of radical religious recruitment for incarcerated prisoners and released inmates. Even if a religious provider is removed from one facility, that provider can simply apply to enter a prison in another state. No comprehensive database exists to track religious services providers who are known to expose inmates to radical religious rhetoric.

*III. Other Radical Religious Groups Relevant to U.S. Prisons*

The growth of Islam in prisons, the relative deficit of vetted religious services providers, and world events have all focused attention on radical Islam. However, it is worth noting that right-wing Christian extremist groups not only have a history of terrorist attacks on U.S. soil, but a longstanding relationship with prisoners. There are many groups aligning themselves with "Christian Identity" ideology. These groups include Posse Comitatus, The Order, Aryan Nations, and many of the militia movements across the country. Aryan Nations has maintained an outreach program with inmates since the 1970's. The racial beliefs of these groups make them appealing to white inmates who feel they must associate with inmates of the same race. As with Islamic groups, this may be related to the need for protection. Some of these groups have found common cause with extremist Muslim groups, who share their hostility towards the U.S. government and Israel. Most recently, a number of white supremacist groups vocalized their support for Hezbollah in its conflict with Israel.[36]

The Phineas Priesthood, a terrorist organization adhering to "Christian Identity" ideology, is significant in that it espouses the concept of a "leaderless resistance." By requiring that its

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[35] The Commission on Safety and Abuse in America's Prisons, "Confronting Confinement," June 2006, p.1.
[36] Counterterrorism Division, "White Supremacist Response to the Conflict in Lebanon," Federal Bureau of Investigation Intelligence Bulletin (Unclassified), 7 August 2006.

members act independently and in extreme secrecy, its activities are very difficult to detect.[37] Other types of terrorist groups may adopt this strategy as their networks become less centralized.

*IV. Organized Prison Gangs*

International terrorist organizations share a funding source with gangs based in U.S. prisons – criminal enterprise. During testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee in 2003, Steven C. McCraw, Assistant Director of the FBI, stated, "Terrorism and crime are inextricably linked. International and Domestic Terrorism Organizations and their supporters engage in a myriad of crime to fund and facilitate terrorist activities." These criminal enterprises, he reported, "include extortion, kidnapping, robbery, corruption, alien smuggling, document fraud, arms trafficking, cyber crime, white collar crime, smuggling of contraband, money laundering and certainly drug trafficking."[38] The National Drug Threat Assessment in 2006 stated that "it is possible that some gangs may associate with foreign terrorists for the purpose of conducting drug trafficking and various criminal activities. Moreover, the potential for such relationships exists primarily among U.S. prison gangs, whose members seem to be particularly susceptible to terrorist and other extremist recruitment."[39]

*V. Challenges at the State and Local Levels*

The U.S. corrections system consists of a complex network of prisons and jails at the federal, state and local levels. Out of the over two million inmates in the U.S. prison system, ninety-three percent are in state and local prisons and jails.[40] The threat of prisoner radicalization is therefore even more paramount for state and local officials.

In California state prisons, for example, there exists no standard policy for vetting Muslim religious services providers. Instead, policy is set by the warden of each prison – leading to thirty-three different policies for each of California's thirty-three adult facilities. A lack of a single state-wide policy hinders attempts at identifying and monitoring radical religious services providers. Most providers are endorsed by local organizations which have different requirements for religious education and provide different levels of scrutiny to weed out potential radicals.

California employs twenty Muslim chaplains for a population of over 300,000 prisoners and parolees, limiting their ability to oversee religious services. Prisoners must often rely on fellow inmates or volunteers to meet their religious needs. One California state prison alone hosts 3,000 volunteers each month, an impossible number for short-staffed prison officials to

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[37] Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism, Terrorism Knowledge Database, accessed July 13, 2006, http://www.tkb.org/Home.jsp.

[38] Steven C. McCraw, Assistant Director, Office for Intelligence, Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Narco-Terrorism: International Drug Trafficking and Terrorism – A Dangerous Mix," Testimony before the Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, delivered on May 20, 2003.

[39] "National Drug Threat Assessment 2006," National Drug Intelligence Center, U.S. Department of Justice, Product No. 2006-Q0317-001, p. 35.

[40] Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Prison Statistics*, 15 August 2006, <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/correct.htm> (13September 2006).

monitor effectively.

State prison officials lack the manpower and financial resources to thoroughly investigate radicalization occurring within their facilities. Successful disruption of radicalization is currently more a matter of luck than of ability or intent. The terrorist plot formulated at New Folsom State Prison is one such example. The responsible group, Jam'iyyat Ul-Islam Is Saheeh (Assembly of Authentic Islam or JIS), was founded by Kevin Lamar James while he was imprisoned. James recruited his fellow inmates to JIS, while other members recruited outside the prison after having been paroled. The group planned a number of attacks on targets in the Los Angeles area, including U.S. military facilities, synagogues and the Israeli consulate.[41] The plot was discovered because a member of the group dropped a cell phone during a robbery, fortuitously alerting authorities to the group and the plot. A lack of resources, mainly personnel shortages, prevents law enforcement officials from operating more proactively.

The Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (LASD) has indicated that radicalization is a growing problem within their jurisdiction, with a number of potential leads to be followed. However, a lack of trained experts and analysts prevents the LASD from investigating many potential groups and plots, and hinders them from sharing intelligence with other departments and agencies. With dozens of overcrowded prisons (some are at 200 percent capacity and growing) and hundreds of thousands of prisoners and parolees to oversee, prison officials must devote most of their resources to maintaining basic order and security, with little left over for investigating radicalization. This is compounded by the fact that radical inmates, wishing to avoid attention, act as model prisoners, leading prison officials to focus on violent prisoners while overlooking radicalization. The LASD – one of the largest Sheriff's departments in the country – reports that its manpower shortage is of the magnitude of a thousand personnel.[42]

## EUROPEAN PRISONS

In the U.S., Muslims make up a relatively small percentage of the prison population. According to the Chief of the FBOP's Chaplaincy Services Branch, "approximately 9,000 inmates, or about 6 percent of the inmate population, seek Islamic religious services."[43] In contrast, Muslims are significantly overrepresented in European prisons.[44] For example, Muslims make up about 8 percent of the general populations of France, but there are approximately ten times as many Muslims in French prisons as there are in the general population. Though Islam is the most prevalent religion in French prisons,[45] there are some 600 Catholic priests attending Christian inmates compared to 95 imams attending Muslim

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[41] United States District Court for the Central District of California, October 2004 Grand Jury, Indictment against Kevin James.
[42] See Appendix A.
[43] Department of Justice, OIG Review, 2004, p. 5.
[44] N.H.Ammar, et al. "Muslims in Prison: A Case Study from Ohio State Prisons," *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, Vol. 48, No. 4, (2004), pp. 416-417.
[45] Fahrad Khosrokhavar and Danielle Joly. *Muslims in Prison: Challenge and Change in Britain and France.* Palgrave, Oct 2005.

prisoners. This shortage provides ample opportunities for radical Islamist preachers and organizers to spread their message among prisoners.

The number of Muslim inmates in Europe since the 1970s has been growing. France and Britain have the largest and longest established populations of Muslims in Western Europe. Muslim prisoners serving prison sentences in England and Wales have increased as a proportion of the prison population from 4.49 percent in 1991 to approximately 8.05 percent today. In France, the proportion of Muslims in prisons is probably higher than in the prisons of England and Wales. Estimates of their presence in sections of urban prisons in France go as high as 80 per cent.[46] Whereas the 6 million Muslims in the U.S. are mostly middle class, most of Western Europe's 12-15 million Muslims occupy a lower socioeconomic status. European policies on assimilation, in contrast to U.S. policies, have resulted in a division between Europe's Muslim population and the rest of society. This socioeconomic marginalization of Europe's Muslims makes them more vulnerable to radical political and religious messages.

Although immigrant communities and their levels of integration vary across nations, the experience of other countries is relevant for the U.S. For example, when radicalized inmates are released in Europe, they may travel to the U.S. or participate in networks with individuals inside the U.S. Both Zacarias Moussaoui and Richard Reid entered the country using passports issued by countries participating in the Visa Waiver Program. Moreover, because of the increasing amount of knowledge that can be shared globally through the Internet, successful radicalization and recruitment techniques can be adapted to the U.S. prison system with relative ease. Indirect access to the Internet allows prisoners in the U.S. to communicate with extremist and terrorist groups outside prison walls, making it easier for terrorist networks to work across borders.

Radicalization in Europe is not limited to recent immigrants from traditionally Islamic countries. Researchers in the Netherlands have found that radicalization occurs among many second and third generation immigrants, as well as a small number of converts of Dutch descent. These individuals tend to participate in local networks, but these local groups may periodically coordinate with one another or make connections with transnational networks.[47]

Prison officials have struggled to control radicalization. However, in the interest of maintaining order, prison administrations often facilitate radical groups. Moreover, the blackmailing of prison staff and even non-Muslim religious personnel has resulted in radical inmate groups gaining access to cellular phones and even the Internet. Attorneys provided by foreign terrorist organizations have also arranged for inmates to be moved in and out of particular prisons. Attorneys have also been used to pass information between radical inmate leaders and to coordinate with outside networks. As in the U.S., radical religious groups have adopted the techniques of violent prison gangs to intimidate others and gain control over the facilities in which they are incarcerated.[48]

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[46] James A. Beckford, et al., *Muslims in Prison Challenge and Change in Britain and France,* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, Mar. 2, 2006, pp. 72 and 276.
[47] Violent Jihad in the Netherlands: Current trends in the Islamist terrorist threat, General Intelligence and Security Service Communications Department, March 2006, pp. 23-24.
[48] See Appendix A.

## Current Response Efforts

Awareness and containment of the European problem is only part of the needed response. Because successful networks adopt and adapt effective strategies learned elsewhere, the European experience must be used as an opportunity to learn about prison radicalization so that it can be disrupted in the U.S. at a much earlier stage.

### FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL RESPONSES

Officials at the state level have taken a number of steps to combat prisoner radicalization. Arizona, California and New York have started actively addressing this challenge. California in particular has been exemplary in this regard, having identified prisoner radicalization as a high priority threat and devoted resources to combating it. Despite severe manpower shortages, officials are making a concerted effort to investigate radical networks within their prisons. All California state prisons, for example, have an investigative unit dedicated to this task.

California officials are making a deliberate effort to identify key gaps in responses and fill them. Model terrorism and training awareness courses are being developed for correctional officers, and pilot programs have been introduced to draw on the expertise developed over time by institutional gang investigators. Prison officials have been working to counter gang organization and recruitment among inmates with success. Due to the similarities between gang recruitment and recruitment by radical groups within prisons, there are lessons that can and should be drawn from anti-gang efforts to thwart radicalization and potential terrorist recruiting. Important differences exist between gangs and radical groups, however, so these lessons should not be applied wholesale. Rather, anti-gang efforts should be studied to determine what among them can be usefully applied to combating radical groups in prisons.

The California state government has taken steps to coordinate efforts between its own prison facilities and between other agencies working on this problem. Presently, the California Department of Corrections has liaison officers posted at each prison who meet monthly to share information across facilities. Beyond the prison-to-prison network at the local level, the long term and crucial process of building relationships and trust between and among officials at different levels of government has been furthered by the establishment of a number of "fusion centers" to bring together federal, state and local officials to share intelligence and plan responses. The California state government has created several Joint Regional Intelligence Centers (JRICs) and Regional Threat Assessment Centers (RTACs), which are composed of representatives from prison staffs, the LASD, the Los Angeles Police Department, the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Agency and the Assistant U.S. Attorney for the area. Unfortunately, efforts are often stymied by the nature of bureaucracy. The FBI established four Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs) in California to bring together federal, state, and local officials, but the JTTFs meet infrequently. Likewise, the JRICs and RTACs are designed to study the problem strategically, not to support operations against radical groups, leading some member agencies to disregard the groups thus sinking an opportunity for intelligence sharing.

Even though state and county officials have been forward leaning in their efforts to work together, significant cultural, policy and resource impediments continue to hamstring their efforts. Crucially, local information must fully find its way into regional and national intelligence processes and networks, and strategic analysis must be fused with investigatory efforts for synergies to emerge. California provides an excellent case study of the complexities of working across jurisdictions, and among a number of agencies to get an accurate gauge of the extent of radicalization, but even the most effective example still suffers from numerous impediments to success.

In New York State, in late 2004 and early 2005, the New York State Office of Homeland Security, State Department of Corrections, New York City Department of Corrections, NYPD and the FBI began the process of establishing a joint prison monitoring system to monitor and track prison radicalization within State prisons and Riker's Island Jail. All of the agencies had been working on their own prison monitoring programs before that time, but each independent of the other. The system is built off of already well established gang intelligence units at both the State and city level and uses the Upstate New York Regional Intelligence Center (UNYRIC) and the NYPD intelligence center at the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) to fuse intelligence collected within the prisons and jails. More recently, the State of New York has begun the process of integrating county jails, most of which are run by local sheriffs, into the system. However, at this time, the majority of county jails are still not part of the prison monitoring system.[49]

## EXCLUDING RADICALS AND EXTREMIST MATERIALS FROM PRISONS

Since 2002, the FBI and FBOP have enhanced collaborative efforts to detect and respond to any threats to national security originating from prisons. Their experience indicates that U.S. prisons have been targeted for radicalization and recruitment.[50] However, because the vast majority of inmates are incarcerated in state prison systems, individual and organized radicalization and recruitment at the state level represents the majority of the current radical activity.

In response to the OIG report on the paucity of Muslim religious services providers, the FBOP has made changes to many of its policies.[51] Religious services providers are now questioned about their beliefs regarding violence and other concepts related to radicalization. They are also subjected to more rigorous background checks. Muslim chaplains are involved in the screening process as subject matter experts.

The OIG report detailed issues related to the selection of chaplains and other religious services providers, such as the inadequate examination of doctrinal beliefs.[52] Volunteers and

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[49] See Appendix A.
[50] See Appendix A.
[51] Analysis of the Response by the Federal Bureau of Prisons to Recommendations in the OIG's April 2004 Report on the Selection of Muslim Religious Service Providers, U.S. Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General, July 2004.
[52] Department of Justice, OIG Review, April 2004.

religious contractors were required to receive endorsements only from local organizations. Since 1995, chaplains had been required to obtain endorsement from a national organization. The FBOP made the change in order to increase accountability and allow the chaplains to maintain contact with the endorsing agency when they were moved to other states. To further accountability, the FBOP could maintain more consistent relationships with a national agency, and more easily detect any deviation from mainstream religious practices. The Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) was the only provider of endorsements of Muslim chaplains until 2003. In response to allegations about ISNA connections to terrorist groups, the FBOP stopped accepting endorsements for Muslim chaplains.[53] As a result, no new Islamic chaplains could be hired until the FBI cleared the ISNA of any association with terrorist groups. The FBOP has maintained ongoing communication with Muslim groups, including the ISNA.

There is strengthened communication between the FBI and FBOP regarding the vetting process of religious services providers. They are questioned and investigated regarding any connection to or funding from foreign governments. The FBOP has begun accepting endorsements of chaplain candidates from local organizations in lieu of national endorsements. FBOP chaplains must now meet new requirements for academic training, and experience, and pass thorough background checks. Chaplains must also demonstrate a willingness and ability to provide and coordinate religious programs for inmates of all faiths.[54] FBOP staff members have received training on Islamic beliefs and FBI field offices are required to provide training to local and state prisons.

The FBOP's mission is to identify organizations and individuals attempting to radicalize inmates and prevent their entry into prisons. Although the need for positive influences on inmates, including non-radical religious services is recognized, it is difficult to maintain the balance between the need to provide religious services and the need to prevent entry of radical religious services providers. While the OIG found that the FBOP was effectively employing ten current Muslim chaplains to screen new contractors, this was not felt to be adequate for supervision of existing inmate and non-inmate providers, because "ample opportunity exists...to deliver inappropriate and extremist messages." The ten FBOP Muslim chaplains cannot interview the many thousands of religious contractors who have exposure to inmates.

The FBOP maintains a database of inmates which is available to, but not widely used by, local and state systems. State and local databases of information on prisoners that do exist are not universally compatible with the federal system or with other states. Despite use of available databases and improvements in information sharing, intelligence gaps remain. Information about who is directing and funding radicalization and recruitment efforts is incomplete. The decentralized and fluctuating leadership of radical groups contributes to this deficit.[55]

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[53] The investigation of the ISNA is beyond the scope of the task force and the statements made in this report are not meant to confirm or deny the allegations mentioned above. The ISNA is mentioned specifically because it is the only national Islamic organizations that has been used to endorse FBOP chaplains.
[54] Department of Justice Fact Sheet, *Department of Justice Anti-Terrorism Efforts Since Sept. 11, 2001*, 5 September 2006 <http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2006/September/06_opa_590.html>.
[55] See Appendix A.

The FBOP has developed a more complete system of monitoring the inventory of religious reading material and other forms of media available to Federal prisons. This allows for more consistent review by experienced chaplains. A set of best practice guidelines has been implemented throughout the FBOP regarding appropriate reading materials. These guidelines are incorporated into the training available to local and state facilities, though there has been no authoritative measure of the degree to which these practices are being implemented. The FBOP has mandated the constant supervision of inmate-led groups, and is requiring that the provision of Islamic teachings and study-guides must be prepared by Islamic chaplains who are full-time FBOP staff.[56]

## Findings

- Prison gangs and terrorist organizations share a common interest in criminal enterprises. The potential therefore exists for a nexus between the two. The limited numbers of individuals required by successful terrorist recruiting methods increases the possibility of cross fertilization. Research on foreign terrorists describes isolated and alienated young people lacking a sense of self importance that feeds a need to belong to a group—a set of conditions found in recruits of U.S.-based prison gangs. Radicalized prisoners form a pool of potential recruits for terrorist groups.

- Radicalization is neither unique to Islam nor a recent phenomenon, and remains the exception among prisoners rather than the rule. Right-wing extremist groups are present in prisons and have an extensive history of terrorist attacks.

- The inadequate number of Muslim religious services providers increases the risk of radicalization. At the same time, not all contracted religious leaders have the appropriate experience, education or background to lead fellow Muslims. Prisoners with little training in Islam have been able to assert themselves as leaders among the prison population, at times misrepresenting the faith. "Jailhouse Islam", based upon cut-and-paste versions of the Qur'an, incorporates violent prison culture into religious practice. Radical religious service providers in prisons are able to move from prison to prison while remaining under the radar of prison officials. Currently there are no national organizations authorized by the FBOP to endorse Muslim chaplain candidates. By relying on local endorsing organizations, it is inherently more difficult to ensure that religious leaders providing services within prison systems are adequately trained and to deny radical ideologues access to prisoners. In the absence of a sound process to vet materials entering into prisons, the system remains vulnerable.

- The inability to track inmates upon release from prison, coupled with limited social support, gives rise to a vulnerable moment in which former inmates may act upon radical tendencies. The lack of support groups to help reintegrate released prisoners into society allows for individuals to carry into the larger community the radical

[56] *Department of Justice Anti-Terrorism Efforts Since Sept. 11, 2001.* Department of Justice Fact Sheet, 5 September 2006 <http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2006/September/06_opa_590.html>.

messages learned while confined and increases the likelihood of repeat offenses. There do exist local charities that may accept recently released prisoners of Muslim faith to help these individuals to become productive members of society by providing immediate assistance with housing and career counseling. However, these groups generally rely on private donations, and with their decentralized leadership may be vulnerable to the influences of radical groups more interested in finding recruits than in providing social services or in the welfare of prisoners.

- Resource limitations – both in terms of manpower and financing – hinder efforts to combat prisoner radicalization. Officials in California report that every investigation into radical groups in their prisons uncovers new leads, but that they simply do not have enough investigators to follow every case of radicalization and information goes unshared with officials at other prisons or agencies.

- Lack of systematic intelligence and information sharing among federal, state and local prisons on inmates who express violent, religion-based behaviors allows for such prisoners to carry out a message of extremism undetected. Information collection and sharing among federal, state and local prison systems is integral to tracking radical behavior of prisoners and religious services providers, and to preventing recruiters from moving freely between prisons. Significant strides have been made at the federal level, but change at the state and local level is difficult to assess. Further, intelligence regarding radicalization activities at the federal, state and local levels must be integrated into the body of information shared through the ISE.

- Radicalization in prisons is a global problem and bears upon the national security of the U.S. Information sharing between and among the U.S. and other countries is crucial. Lessons learned abroad afford the U.S. the opportunity to proactively address such threats domestically.

- At present there is insufficient information about prisoner radicalization to qualify the threat. There is a significant lack of social science research on this issue. No records currently exist, for example, on the religious affiliations of inmates when they enter prison. This can be improved by policies that promote good research while continuing to secure the rights of inmates who are involved in these studies. The motivations for and incentives offered by terrorist groups must be better understood, and the sequence of radicalization must be better understood to identify the steps that separate a radicalized inmate from a terrorist recruit – that is, the factor or factors that exist in prison that cause a few radicalized prisoners to pursue violence.

- Prison officials are understandably stretched thin by the need to maintain order in overcrowded and under-funded facilities. Nevertheless, because information is an essential precursor to action, investigation of radicalization in prisons must become a priority.

## Recommendations

Prisoner radicalization is a potentially significant threat to U.S. national security. Conditions in prison are conducive to radicalization, as demonstrated by Europe's experience and cases within the U.S. Radicalized prisoners are a potential pool of recruits by terrorist groups. The U.S., with its large prison population, is at risk of facing the sort of homegrown terrorism currently plaguing other countries. To deal with this threat before it materializes as a terrorist attack, Congress should establish a commission to investigate prison radicalization. An objective risk assessment is urgently needed to investigate this issue in depth, in order to better understand the nature of the threat, and to calibrate and formulate our prevention and response efforts accordingly.[57]

Religious radicalization within prisons is a complex problem and therefore no one profession alone is equipped to analyze and recommend change. A multi-disciplinary approach that includes perspectives of religion, criminal justice, law, and behavioral sciences is vital for proactive analysis of the phenomenon. We would urge that the Commission seek to balance the practice of religious freedom while preventing the spread of radical ideology in a religious context.

Among the areas to be addressed by the commission are the following recommended priority issues:

- Objectively assess the risk posed by the influence of radical groups in the prison system, as well as the current levels of information sharing between and among agencies at all levels of government involved in managing inmates and monitoring radical groups.
- Identify steps to ensure the legitimacy of Islamic endorsing agencies so as to ensure a reliable and effective process of providing religious services to Muslim inmates.
- Identify steps to effectively reintegrate former inmates into the larger society, thereby reducing the likelihood that they will be recruited by radical groups posing as social service providers, or will act upon radical tendencies learned behind bars.
- Identify broader areas of dialogue with the Muslim community to better facilitate cultural understanding.
- Identify lessons that can be learned and adapted from present and past efforts to combat gangs and right-wing extremists in prisons. Existing prison programs designed to prevent radicalization and recruitment or to disrupt radical groups, whether at the local, state, federal, or international level, should be evaluated to determine a set of "best practices" that can be used to develop a comprehensive strategy to counter radicalization.

**Out of the Shadows:** GETTING AHEAD OF PRISONER RADICALIZATION

- Knowledge must be translated into action. Awareness, education and training programs must be developed for personnel who work in prison, probation and parole settings.

[57] It should be noted that the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security are also conducting their own strategic assessments regarding the scope of radicalization and recruitment in U.S. prisons from a law enforcement-centric point of view.

# Appendix A

## Prisoner Radicalization Task Force Briefings*

- Johari Abdul-Malik: Muslim Chaplain, Howard University, Washington, D.C.
- Randy Beardsworth: Assistant Secretary for Strategic Planning , Department of Homeland Security
- Matthew Bettenhausen: Director, Office of Homeland Security, California
- Alon Daniel: Counterterrorism Consultant, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center, American University
- Richard Davis: Senior Associate, Center for the Study of the Presidency; Former Director of Prevention Policy, Homeland Security Advisory Council
- Cindy Gatiglio: Intelligence Analyst, Emergency Operations Bureau, Terrorism Early Warning Group, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department
- Matthew Hamidullah: Warden, Federal Bureau of Prisons in Estill, South Carolina
- William Hipsley: Deputy Director, California Office of Homeland Security
- Sunni-Ali Islam: Muslim Religious Service Provider, Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections
- James McMahon: Director, New York State Office of Homeland Security
- Larry Meade: Sergeant, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department
- Todd Puhler: Federal Bureau of Investigations
- Larry Richards: Detective, Emergency Operations Bureau, Terrorism Early Warning Group, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department
- Rick Rimmer: Assistant Secretary, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
- John Stedman: Lieutenant, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department
- Craig Trout: Federal Bureau of Prisons Detailee, Federal Bureau of Investigations

* The task force consulted, interviewed and received briefings from additional subject matter experts who wish to remain anonymous. All briefings were conducted under "Chatham House" rules.

# Appendix B
## Additional Resources

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**Post-Hearing Questions for the Record**
**Submitted to Frank J. Cilluffo**
**From Senator Susan M. Collins**

**"Prison Radicalization: Are Terrorist Cells Forming in U.S. Cell Blocks?"**
**September 19, 2006**

1. *A significant number of prisoners convert to Islam in prison in order to become part of a gang that can provide both status and protection in prison. These conversions are clearly not based on religious fervor but instead on some level of self-preservation. Speaking strictly from the perspective of our concern about radicalization leading to terrorist activity, do these conversion-of-convenience inmates pose as significant a concern as someone who is more truly committed to a radicalized form of Islam?*

In the context of prisoner radicalization, it is not constructive to adopt a simple dichotomy between "conversion-of-convenience inmates" and those more truly committed to a radicalized form of Islam. What is critical, in terms of threat assessment, is the existence and nature of the inmate leader(s), whose possibly charismatic approach may draw others to their cadre. In all religions, the recently converted are often the most zealous. In the prison environment, even if an inmate converts for reasons other than "religious fervor," the potential to cause harm is disturbing. Studies have suggested that terrorist recruitment methods are not always expected to yield a high number of recruits. Radical messages may be delivered to many prisoners with the understanding that most will resist radicalization. However, as demonstrated in the New Folsom case, a single radicalized inmate (as best we know) can be a significant threat. Even if the radical message resonates with only a few inmates, they could then be targeted for more intense one-on-one instruction. If the recently released inmate makes connections with a radicalized community group, he or she may remain at risk for recruitment or continued involvement in terrorist networks. Released inmates have significant potential value for terrorist networks that have recruited them.

2. *The "Out of the Shadows: Getting Ahead of Prisoner Radicalization" report notes that Arabic language and writing is often used as a form of code to communicate secretly and smuggle radical materials into prisons. The report also describes many radical inmates as "model prisoners," who maintain good behavior to avoid attention. Finally, I note that our prison system has been trying to deal with radical religious groups in prisons since the 1970s and yet many of those groups continue to recruit in prisons to this day. These are just some factors that suggest that radicalization is a problem that is difficult to detect and difficult to contain. Where is there a "choke point" that the prison system can focus on to contain this problem of prison radicalization?*

As the question suggests, prisoner radicalization is indeed difficult to detect and contain, in part because there is no single "choke point" that the prison system can focus upon. While the absence of a single focal point is itself part of the problem, there are multiple

points at which authorities can insert themselves and thereby impact outcomes. One way to conceive of the issue is to break it down into different elements along a continuum. At one end, upon entry into prison, a variety of elements loom large, including the introduction of suitably qualified religious service providers as well as non-radical literature into the prison system. At the other end of the spectrum lie those elements related to successful re-entry and re-integration into society. At each point along the continuum, there is an opportunity for radicals to exploit vulnerabilities and also for officials to thwart them.

Understood in this way, authorities could and should take further action, especially at the state and county level, to vet imams and chaplains as well as literature entering the system; monitor religious services conducted within prisons, especially those services that are led by inmates themselves; bolster translation capacity; raise cultural awareness of prison personnel and those who work in probation and parole settings; and direct more resources towards re-entry programs that effectively reintegrate former inmates into society writ large. This list is illustrative rather than exhaustive, but determined action on any one of these challenges could have a positive, even if incremental, effect on containment.

At the same time, it is crucial that broader avenues of dialogue with the Muslim community be identified and pursued to foster mutual respect and understanding, and ultimately trust. Prison radicalization is but one subset of the battle of ideas, and it is only by challenging ideas with ideas – both within and beyond prison walls – that hearts and minds may ultimately be changed, and radical ideas moderated.

3. *In its report, the Task Force notes that, "[a] 2004 survey of 193 wardens of state and correctional facilities showed that only half of religious services were physically supervised and just over half use any sort of audio or video monitoring capabilities," and that "[h]alf the institutions allowed inmates themselves to act as spiritual leaders." This practice is different than the procedures in place for our nation's federal prisons. But, given that the vast majority of persons incarcerated in this country are within our state correctional facilities, how much of a problem do you perceive this to be and how should it be addressed?*

Upwards of 90% of America's prison population is in state and local prisons and jails. Overstretch and capacity issues at the state level are serious. The figures for California alone are staggering. There, thirty-three adult prisons contain an inmate population in excess of 170,000. With facilities hugely overcrowded – operating at 200% capacity – staffing, management, funding, and logistics pose a tremendous challenge, and wardens there understandably have their hands full dealing with day-to-day operations alone. Concerned with dangerous inmates and hardened criminals, prison officials simply do not have the manpower to oversee every prayer service. The problem identified in this question is therefore a highly significant concern.

Radical prisoners who volunteer for religious functions and assume religious authority benefit from a captive audience which may, in large part, have had no prior exposure to Islam, and no way to put the radical message into context. The only version some may have been exposed to is a "cut-and-paste" version of the Qur'an that incorporates violent prison gang culture, known as "Jailhouse Islam" or "Prislam." (It should go without saying, however, that in general terms religion may have a tremendously constructive impact upon inmates, imbuing them with a sense of discipline and purpose, among other things). Radical prisoners who want the role of religious leader for themselves have also been known to intimidate suitably qualified religious providers into ceding their role.

Granted, practice in federal prisons is more encouraging than that at the state level; but even at the federal level, our response to the problem identified in this question is incomplete and it would be beneficial to devote more resources to the issue. In particular, we should focus first on raising awareness (especially at the state and local level) among wardens and prison personnel. Education and training programs should be developed in order to translate knowledge into action across the board, and best practices should be shared. Further, to the extent that lessons can be learned from present and past efforts to combat gangs and right-wing extremists in prisons, these lessons should be adapted and applied to the present context.

4. *Having served in the White House as Special Assistant to the President for Homeland Security, how do you think the issue of prison radicalization fits into the larger homeland security apparatus, specifically with respect to law enforcement activities, intelligence, and the need for information sharing between the federal government and state and local authorities?*

This question raises a very significant set of issues, but I must emphasize from the outset that the following reply is based on my own particular set of experiences and views. Having said that, the issue of prison radicalization represents one slice of a much larger pie. As such, the issue and the challenges that it highlights represent a microcosm – one whose difficulties reappear in a variety of other contexts as well. Specifically, the prison setting demonstrates the need for both horizontal (within the federal government) and vertical (between and among federal, state, and local entities, and beyond) coordination, cooperation, and coherence. Neither prisoner radicalization nor other homeland security issues can be tackled by law enforcement activities alone, or even by law enforcement and intelligence in tandem. Instead, a range of non-traditional actors must have a seat at the table. In this case, without the integral input of imams and chaplains, scholars of religion, and behavioral science experts, our analysis and understanding will be incomplete. The issue is multidimensional and so too must be our response.

A number of noteworthy information-sharing initiatives do exist in the prison context. In California, for instance, state liaison officers posted at each prison meet monthly to share information across facilities; and beyond the prison-to-prison network, the long term and crucial process of building relationships and trust between and among officials at different levels of government is furthered by monthly meetings of a collective including

prison staff, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD), the Los Angeles Police Department, the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Agency, and the Assistant US Attorney for the area. However, even here, local information has yet to fully find its way into regional and national intelligence processes and networks, and strategic analysis is not yet fused with investigatory efforts so that synergies emerge. Significant cultural obstacles also hinder the information-sharing process. Bureaucratic infighting remains a problem, even between and among federal agencies, in part because of differing views on tradecraft – while some agencies are inclined to string people up at a relatively early stage, others are predisposed to stringing them along in order to tease out additional valuable information.

These challenges are not unique to the prison setting and present themselves in a variety of other information-sharing contexts as well, which reinforces the need to address and remedy these difficulties across the board. Prison radicalization is, of course, a subset of the more general phenomenon of radicalization that has manifested itself in a series of terrorist attacks and activities including the bombings in Madrid (3/11) and London (7/7), and operations recently uncovered in Canada. Although Al Qaeda in its classic form is now a degraded entity, it has franchised itself across the globe, with its franchisees prepared to act locally, and largely independently – in effect a network of networks. Our own homeland security apparatus must therefore be equally networked. Moreover, our overseas partners must be plugged into that effort in a truly meaningful way; we must leverage more effectively the information, intelligence, and lessons gleaned from overseas (including specifically related to prisons; nor should we ignore the opportunity to debrief those who have served a prison sentence overseas and subsequently seek to emigrate to the United States through legal means). At the same time, we must not shirk our responsibilities at home – in part, this means that greater analytical capacity must be built at the state and local levels. The sort of database that is truly needed is one that encompasses both the prison context and beyond, and covers who joins jihad, when, and how. In any case, it is critical that information regarding the radicalization of prisoners in state, local, and federal correctional facilities be included as part of the body of information shared through the Information Sharing Environment called for by the *Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act* of 2004.

**Post-Hearing Questions for the Record**
**Submitted to Dr. Gregory B. Saathoff**
**From Senator Susan M. Collins**

**"Prison Radicalization: Are Terrorist Cells Forming in U.S. Cell Blocks?"**
**September 19, 2006**

1. A significant number of prisoners convert to Islam in prison in order to become part of a gang that can provide both status and protection in prison. These conversions are clearly not based on religious fervor but instead on some level of self-preservation. Speaking strictly from the perspective of our concern about radicalization leading to terrorist activity, do these conversion-of-convenience inmates pose as significant a concern as someone who is more truly committed to a radicalized form of Islam?

   Chairman Collins, while arguably these inmates don't pose the kind of long-term risks that we face with radicalized prisoners, we should not minimize the dangers that "conversion-of-convenience" inmates pose to society. I am now speaking of those who are para-radicalized, exhibiting the behaviors of radicalized prisoners without the beliefs.

   Referring back to my testimony; terrorism is a team sport. Those non-radicalized inmates who align with religious radicals in prison can be seen as being on "special teams." Although they may not spend much time on the field, they nonetheless provide crucial support. The cell phone that is smuggled to a religious radical is no less dangerous because the smuggler himself is not radicalized. The money that is transferred to radical religious groups is no less destructive because it was passed through the hands of an individual who is in a marriage of convenience with radicalism.

   Because inmates in prison are subject not only to radicalization, but also to para-radicalization, they are particularly vulnerable towards adopting the behaviors, if not the beliefs of religiously-based terrorists who advocate criminal behaviors.

2. The "Out of the Shadows: Getting Ahead of Prisoner Radicalization" report notes that Arabic language and writing is often used as a form of code to communicate secretly and smuggle radical materials into prisons. The report also describes many radical inmates as "model prisoners," who maintain good behavior to avoid attention. Finally, I note that our prison system has been trying to deal with radical religious groups in prisons since the 1970s and yet many of those groups continue to recruit in prisons to this day. These

are just some factors that suggest that radicalization is a problem that is difficult to detect and difficult to contain. Where is there a "choke point" that the prison system can focus on to contain this problem of prison radicalization?

Chairman Collins, I agree with you that this problem of prisoner radicalization is difficult to detect and contain. The detection aspect is paramount, and the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) for the U.S. Department of Justice has identified particular concerns with mail and telephone calls in its September 2006 report; *The Federal Bureau of Prisons' Monitoring of Mail for High-Risk Inmates.*

Rather than attempting to name just one, it is probably more relevant to speak of "choke points." Areas of real vulnerability include prison libraries, religious services, mail, telephone calls and visits. The Inspector General's report also indicated the need for greater monitoring of inmates' conversations within cellblocks as well.

Fortunately, with improvements in information technology, prisons have a greater opportunity to monitor communication compared with earlier decades. This is essential, particularly with regard to limitations in traditional translation services for languages other than English. One example of a new capability afforded by information technology is a pilot inmate messaging system within the Federal Bureau of Prisons called TRULINCS.

As described by BOP Director Harley Lappin in his written response to the above cited OIG report, this messaging system would allow offenders the ability to communicate with friends and family through the use of electronic messaging through a secure work station. Multiple advantages of this system include a great reduction in incoming and outgoing mail, with the ability to screen and index messages for indefinite retention. While providing greater content monitoring capability, it has a side benefit of allowing inmates to have enhanced real-time communication, which they see as beneficial. Enhanced monitoring does not necessarily imply increasing limitations for inmates. In fact, the above example actually appears to be a "win-win" situation for public security and inmate communication. Mr. Lappin reports that this program has been successful in eleven federal institutions, and is expected to be implemented across the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

Unfortunately, while this is a significant step forward for the Federal Bureau of Prisons, even when fully implemented it will impact only a small fraction of incarcerated individuals. Most of the 1.7 million prisoners housed in state facilities are particularly vulnerable due to serious limitations in information technology monitoring systems.

3. In its report, the Task Force notes that, "[a] 2004 survey of 193 wardens of state correctional facilities showed that only half of religious services were physically supervised and just over half use any sort of audio or video monitoring capabilities," and that "[h]alf the institutions allowed inmates themselves to act as spiritual leaders." This practice is different than the procedures in place for our nation's federal prisons. But, given that the vast majority of persons incarcerated in this country are within our state correctional facilities, how much of a problem do you perceive this to be and how should it be addressed.

The 1.7 million inmates incarcerated in our state system are a major concern, because of the great variability in prison systems, populations and approaches to this recent phenomenon. Because there is no central overriding assessment mechanism applicable towards the myriad state prison systems, we have very little information about comprehensive approaches to the problem.

Certainly, we can learn from the experience of the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Problems highlighted by the Office of the Inspector General are being addressed. Resulting solutions could serve as a model for the state system.

Before we can provide treatment, however, we must have a correct diagnosis. One way to approach the problem in a comprehensive way would be to convene a national commission that could not only assess for vulnerabilities but also identify some of the best practices now in use at the state level.

4. There are many reasons an individual might convert to a particular religion in prison: true belief, protection, and/or privilege. The question is one of radicalization. What motivates an individual to prepare for and engage in physical attacks in the name of religion?

What limited research we have on the topic is clear about one thing: these individuals do not suffer from identifiable mental illness.

In a recently convened conference we looked at the issue of suicide bombers across cultures, and found that psychology alone does not provide us with a satisfying answer to the question. For example, there is a significant social component that increasingly relies on the internet for introduction, indoctrination and maintenance of radical beliefs. This information network encourages both those who engage in physical attacks and those who form the support network.

In the past, we have at times erred by using the prism of just one discipline to answer questions more rightly left to a combination of specialists. Although my training is in medicine and the behavioral sciences, I have found that religion scholars from the American Academy of Religions have extremely valuable perspectives regarding issues relating to religion and violence. It is clear to me that the best answers to your question will be gained through collaborative research from multiple disciplines, such as political science, religion, behavioral science, criminology, sociology and anthropology.

There is much that we have yet to learn, although the importance of networks in building and maintaining radical religious alliances can not be overstated.

5. In your testimony before the Committee you noted that government regulations regarding human subject research in prisons have constrained further research in this area. What steps do you recommend we take to give you and your colleagues the tools you need to gather this information while still protecting the rights of prisoners?

If a commission is chosen to examine the issue of prisoner radicalization, one of its critical tasks should be to examine the reasons behind the dearth of research in U.S. prisons. With regard to radicalization questions, this is particularly true in social sciences research. There is a consensus that the significant lack of prison research is a serious problem. However, it is unclear whether that lack is due to unnecessary regulation, lack of incentives for investigators, lack of incentives for the institutions where the research will take place, or yet some other reason or combination of reasons.

Some state prison systems do a better job than others at facilitating research, but this varies widely from state-to-state.

This fact may suggest that existing federal regulations are not too onerous, and that the rate-limiting step actually occurs at the level of the states. By way of example, some researchers indicate that their research proposals are refused without any rationale provided by the institution that has denied the research request. In such circumstances, it is not possible to determine the reasons for the denial, and therefore impossible to correct the research proposal for whatever inadequacy exists.

Certainly, in the case of any human research, ethics and Constitutional guarantees dictate the need for safeguards in the approval, implementation and dissemination of research. Because of the priority for prison security, it is understandable that state prison officials may be hesitant to facilitate research. Scientific investigation may arguably compromise security or inmate rights while providing little or no direct benefit to the institution being studied.

What we don't know *can* hurt us. As I stated in my testimony, without the light afforded by good research, we are left only with the heat of case-related investigations by government and the media. Effective policy should be driven by good research on radicalization rather than through random case reports. Whatever the reasons for the lack of good social science research on prisoner radicalization, it is important to identify and correct the problem. Failure to identify the process and extent of prisoner radicalization places prison populations, prison employees and society at an unnecessary risk.

**Questions for the Record**

**for the Hearing "Prison Radicalization: Are Terrorist Cells Forming in U.S. Cell Blocks?" before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee**

**by Daveed Gartenstein-Ross**

**Senior Consultant, Gerard Group International**
**Co-Chairman, The Counterterrorism Foundation**

**Senator Collins**

1. **Having worked for Al Haramain—a terrorist financier—and having admittedly been radicalized yourself, what do you think is the most critical thing that the government (federal, state, and local) can do to counter the spread of radical Islam both in our nation's prisons and in our society in general?**

Two important steps to tackling the spread of radical Islam both within and also outside the nation's prisons are developing literacy/expertise about radical Islam and also developing a clear sense of mission. By developing literacy and expertise about this critical problem, the government can have a better grasp of what kind of literature and teachings run the risk of bringing radical ideas to the prison population. With greater literacy and expertise, the government can also do a better job of bolstering moderate Muslims and marginalizing—rather than engaging—those whose values are opposed to the liberal institutions and pluralism that define Western society.

But improved literacy and expertise will not avail us well without a clear sense of mission. At the hearing, I was concerned that the question about whether the Bureau of Prisons would exclude literature that advocated the killing of Jews was considered a complex issue. This indicates to me that there still isn't a concrete sense of mission about what kind of material should be excluded from prisons. While the question of prison radicalization does indeed involve complex questions about the interplay between religious freedom and national security, it shouldn't be difficult to determine that literature should be excluded if it asks readers to act upon the injunction: "The Last Hour will not appear unless the Muslims fight the Jews and kill them."[1]

2. **In the report entitled, "Out of the Shadows: Getting Ahead of Prisoner Radicalization," released by the Homeland Security Policy Institute of the George Washington University and the Critical Incident Analysis Group of the University of Virginia, the definition of radicalization is as follows: "[T]he process by which inmates . . . adopt extreme views, including beliefs that violent measures need to be taken for political or religious purposes." The report qualifies "extreme views," as**

[1] MUHAMMAD BIN JAMIL ZINO, ISLAMIC GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL REFORM 167 (1996).

**"beliefs that are anti-social, politically rebellious and anti-authoritarian." Were the other members of Al Haramain's U.S. staff, and the guest religious experts that the organization hosted from time to time, radicalized consistent with the report's definition of the term?**

Yes, the other members of Al Haramain's U.S. staff with whom I had significant contact as well as guest theologians that the organization hosted were radicalized consistent with this definition. I interpret the term "anti-authoritarian" in the definition of "extreme views" to mean that these individuals are opposed to U.S. authority: they held authoritarian views of their own that would be applicable to the utopian Islamic society that they envisioned.

I outline the radical views that my coworkers held at length in my forthcoming book *My Year Inside Radical Islam*, but a few examples suffice to demonstrate this. One of the guest scholars, when asked whether it was possible for someone to again become Muslim after converting from Christianity to Islam and then back to Christianity, immediately pointed out that many scholars believed that those who converted out of Islam should be killed. A second guest lecturer, responding to a question about the Talmud, described it as "the Jews' plan to ruin everything," and launched into a lengthy exposition about sinister Jewish conspiracies. These conspiracies even included encouraging people to play soccer "so that they'll wear shorts that show off the skin of their thighs." And a coworker opined to me that because of deviance within the Nation of Islam's theological beliefs, members of that group should be given the choice between accepting true Islam or being beheaded.

It is worth noting that, although Al Haramain's theological views came to dominate the Muslim community in Ashland, Oregon during my time there, not all members of the community were radicalized. There were a number of local Muslims whose practice of Islam was completely consonant with the best of Western values. I believe that extremism has now been marginalized in Southern Oregon's Islamic community.

3. **During your time with Al Haramain, you were heavily involved in the organization's radical prison literature program. Based on that experience and the success Al Haramain had in getting its radicalized literature to prison inmates, if you were a prison warden in either the federal or state/local system, what procedures would you implement to counter the dissemination of radicalized religious literature within the prison?**

In my view, the prison's procedures must be both reactive and also proactive. On the reactive side, keeping radical literature away from inmates and keeping radical religious leaders out of the prisons is the critical step. Cooperation between the federal Bureau of Prisons and state wardens is important in this area, because there is a strong possibility of wasting resources by needless duplication of work on the federal and state level.

But simply excluding radical literature and theologians is only half a solution. *Out of the Shadows* points out: "In the absence of qualified Muslim religious services providers, inmates can become attracted to radical views and the politico-religious messages coming from other inmates who assume informal positions of religious leadership." Thus, wardens should identify

Muslim organizations that they believe offer a positive message, and forge partnerships to help ensure that reputable groups are satisfying the religious needs of Muslim inmates.

**Senator Lautenberg**

1. **Although Al Haramain has since disbanded, do you know whether the database you referred to in your testimony could still be circulating among radical groups in the United States?**

The database is still out there. We sent it the Al Haramain's head office in Saudi Arabia several times while I worked for the U.S. office. However, I don't know that either the U.S. office or the head office in Riyadh sent this database to any Muslim groups in the United States. Moreover, the database would be several years out of date at present. Al Haramain's U.S. offices were raided in February 2004, and the prison *dawa* program ceased before that date. In my judgment, the bigger risk does not come from Al Haramain's database, but from a radical group that is more motivated to recruit terrorists from U.S. prisons and establishes a similar database for that purpose.

**Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**
**United States Senate**

**"Prison Radicalization: Are Terrorist Cells Forming in U.S. Cell Blocks?"**
**September 19, 2006**

**Responses of**
**John M. Vanyur**
**Federal Bureau of Prisons**
**to Post-Hearing Questions for the Record**

**Responses to Questions from Chairman Joseph I. Lieberman:**

*1. Please provide a list of literature which has been banned from BOP facilities and the criteria by which literature is evaluated for inclusion in such a list. Please indicate literature which BOP has determined will not be provided to inmates, i.e., in prison libraries, and literature which BOP has determined will not be allowed in facilities and may be confiscated from inmates.*

With regard to materials in chapel libraries, the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) does not allow items that contain language that encourages violence or other criminal activity, disparages the faith of other inmates, discriminates against other inmates, or excludes other inmates from religious services based on race, color, religion, gender, or national origin.

In August and September 2006, based on an ongoing review of religious materials in institution chapels, BOP staff compiled a list of publishers and distributors whose materials contain content that discriminates against persons of other religions, races, or ethnic groups; or content that may radicalize inmates or incite them to violence. Following is the list of publishers and distributors:

- Chick Publications, Ontario, CA
- CIA Distributors, Orange, CA
- Christian Scholars Press, Las Vegas, NV
- Crescent Moon Publishers, Las Vegas, NV
- Dar-us-Salaam Publishers, Riyadh, Lahore, Houston, NYC
- Faith Defenders, Orange, CA
- Fourteen Word Press, St. Maries, ID
- Paladin Enterprises
- The Research and Education Foundation, Orange, CA

The BOP removed these materials from their institution chapels. The BOP also prohibited institutions from procuring any new religious materials or accepting any donated religious literature until the system-wide review of religious material is completed. In addition, the BOP instructed institutions to discard from chapel libraries any materials that were not specifically religious or spiritual in nature.

When completed, this review will result in a list of books and other religious material that are approved for purchase using appropriated funds or can be accepted as a donation from verified sources in the community. The information on restricted publishers and distributors will be shared with State and local jurisdictions when the BOP verifies that the purging and prohibition has had the desired effect in chapel library and inmate management.

In addition, institution Wardens have the authority to reject any materials that are determined to be detrimental to the security, good order, or discipline of the institution, or if these materials might facilitate criminal activity (28 C.F.R. § 540.71). Due to the First Amendment right to free speech, generally, reading material that is sent to an inmate for the inmate to have as part of his or her personal property is reviewed and accepted or rejected on an individual basis. (Such materials may not be rejected in bulk.) Mail room personnel review all incoming books and publications for suitability and provide recommendations to the Warden for rejection of materials that do not meet the regulatory standard. If an item is rejected, the inmate is notified of the reason for the rejection. Federal regulations state that the "Warden may not reject a publication solely because its content is religious, philosophical, political, social or sexual, or because its content is unpopular or repugnant." Because of this stipulation, the review of mail to inmates in the BOP is very labor intensive.

*2. Please describe the means by which information on threats to security in prison systems is disseminated to state and local correctional facilities, including information on individuals who may not have a criminal history, but who have been determined to pose a potential threat. Please also describe BOP's efforts to disseminate standards and best practices to state and local jurisdictions. Please provide your assessment of the effectiveness of the above efforts to counter radicalization, and describe the BOP's plans for expanding information-sharing capability and efforts.*

In partnership with the FBI, the BOP designed, developed, and helps manage the Correctional Intelligence Initiative (CII) within the NJTTF as the primary mechanism in which information and best practices are disseminated through the local Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs) to Federal, State, and local prison systems. The CII program has been in effect since 2003 and its activities have been continually enhanced and updated.

With regard to individuals who may be attempting to radicalize and recruit, all such information is reported through the local JTTFs. If the BOP suspects that a religious service provider is attempting to radicalize inmates, the agency will report this suspicion to the FBI. The FBI will open an investigation on the religious service provider and will enter the individual into appropriate data systems that can be searched through the Terrorist Screening Center and the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) process. Federal, State, and local correctional agencies are encouraged to follow the established CII best practice of running appropriate NCIC checks on individuals during the chaplain application and contractor/volunteer vetting and screening process. If an individual is discovered within the database, the search will result in a warning screen and instructions to call the Terrorist Screening Center. As a result of the process, the hiring agency is placed in direct contact with the investigative authorities holding

information on the subject. If all correctional agencies follow this practice, the subject individual would be refused access to every correctional facility in the United States and U.S. territories. This same principle holds true whether the individual was denied access before he or she ever gained entrance to a prison or if they were removed for cause (attempted radicalization or recruitment) from any prison in the United States.

While the CII program has been highly effective in reaching the great majority of State and local correctional agencies, CII officials have determined that coverage has been incomplete in some cases. The NJTTF is working to correct deficiencies and expand this comprehensive training and information sharing initiative.

*3. Please respond to Dr. Saathof's recommendation that a comprehensive database be developed for tracking inmates known to promote ideology which may incite violence, which all jurisdictions may access, with information on criminals, individuals with ties to terrorism, and others who should not be given access to vulnerable populations.*

Comprehensive databases already exist as part of the Correctional Intelligence Initiative program within the NJTTF. When correctional agencies follow CII best practices during the contractor, volunteer, or visiting cleric vetting and screening process, individuals of concern will be identified and a warning screen will direct the correctional agency to call the Terrorist Screening Center, which in turn will place them in contact with the investigative agency holding information on the individual. Inmates under investigation for attempting to radicalize or recruit among their fellow inmates also appear in the databases.

*4. In October 2003, members of the American Correctional Chaplains Association argued before the Senate Judiciary Committee for a universal certification for all chaplains of all faiths, in order to ensure adherence to a common code of ethics and behavior amongst religious service providers. This has not happened, and BOP currently accepts only local certification for Muslim chaplains. Could you please comment on whether a universal certificate for chaplains, such as that proposed by the ACCA, could or should be implemented?*

The BOP believes it is extremely important to employ only professional chaplains and for chaplains to maintain their professional affiliation as a requirement of employment. However, the BOP does not support a universal certification process for all chaplains. The BOP has controls in place to ensure that only academically-trained, professional chaplains are employed by the agency.

The American Correctional Chaplains Association is a certifying agency for prison chaplains. While the BOP believes the certification process and actual certification is a valuable self-check for chaplains, the agency does not support actual certification as a requirement because there is an added cost attached to certification and a chaplain's maintaining his or her related credentialing. The process is also lengthy and time consuming.

*5. The Committee hearing made light of the urgent need for educated and reliable Muslim staff chaplains in the federal prison system to provide safe, trustworthy guidance to the many Muslim inmates, including those who convert while in prison, in addition to serving as a valuable security measure through linguistic ability and cultural expertise. Please describe efforts that the Bureau is making, or potential efforts that the Bureau is considering making, to broaden its outreach out to the Muslim community in order to attract qualified and valuable religious personnel. If any factors have been identified as challenges to the ability for outreach, please explain these challenges and how they may be overcome.*

BOP chaplains have participated in national recruitment efforts at Islamic Schools of Theology and at universities having strong Islamic programs, have enrolled in courses with Islamic students, and have participated in and addressed local and national conferences of moderate Muslims. The BOP also has advertised in local and national Islamic publications for Islamic chaplains and for contractors and volunteers. Overall, these efforts have proved to be satisfactory in obtaining Islamic chaplains, contractors, and volunteers; but there is always room for improvement.

**Responses to Questions from Senator Thomas R. Carper:**

*1. Can you explain the process by which prison chaplains are reviewed before being hired? If I'm a Catholic priest, a Jewish rabbi, a Muslim imam, what do I need to go through before I can start working with prisoners?*

The review of chaplain applicants includes the following:
- Review and validation of academic credentials.
- Review and validation of professional credentials.
- Review and validation of ministerial experience.
- Review and validation of endorsement and endorser's credentials.
- Review and validation of suitability with regard to employment history, financial history, criminal history, history of having made any intentional false statements or misrepresentations of fact, and instances of moral turpitude.
- Review of citizenship and residency requirements to meet minimum standards established by Office of Personnel Management regulations and Department of Justice regulations.
- Completion of a limited background investigation.
- National Crime Information Center (NCIC) check, local law enforcement checks, and fingerprint clearance.
- Review of foreign travel.
- Certification of personal position disavowing discrimination, violence, and radicalization.
- Review of statement of purpose, theology, and religious beliefs and practices.
- Reference checking.
- Panel interview.

*2. I understand that part of the chaplain review process involves certification of the candidate's qualifications. How do Muslim chaplains currently get certified?*

The qualifications for an Islamic chaplain candidate are the same as any other chaplain applicant. Chaplains are required to demonstrate their academic and professional preparation (having attained a Master of Divinity or the equivalent consisting of at least 80 semester hours of graduate-level course work in theology, religious history, sacred writings, and ministry). The applicant must be ordained by or be a member of an established religious institute, must be endorsed by a established religious organization, and must have a minimum of two years of ministry experience in the community. An applicant's professional and ministerial qualifications are verified and measured in comparison with the requirements of the religious entity or body that represents the applicant's faith tradition.

*3. I understand that there is no longer a national organization to certify Muslim chaplains as there is for chaplains for other religions. I believe the Islamic Society of North American used to do that work. Why are they no longer doing it? Are there currently any Muslim chaplains in the federal system who were certified by the Islamic Society?*

There has never been one national organization to certify Islamic chaplains or chaplains of any other faith. The BOP relies on the applicant to submit his or her endorsement by a legitimate, recognized religious organization that represents a religious constituency outside of prisons. Endorsing organizations are required to submit documentation attesting to their validity as a religious entity, their tax-exempt status, and their criteria for endorsing clergy. The BOP reviews each application and, on a case-by-case basis, accepts or declines the endorsement by the religious organization or entity provided by the applicant. The Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) can serve as an endorsing organization for Islamic chaplains if the applicant submits ISNA as his or her endorser.

Currently, there are four Islamic chaplains working in the BOP who were endorsed by ISNA. The BOP has had extensive experience with these four chaplains over the years. Each of these chaplains fulfilled the background screening requirements for a Federal law enforcement officer, and each undergoes the regular re-investigation process required of Federal employees. The BOP has not hired any chaplains endorsed by ISNA since August 2001, and the BOP has not acknowledged any endorsements from ISNA since September 2001 without a prior review and approval by the FBI through the BOP's representation on the National Joint Terrorism Task Force (NJTTF). The earliest the BOP hired a chaplain endorsed by ISNA was in 1987. Other Islamic chaplains in the BOP are endorsed by Islamic centers and local mosques.

The responsibility for identifying the endorser has always rested with the applicant. Once the applicant identifies the religious entity that will serve as endorser (national organization or local mosque), the endorser is required to submit an endorsement attesting to the candidate's suitability for engaging in correctional ministry. The endorsement becomes one of the factors used to determine whether to consider a candidate for employment.

*4. Can you explain the process you have in place now to ensure that radical or dangerous materials – whether in religious writings, online or elsewhere – does not make its way into prisons?*

With regard to materials in chapel libraries, the BOP does not allow items that contain language that encourages violence or other criminal activity, disparages the faith of other inmates, discriminates against other inmates, or excludes other inmates from religious services based on race, color, religion, gender, or national origin.

The BOP is in the process of creating an inventory of all religious materials in institution chapels. In August and September 2006, based on this ongoing review, the BOP compiled a list of publishers and distributors whose materials contain content that discriminates against persons of other religions, races, or ethnic groups; or content that may radicalize inmates or incite them to violence. The BOP removed these materials from their institution chapels. The BOP also prohibited institutions from procuring any new religious materials or accepting any donated religious literature until the system-wide review of religious materials is completed. In addition, the BOP instructed institutions to discard from chapel libraries any materials that were not specifically religious or spiritual in nature.

When completed, this review will result in a list of books and other religious material that are approved for purchase using appropriated funds or can be accepted as a donation from verified sources in the community.

In addition, institution Wardens have the authority to reject any materials that are determined to be detrimental to the security, good order, or discipline of the institution, or if these materials might facilitate criminal activity (28 C.F.R. § 540.71). Due to the First Amendment right to free speech, generally, reading material that is sent to an inmate for the inmate to have as part of his or her personal property is reviewed and accepted or rejected on an individual basis. (Such materials may not be rejected in bulk.) Mail room personnel review all incoming books and publications for suitability and provide recommendations to the Warden for rejection of materials that do not meet the regulatory standard. If an item is rejected, the inmate is notified of the reason for the rejection. Federal regulations state that the "Warden may not reject a publication solely because its content is religious, philosophical, political, social or sexual, or because its content is unpopular or repugnant." Because of this stipulation, the review of mail to inmates in the BOP is very labor intensive.

*5. Talk to us if you could about some of the successes we've had in the federal prisons or in state and local prisons over the years in fighting other dangerous groups like criminal gangs or right-wing groups. How are some of the lessons learned in those efforts being applied in response to the relatively new phenomenon of radical Islam in our prisons?*

The BOP has an aggressive gang management strategy to combat gang activity in its institutions. Every BOP facility has one or more special investigative agents who serve as the focal point in the coordination of gang management initiatives, the identification and tracking of gang

members, and the sharing of intelligence on gang activities. In addition, the special investigative agent serves as a liaison to the FBI, U.S. Marshals Service, and U.S. Secret Service regarding the investigation of criminal activity in BOP facilities.

Specific BOP gang management initiatives include: screening of inmates to identify gang members and associates, monitoring of mail and telephone communications, and enhanced security and supervision of identified gang members. Gang members and associates are only one of several security threat group assignments that the BOP identifies among the inmate population and uses to monitor inmates. Other security threat group assignments include: inmates with special skills, such as locksmiths, computer experts, explosives experts, and electronics experts; inmates who have a history of assault against law enforcement personnel or hostage taking; terrorists and other high-risk offenders; and other groups or organizations that may act on behalf of gangs or other highly-structured groups. The BOP coordinates with other Federal law enforcement agencies and with State and local law enforcement agencies on gang management. In addition, personnel from the BOP are assigned to the FBI's Safe Streets Task Forces, Joint Terrorism Task Forces, and the National Drug Intelligence Center in an effort to combat gang-related crimes.

In addition, the BOP is involved significantly with the FBI's National Gang Intelligence Center (NGIC). The goal of the NGIC is to disrupt and dismantle gangs by centralizing and coordinating the collection of information and intelligence on gangs and analyzing and sharing the intelligence with law enforcement authorities throughout the country. The responsibilities of the NGIC include identifying gangs and gang members, understanding the full scope of their criminal activities and enterprises, identifying the threat each gang poses, assessing the growth and migration of various gangs, and coordinating investigations and prosecutions. The National Gang Intelligence Center is a partnership of Federal, State, and local law enforcement agency investigators and intelligence analysts; the BOP has two full-time employees assigned to the NGIC.

The BOP is applying elements of intelligence infrastructure and strategies for managing security threat groups to its efforts to detect, deter, and disrupt the radicalization and recruitment of inmates. Conversely, a number of the best practices developed to disrupt radical Islam can also be applied to anti-government and similar domestic extremist groups that also may be attempting to radicalize or recruit inmates.

*6. When I was governor of Delaware, we worked hard to lower the rate of recidivism among prisoners in our state who were eventually released. What does the attractiveness – perhaps the growing attractiveness – of radical ideologies in our prisons tell us about how good a job we're doing in keeping prisoners busy with work or training and helping those who may be released one day out of trouble so that they can become contributing members of society?*

Some experts have identified the societal marginalization of inmates as a key factor in their becoming radicalized. The BOP provides inmates with a broad variety of programs that have been proven to assist in the development of key skills, thereby minimizing the likelihood of the

inmates being marginalized. These programs include work (including Federal Prison Industries), vocational training, education, and drug abuse treatment. The BOP has for many years worked diligently, and with great success, at targeting these programs toward inmates with substantial needs. The result has been demonstrable gains in the effort to return inmates to society with the skills necessary to become productive, law-abiding members of society.

**Responses to Questions from Senator Frank Lautenberg:**

*1. What is the level of coordination between your agencies and state corrections personnel to combat the radicalization of prisoners?*

In partnership with the FBI, the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) designed, developed, and helps manage the Correctional Intelligence Initiative (CII) within the NJTTF. The initiative is designed to detect, deter, and disrupt efforts by extremist or terrorist groups to radicalize or recruit in Federal, State, and local prisons and detention facilities. From the inception of the CII program in 2003, State and local correctional agencies have been the centerpiece of the initiative. In fact, 73 percent of all active CII cases involve State and local corrections. Recently, the CII program completed on-site assessments at 2,088 State and local correctional facilities. While State and local corrections have always been included in the program, the CII has identified certain areas of incomplete coverage, particularly at the local level, and the NJTTF is working to correct deficiencies and expand this comprehensive training and information sharing initiative.

In addition to direct CII Outreach and Training programs for all State and local corrections through each of the 56 FBI field offices in the country, the BOP works through a variety of entities and professional correctional organizations to ensure that all correctional executives and appropriate mid-level managers and line staff are trained in CII best practices. Examples of such organizations include the National Institute of Corrections, the Association of State Correctional Administrators, the American Correctional Association, the National Major Gang Task Force, and the American Jail Association. The BOP is considering expanding its outreach efforts to include additional organizations.

**Responses to Questions from Senator Susan M. Collins:**

*1.(a) In testimony before the Committee, you noted that the Federal Bureau of Prisons very recently identified certain publishers whose publications will be barred from entering Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBOP) institutions. When was this list completed and has it been shared with state and local counterparts?*

In August and September 2006, based on an ongoing review of religious materials in institution chapels, BOP staff compiled a list of publishers and distributors whose materials contain content that discriminates against persons of other religions, races, or ethnic groups; or content that may radicalize inmates or incite them to violence. The BOP removed these materials from their institution chapels. The BOP also prohibited institutions from procuring any new religious

materials or accepting any donated religious literature until the system-wide review of religious materials is completed. In addition, the BOP instructed institutions to discard from chapel libraries any materials that were not specifically religious or spiritual in nature.

When completed, this review will result in a list of books and other religious material that are approved for purchase using appropriated funds or can be accepted as a donation from verified sources in the community. The information on restricted publishers and distributors will be shared with State and local jurisdictions when the BOP verifies that the purging and prohibition has had the desired effect in chapel library and inmate management.

In addition, institution Wardens have the authority to reject any materials that are determined to be detrimental to the security, good order, or discipline of the institution, or if these materials might facilitate criminal activity (28 C.F.R. § 540.71). Due to the First Amendment right to free speech, generally, reading material that is sent to an inmate for the inmate to have as part of his or her personal property is reviewed and accepted or rejected on an individual basis. (Such materials may not be rejected in bulk.) Mail room personnel review all incoming books and publications for suitability and provide recommendations to the Warden for rejection of materials that do not meet the regulatory standard. If an item is rejected, the inmate is notified of the reason for the rejection. Federal regulations state that the "Warden may not reject a publication solely because its content is religious, philosophical, political, social or sexual, or because its content is unpopular or repugnant." Because of this stipulation, the review of mail to inmates in the BOP is very labor intensive.

*(b) How many books already on library shelves in the FBOP institutions have been identified and pulled as a result of the new publisher list?*

1,572 books and audio/video materials have been identified and removed as a result of the BOP's initial determination of a list of restricted publishers and distributors. Because this represents the reporting from all Federal prisons, the BOP believes that there are many duplicate titles among these items and will verify if this is the case when the project of reviewing religious materials is completed.

*2. On September 13, 2006, federal prosecutors in Los Angeles announced the indictment of 18 members of the 18th Street Gang. Among those indicted was Ruben "Nite Owl" Castro, a purported leader of the Mexican Mafia, incarcerated in the "Supermax" prison in Colorado, who allegedly used cryptic phone conversations and coded messages to direct his "shot callers" on the streets. What is there to prevent a radicalized inmate from using similar techniques to send messages out or from someone of the outside sending messages in?*

Inmates are afforded opportunities to communicate and maintain ties with their families and friends through phone calls, mail, and visiting. These are important activities for inmates. Research has shown that maintaining ties with family contributes to an offender's avoidance of crime following reentry. These communications are positive and beneficial in the vast majority

of instances. In some cases, however, inmates abuse their mail, telephone, or visiting privileges for illicit purposes.

All general correspondence (non-legal mail) from inmates the BOP considers to be high-risk (terrorists and a significant number of others) is read and analyzed before it is mailed out of an institution. All incoming correspondence to these inmates is read and analyzed before it is delivered to the inmate. Correspondence written in a foreign language is translated and analyzed.

The BOP monitors and records the social telephone calls placed by inmates, whom the agency considers to be high-risk. Every effort is made through such monitoring to detect coded messages. On occasion, inmates send messages by using inference and innuendo, which presents tremendous challenges in the monitoring process. The BOP is currently working to increase its capacity for monitoring and translating correspondence and telephone conversations.

*3. Prisoners are allowed to request "pastoral visit" by a clergy person or representative of the inmate's faith. Following such a request, there is a review of the minister's credentials and appropriate security checks by the prison chaplain, and then that minister may visit the inmate as his or her "minister of record." These regulations seem out of step with the more vigorous scrutiny given to chaplains. What is being done to ensure that these ministers of record are not preaching a radical message and thereby undermining all of the Bureau's other screening efforts?*

Pastoral visits by a member of a clergy can be authorized as part of the BOP's policy on inmate visiting. The BOP allows visits by an inmate's "minister of record" to ensure inmates have access to spiritual leaders of their faith for counseling and religious instruction. The visits are one-on-one between the inmate and his or her minister of record and must be initiated by the inmate. The minister of record is screened through an NCIC check, which identifies any criminal history and/or association with terrorist groups or organizations. If the NCIC report identifies either a criminal history or terrorist association, the individual is not approved for visiting until the matter can be investigated and resolved.

Visits with ministers of record occur in a supervised visiting area -- the same area where social visits between inmates and their families and others from the community occur. Inmates who have been placed under Special Administrative Measures[1] are not authorized "minister of record" visits, but rather are accommodated by a BOP chaplain who has the necessary knowledge of the faith to assist the inmate.

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[1]Based on national security concerns or in order to prevent acts of violence or terrorism, Federal regulations authorize the BOP Director, upon the direction of the Attorney General, to impose Special Administrative Measures on any inmate, thereby restricting the inmate's conditions of confinement including visits, mail privileges, phone calls, access to other inmates, and access to the media (*see* 28 C.F.R. § 501).

There are no Islamic ministers of record, nor have there been any in the past. Based upon the small number of ministers of record, the infrequency of their visits, and the security and supervision provided in institution visiting rooms, the BOP believes that ministers of record are not communicating radical messages.

*4. A number of religious programs conducted in prison require varying levels of staff supervision in order to ensure that religious services are compliant with the Bureau of Prisons' policy. How are these staff supervisors trained to recognize when a particular service is compliant and when it is not?*

BOP chaplains receive specialized training to ensure they have the necessary information about each religion to oversee and manage religious services and programs effectively. The BOP has prepared a comprehensive technical reference manual that describes appropriate religious services procedures and behaviors. The manual is available for use by any staff member overseeing a religious service or activity.

Thirty BOP chaplains recently participated in mandatory training designed to enhance their awareness and knowledge about identifiers (emblems, colors, expressions, etc.) of radical religious groups. At the training, particular attention was given to white supremacist groups (*e.g.*, Aryan Nations and Christian Identity) and nationalist or racial groups meeting under the guise of religion (*e.g.*, Nation of Gods and Earth). The training will be repeated each year until all chaplains have attended.

All BOP staff receive basic correctional skills training at the beginning of their careers, and on an annual basis they receive additional training that addresses current security and inmate management issues. Part of annual training is provided by Religious Services personnel and emphasizes an awareness of discriminatory language and behaviors, rhetoric, and speech designed to radicalize inmates.

*5. When a prison chaplain, contractor, or volunteer is identified by federal authorities as advocating violent, religion-based behavior, how are other prison facilities within the Federal Bureau of Prisons system alerted to guard against that individual gaining access as a religious service provider? How are state, local, and tribal correctional authorities alerted?*

In partnership with the FBI, the BOP designed, developed, and helps manage the nationwide Correctional Intelligence Initiative within the NJTTF. This initiative is designed to detect, deter, and disrupt efforts by terrorist or extremist groups to radicalize or recruit in Federal, State, and local prisons and detention facilities.

With regard to individuals who may be attempting to radicalize and recruit, all such information is reported through the local JTTFs. If the BOP suspects that a religious service provider is attempting to radicalize inmates, the agency will report this suspicion to the FBI. The FBI may open an investigation on the religious service provider and, upon opening an investigation, will

enter the individual into appropriate data systems that can be searched through the Terrorist Screening Center and the NCIC process.

Federal, State, and local correctional agencies are encouraged to follow the Correctional Intelligence Initiative best practice of running appropriate NCIC checks on individuals during the chaplain application and contractor/volunteer vetting and screening process. If an individual is discovered within the database, the search will result in a warning screen and instructions to call the Terrorist Screening Center. As a result of the process, the hiring agency is placed in direct contact with the investigative authorities holding information on the subject.

The BOP uses the resources of the NJTTF's Correctional Intelligence Initiative and checks information on chaplains, contractors, and volunteers against the databases maintained by the FBI. If all correctional agencies follow this practice, the subject individual would be refused access to every correctional facility in the United States and U.S. territories. This same principle holds true whether the individual was denied access before he or she ever gained entrance to a prison or if they were removed for cause (attempted radicalization or recruitment) from any prison in the United States.

*6. (a) In your testimony before the Committee, you stated that FBOP does a lot of sharing with state and local counterparts, particularly through the National Institute of Corrections. Please describe the types of and mechanisms through which intelligence is shared with state and local counterparts. Please be sure to address sharing of intelligence regarding literature and religious service providers as well as trends and best practices.*

The primary mechanism the BOP uses to share information with State and local corrections is the NJTTF Correctional Intelligence Initiative. The CII program requires that each of the 56 FBI field offices maintain CII Outreach and Training programs for all Federal, State, and local correctional agencies within their area. The CII program is the primary mechanism for providing best practices to State and local correctional agencies.

The BOP shares information with State and local counterparts in a number of other ways as well. The National Institute of Corrections (a component of the BOP) provides training, reference materials, and technical assistance to State and local correctional systems on a wide range of correctional issues and practices. Included among these issues is the prevention of radicalization in prisons and detention facilities. In one selected example, the BOP used recent NIC training for all deputy directors of State departments of corrections as a venue to provide training on the NJTTF CII and related CII best practices.

In addition, for approximately 3 years, the National Institute of Corrections has provided an Administrators Listserv for State and Federal Chaplain Administrators. The listserv was expanded on October 1, 2006, to include staff and administrators from Federal, State, and local criminal justice agencies who have an interest in correctional/religious issues.

The BOP also uses various professional correctional organizations, such as the Association of State Correctional Administrators, to brief all secretaries, directors, and commissioners of corrections regarding the CII program and related best practices. Similarly, the BOP uses the American Correctional Association as a means for highlighting the CII program and encouraging support of CII best practices. The BOP has also made CII presentations at every annual training conference of the National Major Gang Task Force since the CII program began. The BOP is planning to use additional venues, such as the American Jail Association, to expand the provision of CII training and best practices.

BOP Religious Services personnel often provide technical assistance and advice to State and local corrections and, on occasion, provide advisories regarding religious publications disallowed by the BOP and similar information of interest to correctional systems nationwide. The following insert is the text of an electronic mail message sent by the BOP's Chaplaincy Services Administrator to all BOP chaplains and to State chaplaincy administrators on October 13, 2004.

Coverage has been incomplete in some States, however, and the NJTTF is working to correct deficiencies and expand this comprehensive training and information sharing initiative.

*(b) How and what type of intelligence is shared by state and local counterparts with FBOP?*

The primary mechanism for State and local corrections to share intelligence with the BOP is the NJTTF CII program. The CII was developed with the intent that there would be interagency sharing of information so that all correctional agencies could benefit. Examples of interagency cooperation include the sharing of information on publications of concern, information regarding persons under investigation for radicalization and recruitment (through the NCIC process discussed earlier), indicators of radicalization and recruitment, and a wide variety of universal countermeasures (CII best practices) designed to detect and disrupt attempts to radicalize and recruit. CII best practices are continually updated and expanded through the intelligence assessment process and through case reporting.

*7. (a) A report entitled, "Out of the Shadows: Getting Ahead of Prisoner Radicalization," issued by the George Washington University Homeland Security Policy Institute and the University of Virginia Critical Incident Analysis Group, notes that, "because the vast majority of inmates are incarcerated in state prison systems, individual and organized radicalization and recruitment at the state level represented the majority of the current radical activity." Do you concur with that assertion?*

The BOP confines approximately 10 percent of all prisoners in the United States. Accordingly, one would expect that incidents of radicalization would occur much more frequently in non-Federal facilities.

*7. (b) Has your agency received requests from state correctional authorities, including California and New York, and local correctional authorities, including Los Angeles and New*

*York City, for assistance in addressing such activity?*

The BOP received direct requests for advice and assistance from the Office of the Governor of California and from the Secretary of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Members of the BOP's Executive Staff, as well as the BOP program manager for the NJTTF CII program, met at length with officials from California to offer advice and assistance.

Working through the CII program, the BOP indirectly works to assist State and local correctional agencies. The CII program was specifically designed as a mechanism for providing such assistance to State and local correctional systems and agencies.

*8. The first sentence of the "Out of the Shadows" report reads: "The potential for radicalization of prison inmates in the United States poses a threat of unknown magnitude to the national security of the United States." What is your overall assessment of the gravity of the situation presented by radicalization in U.S. prison systems, at all levels of government?*

The BOP is committed to providing inmates with an opportunity to practice their faith while at the same time ensuring that Federal prisoners are not radicalized or recruited for terrorist causes. Inmates are particularly vulnerable to recruitment by terrorists, and the BOP understands that it must guard against the spread of terrorism and extremist ideologies. The agency has taken a number of measures over the last several years and is actively engaged in several ongoing initiatives to ensure that Federal inmates are not recruited to support radical organizations or terrorist groups. We have described many of these initiatives in answers to previous questions. These initiatives include: (1) monitoring written and telephonic communications; (2) the review of material in institution chapels and the removal of and prohibition of materials that contain content that is discriminatory or that may radicalize inmates or incite them to violence; (3) training of staff to recognize and prevent radicalization; and (4) the vetting of chaplains, contractors, and volunteers through the screening systems provided by the NJTTF. In addition, BOP civil service chaplains must meet all the requirements for employment as a Federal law enforcement officer. And, like all BOP employees, chaplains are strictly prohibited from using their position to condone, support, or encourage violence or other inappropriate behavior. Religious contractors and volunteers are also subject to a variety of security requirements in addition to the vetting through the NJTTF prior to being granted access to an institution.

The BOP has been managing inmates with ties to terrorism for over a decade by confining them in secure conditions and by monitoring their communications. The agency has established a strategy that focuses on the appropriate levels of containment and isolation to ensure that inmates with terrorist ties do not have the opportunity to radicalize or recruit other inmates. The most dangerous terrorists are confined under the most restrictive conditions allowed.

In addition to the initiatives reviewed above, the BOP has eliminated most inmate organizations in order to control the influence that outside entities have on Federal inmates. The agency also has enhanced its information and monitoring systems, its intelligence gathering and sharing

capabilities, and its ability to identify and manage disruptive inmates.

The BOP is concentrating its intelligence assets at a recently opened counterterrorism office in Martinsburg, West Virginia. This will improve BOP's ability to monitor communications to and from terrorist and other high-risk inmates and will enhance the BOP's intelligence gathering and intelligence sharing capabilities. The creation of this office will also improve the BOP's ability to assist in the management of the NJTTF Correctional Intelligence Initiative with particular regard to the prevention of radicalization and recruiting in prisons and detention facilities.

In addition to containing and isolating inmates who could attempt to radicalize other inmates, the BOP helps inmates become less vulnerable to attempts to be radicalized through the provision of sound correctional programs. Some experts have identified the societal marginalization of inmates as a key factor in their becoming radicalized. The BOP provides inmates with a broad variety of programs that have been proven to assist in the development of key skills, thereby minimizing the likelihood of the inmates being marginalized. These programs include work (including prison industries), vocational training, education, and drug treatment. The Bureau has for many years worked diligently and with great success, at targeting these programs toward inmates with substantial needs. The result has been demonstrable gains in the effort to return inmates to society with the skills necessary to become productive, law-abiding members of society.

*9. In the years since 9/11, terrorist cells have become more independent and self-starting. Is the radicalization of prisoners in the U.S. more often a part of an organized effort by organizations like al-Qaida or is it more often done by individuals or small groups with an independent, "home-grown" radical agenda?*

I understand that you have also asked this question of FBI Deputy Assistant Director Donald Van Duyn, who appeared along with me as a witness at the hearing. I will defer to the FBI to respond to this question.

*10. The prison population includes numerous members of various gangs. Levar Washington provides an example of a former gang member who converted to Islam as preached by Kevin Lamar James while incarcerated.*

*(a) Do former gang members turned religious extremists pose special challenges within the correctional system? What are these challenges?*

Any gang-to-extremism crossover would present several concerns. A former gang member may possess a number of criminal skills useful to the extremist agenda. In particular, former gang members are extremely familiar with their home turf and they might attempt to influence current gang members to join their new extremist cause or enterprise.

*(b) Do former gang members turned religious extremists pose additional threats both inside the correctional system and post-release? What are these additional threats?*

If there is an additional threat, it would be their charismatic influence over other inmates and their organizational skills.

*11. According to the FBI, since 1979 the Aryan Nations - a violent neo-Nazi white supremacist organization - has been engaged in prison recruiting. The Aryan Nations conducts prison outreach programs through correspondence, literature and personal visits - many of the same tactics used by religious extremists. What lessons has the FBOP drawn and applied from dealing with the Aryan Nations' presence in our prisons for the last 30 years?*

Even though the number of Aryan Nations inmates in BOP custody has been very low over the years, there have been instances in which Aryan Nations inmates have attempted to influence, inspire, and/or recruit other inmates. The BOP has had an aggressive gang management strategy to combat gang activity in its institutions for many years.

Every BOP facility has one or more special investigative agents who serve as the focal point in the coordination of gang management initiatives, the identification and tracking of gang members, and the sharing of intelligence on gang activities. In addition, the special investigative agent serves as a liaison to the FBI, U.S. Marshals Service, and U.S. Secret Service regarding the investigation of criminal activity in BOP facilities. Specific BOP gang management initiatives include screening of inmates to identify gang members and associates, monitoring of mail and telephone communications, and enhanced security and supervision of identified gang members.

The BOP coordinates with other Federal law enforcement agencies and with State and local law enforcement agencies on gang management. In addition, personnel from the BOP are assigned to the FBI's Safe Streets Task Forces, JTTFs, and the National Drug Intelligence Center in an effort to combat gang-related crimes. The BOP is involved significantly with the FBI's National Gang Intelligence Center (NGIC). The goal of the NGIC is to disrupt and dismantle gangs by centralizing and coordinating the collection of information and intelligence on gangs and analyzing and sharing the intelligence with law enforcement authorities throughout the country. The responsibilities of the NGIC include identifying gangs and gang members, understanding the full scope of their criminal activities and enterprises, identifying the threat each gang poses, assessing the growth and migration of various gangs, and coordinating investigations and prosecutions. The NGIC is a partnership of Federal, State, and local law enforcement agency investigators and intelligence analysts; the BOP has two full-time employees assigned to the NGIC.

Over these many years, the information and intelligence gathered by the BOP on methods by which gang members identify, contact, and attempt to recruit new members has been extremely useful in designing the NJTTF CII program and in developing and enhancing the program's activities. While the central focus of the CII program has been to detect, deter, and disrupt radicalization and recruitment of international terrorist groups, the CII best practices are designed and can be used to address any terrorist or extremist group attempting to radicalize or recruit among inmate populations.

The BOP is applying elements of intelligence infrastructure and strategies for managing security threat groups to its efforts to detect, deter, and disrupt the radicalization and recruitment of inmates. Conversely, a number of the best practices developed to disrupt radical Islam can also be applied to anti-government and similar domestic extremist groups that also may be attempting to radicalize or recruit inmates.

**Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**
**United States Senate**

**Hearing on**
**Regarding Prison Radicalization**
**September 19, 2006**

**Responses of**
**Donald Van Duyn**
**Deputy Assistant Director**
**Counterterrorism Division**
**Federal Bureau of Investigation**

**Questions Posed by Senator Collins**

**1. a. In your testimony before the Committee, you highlighted the need for very good communications between all levels of government to address the threat posed by radicalization. Please describe the types of and mechanisms through which intelligence is shared with state and local law enforcement and correctional authorities. Please be sure to address sharing of intelligence regarding literature and religious service providers as well as trends and best practices.**

Response:

While the FBI has long had a well-established information sharing relationship with state and local law enforcement and correctional agencies on a wide spectrum of issues, the primary mechanism for a focused exchange of intelligence with these entities regarding terrorism-related matters involving correctional facilities is the National Joint Terrorist Task Force (NJTTF) Correctional Intelligence Initiative (CII). The CII program was established in February 2003 and requires all 56 FBI field offices and 101 Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs) to actively engage with all Federal, state, and local corrections facilities regarding prison radicalization and terrorism-related intelligence matters. The CII program was designed expressly for this mission and purpose and, from the inception of the program, the issue of prison radicalization has been designated as a nationwide FBI Priority Intelligence Requirement.

Among other issues, the NJTTF CII program provides information regarding extremist literature and offers recommended vetting and screening protocols for contractor and volunteer religious service providers. The identification of extremist literature and the vetting of protocols are both central elements of CII

"best practices." The CII program fosters and relies on good communications with Federal, state, and local corrections authorities, and the FBI is committed to continuing its emphasis on expanding this important initiative.

**b. How and what type of intelligence is shared by state and local counterparts with the FBI?**

Response:

The FBI's state and local counterparts share a wide variety of information related to terrorism and indicators of radicalization in their areas, including information obtained from sources and reports of suspicious activities. The majority of this information is shared through the JTTFs, but the FBI has also established a pilot program whereby local law enforcement agencies can submit information for potential inclusion in national reporting systems through the Law Enforcement Online system. The FBI has shared its intelligence reporting requirements with state and local law enforcement to guide them in their efforts to develop and report information.

**c. Please describe the mission and composition of the Los Angeles Prison Radicalization Working Group. In what other field offices have such working groups been established? Does the FBI plan to establish such working groups in all FBI field offices? If not, please provide an explanation.**

Response:

The objective of the Los Angeles Prison Radicalization Working Group is to coordinate prison radicalization investigations in the FBI's Los Angeles Division among the various agencies involved to prevent terrorism and enhance threat detection. Working group meetings are held monthly and are hosted by the Los Angeles FBI Field Office. These monthly meetings are attended regularly by the FBI (including domestic terrorism, international terrorism, and Field Intelligence Group representatives); Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP); Drug Enforcement Administration; U.S. Treasury Department; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms; U.S. Secret Service; U.S. Attorney's Office; California Department of Justice; California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation; California Highway Patrol; Los Angeles Police Department; Los Angeles County District Attorney investigators; Los Angeles Sheriff's Department; and Beverly Hills Police Department. The Los Angeles model is an excellent example of CII program implementation on a local operational level.

Additionally, the four FBI field offices in California (Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Francisco, and San Diego) use the working group concept to coordinate

among themselves to help ensure that California has statewide coverage on CII matters.

At least three additional FBI field offices (Atlanta, Miami, and Columbia, South Carolina) have established similar working groups within their territories to support the mission of the CII Outreach and Training program, and additional working groups are now being developed.

The FBI's Atlanta Field Office, working in coordination with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), has established a Correctional Intelligence Branch located at the Intelligence Community Fusion Center. The mission of this group is to enhance the correctional agencies' collaborative efforts, networking, and communication with the state fusion center and JTTF and to improve the ability of correctional agencies to recognize, collect, and exchange information concerning potential terrorism operations, indicators, and suspicious activity. Members of the Atlanta working group include the FBI, DHS, Georgia Department of Corrections, Georgia Board of Pardons and Paroles, Georgia Department of Probation, Georgia Sheriffs' Association, and Georgia Information Sharing and Analysis Center.

The mission of the Columbia, South Carolina, Prison Radicalization Working Group is to "encourage the exchange of information regarding prison radicalization through formal and informal means." This group includes representatives from the JTTF, BOP, and South Carolina Department of Corrections. The FBI's Miami Field Office also uses the prison radicalization working group concept to effectively coordinate between Federal, state, and local prisons within that area.

While all 56 FBI field offices are required to actively engage with Federal, state, and local corrections facilities regarding prison radicalization and terrorism-related intelligence matters, the establishment of a local prison radicalization working group by each FBI field office has not been required. Because such working groups have proven to be a productive means of coordinating this effort, however, the concept is actively endorsed by the FBI as an effective means of fully implementing the concepts of the NJTTF CII program, and the establishment of a local prison radicalization working group has recently been designated as a recommended CII "best practice."

**2. a. A report entitled, "Out of the Shadows: Getting Ahead of Prisoner Radicalization," issued by the George Washington University Homeland Security Policy Institute and the University of Virginia Critical Incident Analysis Group, notes that, "because the vast majority of inmates are incarcerated in state prison systems, individual and organized radicalization and recruitment at the state level represented the majority of the current radical activity." Do you concur with that assertion?**

Response:

Yes. Approximately 73% of all CII cases currently involve state and local facilities.

**b. Has your agency received requests from state correctional authorities, including California and New York, and local correctional authorities, including Los Angeles and New York City, for assistance in addressing such activity?**

Response:

Through the NJTTF CII, all FBI field offices and JTTFs are very actively engaged with California and New York correctional authorities, as well as with those of all other states and with all major local correctional agencies. This is a very proactive nationwide FBI program and includes required outreach and training that is not dependent on first receiving a request for assistance. Any questions or requests for assistance that arise in the context of this proactive relationship are addressed as appropriate.

**3. a. Is there a system or mechanism in place to track inmates of concern upon their release from prison? If so, please describe the system or mechanism.**

**b. How is information shared and what is the nature of the information shared by federal law enforcement with their state and local counterparts with respect to a radicalized inmate that is released from a federal prison and moves to another state?**

Response to subparts a and b:

Upon the release of an inmate who has been radicalized and poses a danger, the FBI field office for that area opens an investigation and the former inmate is included in the Consolidated Watch List indices. Additionally, the CII program is working to improve notification mechanisms through which probation and parole authorities, as well as local police jurisdictions, are alerted.

**4. The first sentence of the "Out of the Shadows" report reads: "The potential for radicalization of prison inmates in the United States poses a threat of unknown magnitude to the national security of the United States." What is your overall assessment of the gravity of the situation presented by radicalization in U.S. prison systems, at all levels of government?**

Response:

The NJTTF CII program recently conducted on-site assessments at 2,088 state and local correctional facilities, addressing prison radicalization substantively as

well as assessing case reporting and related intelligence activity. These assessments indicate that attempted prison radicalization appears to occur in localized or regional areas, without apparent centralized direction or control. When viewed within the context of the large number of inmates housed in well over 2,000 facilities, the number of cases is relatively small but, when it does occur, such attempted radicalization must be quickly detected and actively disrupted and defeated.

**5. In the years since 9/11, terrorist cells have become more independent and self-starting. Is the radicalization of prisoners in the U.S. more often a part of an organized effort by organizations like al-Qaida or is it more often done by individuals or small groups with an independent, "home-grown" radical agenda?**

Response:

The assessment discussed above indicates that a number of groups are likely inspired or influenced by international terrorist groups, but are not directly controlled or tasked by them. In addition, several individuals and groups are clearly pursuing independent, "home-grown" radical agendas.

**6. The prison population includes numerous members of various gangs. Levar Washington provides an example of a former gang member who converted to Islam as preached by Kevin Lamar James while incarcerated.**

**a. Do former gang members turned religious extremists pose special challenges within the correctional system? What are these challenges?**

**b. Do former gang members turned religious extremists pose additional threats both inside the correctional system and post-release? What are these additional threats?**

Response to subparts a and b:

The FBI has found that the transition from gang membership to religious extremism poses significant challenges because former gang members often possess criminal skill sets useful to the extremist agenda and they may attempt to influence other gang members to join their new cause or enterprise. This threat is increased if the individual is charismatic or possesses significant organizational skills. Post release, this challenge is increased because these individuals are often extremely familiar with their home turf.

**7. a. The Kevin Lamar James case provides an example of prison radicalization and recruitment. In the indictment there is mention of a "protocol" which**

**James clandestinely distributed and that this document set forth James' teachings about Islam. How was he able to distribute this document?**

Response:

Kevin Lamar James distributed the protocol document through Jam'iyyat Ul-Islam Is-Saheeh (JIS) members whom he personally trained as imams. These individuals were directed to use the protocol to teach others about the JIS message and its goals.

**b. How did Kevin James identify inmates to receive the document?**

Response:

James required prospective members to take an oath of obedience to him and to swear not to disclose the existence of JIS.

**c. How many copies of the "protocol" document have been found in the California prison system?**

Response:

The FBI does not know precisely how many copies of the protocol exist.

**d. Have similar documents (i.e., "protocols" espousing violence against "infidels" or non-believers in the name of Islam) been found, authored by other inmates, in federal, state, and/or local facilities?**

Response:

No. The FBI has, however, found newsletter-style articles in other Federal and state facilities that espouse violence against nonbelievers.

**8. According to testimony in 2003 by then-Assistant Director John Pistole, since 1979 the Aryan Nations - a violent neo-Nazi white supremacist organization - has been engaged in prison recruiting. The Aryan Nations conducts prison outreach programs through correspondence, literature and personal visits - many of the same tactics used by religious extremists. What lessons have been drawn and applied from dealing with the Aryan Nations' presence in our prisons for the last 30 years?**

Response:

FBI investigations have determined the Aryan Nations prison outreach program to be quite successful. Recruitment is often conducted under the guise of providing Christian identity-related religious materials to prison inmates. This group is known to specifically target individuals incarcerated for aggravated burglary and/or robbery.

The FBI recognizes the importance of the outreach program to the effectiveness of the Aryan Nations and has continually shared FBI intelligence with BOP and other correctional agencies to assist in better understanding the personalities and issues involved.

**Questions Posed by Senator Lieberman**

**9. Please describe the means by which information on threats to security in prison systems is disseminated to state and local correctional facilities, including information on individuals who may not have a criminal history, but have been determined to pose a potential threat. Please also describe FBI's efforts, together with BOP, to disseminate standards and best practices to state and local jurisdictions. Please provide your assessment of the effectiveness of the above efforts to counter radicalization, and describe the FBI's plans for expanding information-sharing capability and efforts.**

Response:

In close partnership with BOP, the FBI manages the NJTTF CII as the primary mechanism through which information and best practices are actively disseminated through the local JTTFs to all Federal, state, and local prison systems. As indicated in response to Question 1a, above, the CII program has been in effect since 2003 and has been continually updated and expanded. From the inception of the program, the issue of prison radicalization has been designated as a nationwide FBI Priority Intelligence Requirement.

All information regarding individuals who may be attempting to recruit and radicalize inmates is reported to state and local correctional facilities through the local JTTFs. By FBI policy and practice, investigations are opened on such individuals as appropriate, and their names are entered into appropriate indices searched by or through the Terrorist Screening Center (TSC) and National Crime Information Center (NCIC). During the vetting of contractors, volunteers, and other religious service providers, all Federal, state, and local prisons are encouraged to follow established CII best practices, which include running appropriate NCIC checks on these individuals. The response to these NCIC checks will be warning screens and instructions to call the TSC in appropriate circumstances. If all Federal, state, and local correctional agencies follow this simple "best practice," the processing agency will be placed in direct contact with

the investigative authorities holding information on a given subject and the individual can be refused access to all correctional facilities in the U.S. and its territories. This process will work to identify both those who are being denied prison access based on prior attempts to recruit or radicalize inmates as well as those who have not had prior prison access but whose circumstances indicate that this access would be problematic.

While the CII program has been highly efficient in reaching all state and most local correctional agencies, the FBI has determined that coverage has not been completely uniform and we are actively working to expand the coverage of this valuable and highly effective program.

**10. Please respond to Dr. Gregory Saathoff's recommendation that a comprehensive database be developed for tracking inmates known to promote ideology which may incite violence, which all jurisdictions may access, with information on criminals, individuals with ties to terrorism, and others who should not be given access to vulnerable populations.**

Response:

As discussed above, access to such a comprehensive database is already available through the NJTTF CII program. When correctional agencies follow CII best practices during the vetting of contractors, volunteers, and visiting clerics at the Federal, state, or local level, NCIC checks on these individuals will result in warning screens directing the correctional agency to call the TSC, which will place them in direct contact with the investigative agency holding information on the individual. The names of inmates under investigation for attempting to radicalize or recruit their fellow inmates will also appear in the same database.

## Questions Posed by Senator Carper

**11. We heard testimony from our first panel about how easy it would be for a suspect imam removed from a particular facility for promoting radicalism to go and get a similar position in another facility in another community without being detected. I understand that California now has a system in place to share information between and among federal, state, county and city officials on radicalism in prisons in that state. Could you give us your thoughts on how well the system in California is working and what your agencies are doing – or maybe should be doing – to get information on radicals operating in prisons down into state and local corrections systems?**

Response:

As discussed above, an imam removed from a correctional facility for promoting radicalism should not be able to obtain a similar position in another facility in

another community without being detected. A central concept of the CII program is that of "universal removal." When a religious service provider is determined to have terrorist ties or is attempting to radicalize or recruit inmates, an FBI investigation is opened and that person is entered into the appropriate NCIC database, which is also part of the Consolidated Watch List system. If each Federal, state, and local correctional agency follows the CII best practices, they will run the appropriate NCIC search as part of their vetting and screening protocols for new contractors, volunteers, and visiting clerics. They will also run NCIC searches on a periodic basis for contractors, volunteers, and visiting clerics already approved for access to their correctional systems. All such searches will result in warning screens alerting the user that the subject may have terrorist ties and directing the user to call the TSC, which will put the user in direct contact with the investigative authorities holding information on the subject. Through this mechanism, a subject who has been removed from one correctional facility for cause will be effectively denied access to every Federal, state, and local correctional facility. To ensure these procedures are fully effective, the FBI is actively engaged in CII outreach and training for all Federal, state, and local correctional agencies in the country.

Another CII "best practice" recommends that each state establish a system-wide database of all contractors and volunteers entering their correctional facilities to provide direct inmate services. In addition to other uses, such local databases allow the state to alert all other affected facilities if a contractor or volunteer is removed from a particular facility for cause. California and numerous other states are moving forward with this recommended best practice and with the development of related information sharing systems.

This two-tiered approach of using both nationwide NCIC checks and system-wide databases and procedures in each state has been, and continues to be, the best way to effectively support screening and vetting protocols while promoting intelligence sharing with respect to problematic religious service providers.

**12. At one point in your testimony, you call for system-wide standards for vetting chaplains who come in as contractors or volunteers. Does this mean that the FBI views current standards as insufficient?**

Response:

No, the FBI does not believe current standards are insufficient. The FBI does, however, continue to recommend that correctional systems establish standard, system-wide, vetting procedures for chaplains at Federal, state, and local levels in order to ensure that CII best practices are followed throughout all correctional agencies.

**13. I understand that radicalized prisoners often form alliances with members of criminal gangs and other extremist groups. Gang members may even convert to Islam or commit to attempt terrorist acts, in some cases. Jose Padilla – arrested in 2002 on suspicion of being part of a bombing plot – may be the most famous example of this phenomenon. How widespread is this problem?**

Response:

While inmates do occasionally convert from one religious faith to another in the absence of an extremist or terrorism context, this is not of concern to the FBI. The FBI is, however, interested in circumstances involving gang crossover or the development of homegrown violent extremist groups, and this is being examined as the result of the recent CII on-site assessment of 2,088 state and local correctional facilities. That assessment revealed several individual cases in which former gang members and other inmates have attempted to form homegrown violent Islamic extremist groups, indicating that gang crossovers are currently occurring in small numbers on an individual basis. In terms of scope, this phenomenon appears to be localized or regional in nature.

**Questions Posed by Senator Lautenberg**

**14. What is the level of coordination between your agencies and state corrections personnel to combat the radicalization of prisoners?**

Response:

In close partnership with the BOP, the FBI has developed and manages the NJTTF CII, which is designed to detect, deter, and disrupt efforts by extremist or terrorist groups to radicalize or recruit among prison populations at the Federal, state, and local correctional agency levels. From the inception of the CII program in 2003, state and local corrections have been the centerpiece of the initiative, and fully 73% of all active CII cases involve state and local correctional facilities. Significantly, the CII program has recently completed on-site assessments at 2,088 state and local correctional facilities. While state and local corrections have always been included in the program, the FBI has identified certain areas of uneven coverage, particularly at the local level, and we are very actively working to ensure that CII program coverage is complete.

In addition to direct CII Outreach and Training programs for all state and local corrections facilities through each of the 56 FBI field offices, the CII program also benefits from the efforts of assigned BOP staff, who work through a wide spectrum of professional correctional associations to ensure that all correctional executives and appropriate mid-level managers and line staff are trained in CII best practices. These associations include, but are not limited to, the National Institute of Corrections, Association of State Correctional Administrators, American Correctional Association, and National Major Gang Task Force. Presentations are also being prepared for the American Jail Association, and the inclusion of additional correctional professional associations and consortiums is being actively considered.

**Post-Hearing Questions for the Record**
**Submitted to Javed Ali**

**Questions from Senator Susan Collins**

1. A report entitled, "Out of the Shadows: Getting Ahead of Prisoner Radicalization," issued by the George Washington University Homeland Security Policy Institute and the University of Virginia Critical Incident Analysis Group, notes that, "because the vast majority of inmates are incarcerated in state prison systems, individual and organized radicalization and recruitment at the state level represented the majority of the current radical activity."

• Do you concur with that assertion?

**Response**: We concur with the assertion, and have seen no data or other analysis to refute it. Based on several factors, including the fact that the majority of inmates in the United States are incarcerated in state prison systems, DHS assesses that the majority of current radical activity in prisons occurs at the state level.

• Has your agency received requests from state correctional authorities, including California and New York, and local correctional authorities, including Los Angeles and New York City, for assistance in addressing such activity?

**Response**: We have not received specific requests for assistance from state and local correctional authorities; however, we have met with representatives of the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) and the National Joint Terrorism Task Force's (NJTTF) Correctional Intelligence Initiative (CII). We have also met with officials from the California Department of Corrections, Texas Department of Criminal Justice, and others to address prison radicalization issues.

• Please describe the types of and mechanisms through which intelligence is shared with state and local law enforcement and correctional authorities. Please be sure to address sharing of intelligence regarding literature and religious service providers as well as trends and best practices.

**Response**: DHS shares intelligence with state and local law enforcement and correctional authorities through a variety of mechanisms, such as through the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN), the growing number of state and local Fusion Centers and assignment of DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A) officers to them, and personal relationships built between I&A analysts and state and local law enforcement. The interface between the federal government and state prisons, including the passing of intelligence regarding literature and religious service providers was delineated in a list of recommendations from the NJTTF's CII.

2. The first sentence of the "Out of the Shadows" report reads: "The potential for radicalization of prison inmates in the United States poses a threat of unknown magnitude to the national security of the United States."

• What is your overall assessment of the gravity of the situation presented by radicalization in U.S. prison systems, at all levels of government?

**Response**: We assess that the prison radicalization phenomenon in the U.S. is of concern, but for the most part has not yet reached the level of operational threat seen in other countries, especially those in Western Europe. Among the critical factors that influence how radicalization develops in prisons are a staff's ability to recognize and address radicalizing influences; the provision of resources which provide effective radicalization countermeasures as described in the CII; and, increased communication and data-sharing coupled with uniformity of "best practices."

3. In the years since 9/11, terrorist cells have become more independent and self-starting. Is the radicalization of prisoners in the U.S. more often a part of an organized effort by organizations like al-Qaida or is it more often done by individuals or small groups with an independent, "home-grown" radical agenda?

**Response**: We have not found al-Qa'ida or any other transnational terrorist group to have an on-going, centrally-directed, organized effort to radicalize U.S. prisoners. While we cannot rule out whether splinters or self-selected adopters of al-Qa'ida's (or any other terrorist organization's) ideology may attempt to promote radical beliefs in U.S. prisons, we have no evidence of any top-down direction from transnational terrorist organizations. We have found, however, possible indicators of top-down influences from other national governments and conservative Islamic non-governmental organizations. We are working to determine if or how these are aligned with broader strategies to officially promote radical beliefs in U.S. prisons.

4. In your Statement for the Record you wrote that initial analytic findings indicate that "individuals and groups can radicalize or 'de-radicalize' based on a variety of factors" and that this is particularly true for the issue of prison radicalization.

• What are the factors that can lead individuals or groups to radicalize?

**Response**: There are a number of factors that can lead individuals or groups to radicalize, and in the course of our analysis no one single factor stands out as the most important. Certain charismatic leaders and individuals play a significant role in radicalization. The use of propaganda, whether written, spoken, or transmitted over the internet, can facilitate radicalization. Perceptions of policies or events, often colored through propaganda, can cause radicalization. An individual's life circumstances, which could involve a sense of loss or humiliation, victimization, or other social stigmatization, may also provide a 'cognitive opening' where an individual becomes receptive to the possibility of new ideas and worldviews, thus opening the door to that individual's radicalization.

• What are the factors that can lead individuals or groups to 'de-radicalize'? Please provide examples of such 'de-radicalization.'

**Response**: Similar to the factors influencing radicalization, factors leading individuals or groups to de-radicalize are diverse and complex. We have found examples of de-radicalization when individuals simply become more mature and shed more of the radical beliefs popular in some

youth cultures. De-radicalization tends to increase when frustration lessens and individuals gain a greater stake in society, often through acceptance of an individual by a non-radical peer group, through meaningful employment, or by marriage or other strong social bonds. De-radicalization can also happen through the removal of the radicalizing influence, such as a loss of personal faith, the departure of a charismatic leader, the full discrediting of a propaganda source, or an event leading to a shift in perceptions of policies or events.

5. According to the FBI, since 1979 the Aryan Nations - a violent neo-Nazi white supremacist organization - has been engaged in prison recruiting. The Aryan Nations conducts prison outreach programs through correspondence, literature and personal visits - many of the same tactics used by religious extremists.

• What lessons can be drawn and applied from dealing with the Aryan Nations' presence in our prisons for the last 30 years?

**Response**: Despite the Aryan Nations' violent reputation, its activities within Federal and state correctional institutions are centered more on prisoner outreach and support (i.e., concern for an inmate's welfare or potential recruitment), than radicalization or criminal activities. Furthermore, the vast majority of Aryan Nations' members, who are or have been incarcerated for committing violent criminal acts, were motivated and/or radicalized prior to entering the correctional system. In addition, traditional white supremacist groups like Aryan Nations have been relegated to a second tier status within prisons as a result of the activities of other, more violent groups like the Aryan Brotherhood (AB) and Nazi Low Riders (NLR). While groups like the AB and NLR incorporate the ideology of white supremacist groups, it would be more accurate to portray them as organized crime syndicates than hate groups bent on advocating violence for purely ideological motivations. Unlike Aryan Nations, these groups are known to engage in violent criminal activities both within and outside of the correctional system.

**Question from Senator Frank Lautenberg**

1. What is the level of coordination between your agencies and state corrections personnel to combat the radicalization of prisoners?

**Response**: There is no formal relationship that directly allows interface between our analysts and state corrections personnel. All direct contact to date has been informal, but we are working to strengthen relationships with state corrections personnel through the deployment of DHS I&A officers to various state and local Fusion Centers throughout the country.

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