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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND COUNTERING IDEOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR TERRORISM

HEARING

BEFORE THE

TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS AND CAPABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND COUNTERING IDEOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR TERRORISM

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS AND CAPABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE,
Washington, DC, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10:03 a.m., in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Adam Smith (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

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

Mr. SMITH. Good morning. We will go ahead and get the hearing started as close to on time as possible. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses.

We are gathered today to talk about strategic communications in the global war on terror, which is a critically important part of that effort and one that I think we need to place greater emphasis on, greater focus and, ultimately, greater resources as well.

When you look at the battle that we are fighting against al Qaeda and similar ideologies, it is a broad-based ideological battle. And I think that the closest analogy you can draw is to the Cold War and communism. And there were many, many aspects to the Cold War, certainly. Sometimes the Cold War involved military confrontations, in Korea and Vietnam and elsewhere. But it also overlaid the larger issue; it was communism versus capitalist democracy.

And we went out and made the case that our system, our ideology was better. And we made that case comprehensively. And, ultimately, that had as much to do with our success as anything. As I have facetiously said that, you know, the war on communism can best be summed up as we took people from the Soviet Union, said, you know, "Look at your grocery store, look at our grocery store, we win," which is a bit of an exaggeration, but that was certainly part of it.

And, more importantly, we had a comprehensive strategic plan for how to do that and many other messages about what was better about our ideology and what was deficient about the ideology of communism. And slowly but surely, the rest of the world, even in the Communist world, agreed. They came across to our way of thinking ideologically. We basically won a marketing campaign. And that had as much to do with our success as anything.

Now we face a similar struggle, an ideological struggle against Osama bin Laden, al Qaeda and a very dangerous ideology that they are spreading. And it is my judgment, at this point, that we are not doing as well in that battle as we should be. We clearly have the better ideology. We clearly have more to offer people of all faiths, from all places in the world, with freedom, openness, democracy, opportunity, than what Osama bin Laden has been offering.

When the Taliban ran Afghanistan, it was a complete disaster, by everybody's estimation. That is what they have on the table. And yet we haven't been able to sort of get up on the other side of that and begin to win that argument, certainly in the Muslim world. You know, you look at various polls and various indicators out there. It is clear that the Muslim world still has way too much sympathy for Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda and not enough understanding and appreciation for the West.

But it goes beyond the Muslim world, even in Europe. I was in Afghanistan last spring, meeting and talking with various folks about our efforts over there. And while the leaders of some of the key European countries have bought into what we are doing in Afghanistan, a lot of their citizens have not, and that makes it extraordinarily difficult for our commanders over there.

I will always remember General McNeil talking about the various countries that were involved and then the list of what they would and would not do militarily. Any military commander, I think, would shudder at the notion of a bunch of troops under his command that are choosing what they will and will not do. A lot of that has to do with the difference of opinion about going about conducting the broader battle. We have got to start winning the battle for ideas, and we have got to do a better job of promoting that.

And I will say there are many issues—and I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today about how we can better coordinate that and what we need to do—but the two that strike me and the two I am most interested in: One is interagency cooperation. There are many, many people who touch this issue, on all levels. Certainly the State Department is the lead agency. The Defense Department has a lot to do with it. But all across various segments of our Government, right down to the captain in Baghdad trying to persuade, you know, a local tribe to be on our side in the battle against al Qaeda in figuring out how to do this, there are many, many different layers. Are we maximizing those resources? Are we getting the most out of the various pieces that are involved in this and coordinating them in a comprehensive way that makes sure that we are getting the most out of what we have?

But second is the matter of resources, and we are not spending very much money on this strategic communications effort. When you look at what we were spending at the height of the Cold War versus what we are spending now, it is a joke. We haven't even really, significantly increased our efforts at the State Department in public diplomacy, in strategic communications, since 9/11. It is pretty close to a flat line.

And I think the world of what our military has done since 9/11. I think the way they have pulled together, coordinated, maximized their resources is a real testimony to how great a military we have.

On the other hand, when you look at that, you can look at the Department of Defense (DOD) budget from 9/11 forward and see it going like this, and you can look at the State Department public diplomacy budget and see it going like this, and hopefully have a little sympathy for the folks who are trying to do the strategic communications/public diplomacy piece. We need to invest more resources in it if we are going to get the results that we desperately need in this battle.

So I look forward to the testimony. And, with that, I want to turn it over to the ranking member on the committee, Mr. Thornberry, for any opening remarks he has.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Smith can be found in the Appendix on page 31.]

STATEMENT OF HON. MAC THORNBERRY, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM TEXAS, RANKING MEMBER, TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS AND CAPABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. THORNBERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your opening comments, and I agree with them.

I would ask unanimous consent that an editorial from *The Washington Post* from last Saturday by Robert Satloff of The Washington Institute for Near East Policy be made part of the record.

Mr. SMITH. Hearing no objection, so ordered.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 65.]

Mr. THORNBERRY. I think this is only the most recent article, with a big stack of studies and articles, that expresses the view that we are not adequately fighting this war of ideas, in part because it is a hard, unnatural thing for our government to do. And I sympathize with each of you in the position that you are in. But I also think it is important for this subcommittee to focus on those issues and try to encourage us to be more successful.

The point of this article is that we operate as if this war of ideas barely exists and have focused our energies on the wrong problem, trying to gain popularity rather than trying to help the struggle within the Muslim faith itself. And it goes on to point out some suggestions on how and the way we can do that better.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, I have been interested in this for some time. I have dug out the Defense Science Board Task Force report from September 2004, part of which I have introduced as an independent bill to try to gain the expertise of the private sector on behalf of this effort. But I am concerned that we are moving too slowly in really waging this struggle and that this struggle is an absolutely essential part of our national security at this point in time.

So I appreciate this hearing. I appreciate the opportunity to hear from these witnesses and the increased attention that this part of national security is achieving.

I yield back.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mac.

And before I introduce the witnesses, just one more quick comment. As you are making your comments, basically we are trying to win a campaign here, a campaign of ideas. And to do that, you have to develop a message and deliver that message in the mediums where your audience is going to get their information. So as I hear your testimony, I am curious to know what is our message, how are we delivering it, what do we think are the critical mediums to reach those populations that we are trying to reach?

And with that, I will turn it over to our witnesses. I will introduce all three of them.

And we will start with Mr. Duncan MacInnes, who is the Principal Deputy Coordinator of the Bureau of International Information Programs at the Department State. The Department of State is the lead organization on the ideological piece, on the strategic communications piece of the global war on terror. And the International Information Programs Bureau is the lead piece of the Department of State's effort.

We also have Captain Hal Pittman from the United States Navy, who is the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Joint Communication; Dr. Michael Doran, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Support for Public Diplomacy, also with the Department of Defense.

And we will start with Mr. MacInnes.

STATEMENT OF DUNCAN MACINNES, PRINCIPAL DEPUTY COORDINATOR OF THE BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. MACINNES. Chairman Smith, Congressman Thornberry and distinguished members of the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities, thank you for inviting me here today. And thank you for those opening statements, which summarized some of the issues that we do face today.

Combatting ideological support for terrorism poses a variety of daunting new challenges for U.S. public diplomacy. Terrorists have shown themselves to be adept at exploiting the freedom of the Internet to spread their propaganda directly to young Muslims around the world, using effectively video messaging, imaging and text.

Our traditional communication tools are designed for mainstream media and have had little impact in this new information battlefield. Our audiences have also been stretched beyond the traditional opinion leaders, and it leads to the general public and specifically the youth, who are the target of extremist propaganda.

During the Cold War, we fought a traditional enemy in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), and our tools included traditional public diplomacy tools such as educational programs, rule-of-law programs, democracy promotion, publications, mainstream media. These strategies remain relevant and powerful still today, but we need to continue to develop new tactics to counter an elusive and decentralized nonstate foe who is adept at exploiting the Internet and new technologies in spreading its ideology of violence.

We have come a long way in coordinating our efforts on strategic communications across the interagency. On April 8, 2006, the

President established the interagency Policy Coordinating Committee, PCC, on public diplomacy and strategic communications. As chairperson of the PCC, Under Secretary Karen Hughes leads our international strategic communications efforts within the Administration.

Over the past year, Under Secretary Hughes has reorganized the PCC to ensure more active interagency coordination and synergies in the struggle with violent extremism. She established the interagency Counterterrorism Communication Center (CTCC) and created sub-PCCs to work on the issues of State-DOD coordination and cooperation and also set up additional sub-PCCs on research and analysis and on branding.

State and DOD now are working closely together on coordinating our efforts. Last week, for example, Dr. Doran, Captain Pittman and I were together discussing strategic communications at the Global Synchronization Conference held by SOCOM in Tampa.

The week before that, we met together at the State-DOD sub-PCC on coordination and planning. In that sub-PCC, we are exploring ways to enhance our cooperation and develop shared communication strategies. Already in the works are initiatives on coordinating Website activities and content, video production, blogging, and a renewed effort to identify and find ways to empower credible Muslim voices, to develop shared image databanks, and to strengthen the effectiveness of Military Information Support Teams (MIST) teams working in our overseas missions.

Overseas in the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Europe, our public affairs officers at the embassies work closely with military public affairs and Psychological Operations (PSYOPS) officers. Military information support teams, MISTs, are integrated into the work of an increasing number of U.S. missions overseas.

Let me talk a little bit about the Counterterrorism Communication Center which was set up. Under Secretary Hughes established the Counterterrorism Communication Center last summer to coordinate overall overt U.S. strategic communication messaging in the war of ideas and to produce and disseminate effective messaging to counter terrorist ideology, especially in the Arab-Muslim world but also in Europe and elsewhere.

The CTCC, as they call it, is a small but truly interagency organization, with staff currently drawn from the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) and the intelligence community. Working with State, DOD and other U.S. agencies, it produces strategic communication plans, develops effective narratives and themes to undermine and counter terrorist messaging, and produces specific messages for use by State and DOD commuters. It responds with talking points to breaking-news events and works closely with our rapid response unit at the State Department's public affairs office to put out a regular antiterrorism message.

CTCC messaging goes to more than 2,000 key U.S. Government communicators, including combatant commands and all U.S. embassies. Those communicators build on the themes and information in those messages, customizing them for local audiences in order to achieve the greatest impact.

Our efforts focus on undermining and putting extremists on the defensive by exposing how terrorists recruit and exploit young people; destroy religious sites and mosques; murder women, children, men and innocent victims, such as in the tragic events last week that resulted in the deaths of 59 schoolboys, five teachers, police officers and other innocent adults in an effort to target members of the Afghan parliament, six of whom were murdered.

We have also set up a digital outreach team. It was launched one year ago as a pilot initiative to counter ideological support for counterterrorism on the Internet. It employs Arabic speakers to post entries into influential Arabic blogs, challenging misrepresentations and providing accurate information about U.S. policy, our society and our motives overseas. Our bloggers speak the language and idiom of the region and know the culture references and are often able to converse informally and frankly, rather than adopt the more formal persona of the U.S. Government's spokesperson.

This is a major departure from our previous way of conducting public diplomacy. It requires both creativity and a new set of skills. We are currently in the process of expanding the original team of three up to 10, including an Urdu speaker and two Persian linguists. We are also exploring how we can use other cybertechnologies, such as cell phones, Second Life, in our war against the terrorists.

Our Bureau of International Information Programs is also fully engaged in expanding public diplomacy and countering terrorist extremist ideologies through the Internet. Our English-language Website and six foreign language sites, including both Arabic and Persian, are being transformed to use more videos, more blogging, podcasts, Web chats, that are designed to reach younger audiences. Our Arabic Web site attracts more than 200,000 visitors per month, with the top users coming from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the Gulf and Morocco.

The decline in favorable overseas public opinion toward the United States has resulted in an increased skepticism about the motives that drive our policies. On the practical side, this has led to a distrust that undermines the effectiveness of our messages against extremists. We are addressing this issue by working with our embassies overseas and with the American Muslim community here in the States to reinforce credible antiextremist voices.

For example, we have sent out dozens of American Muslims to predominantly Muslim countries to engage in discussions with their counterparts. These citizen dialogue programs directly counter al Qaeda's negative propaganda message that the U.S. is at war with Islam.

The CTCC collects and disseminates antiterrorist statements and editorials and cartoons made by Muslims from around the world in order to amplify their voices in the fight against extremism. We are in the process of finding new ways to empower credible Muslim voices in the Muslim world, because this is a key issue we have to work on.

The strongest messages are sent, however, not through words but through deeds, what Karen Hughes calls the diplomacy of deeds. She talks about the importance of waging peace by showing the United States as a positive force for good in the world, in stark

contrast with the destructive ideologies espoused by al Qaeda and other terrorist groups. Americans are generous, committed to helping others, and we have the largest number of people working in voluntary organizations. We have worked closely with DOD to promote understanding among foreign publics of our humanitarian efforts. These cooperative efforts have included telling the dramatic story of our emergency relief for tsunami and earthquake victims in Indonesia and Pakistan.

Another initiative of Karen Hughes' is the pilot country program, which provides funding for special projects in key countries with predominantly Muslim or sizeable Muslim populations. Funded through the 2007 emergency supplemental for the war of ideas, the pilot country project seeks to find ways to counter ideological support for terrorism through innovative projects that are identified by the Ambassador and senior Embassy staff members. The focus of these projects is to reach, often, young people who are vulnerable to radicalization and help them develop the skills and confidence they need to resist recruitment and become committed extremists.

Mr. Chairman, I have given you and the members an overview of our current and new initiatives to counter extremist ideologies. I have also highlighted the very positive trends toward greater interagency cooperation between the Departments of State and Defense.

This struggle against the evils of terrorism will take many years, and we still have a great deal more to do to meet the challenges of violent extremism. We believe that we have made major strides in adapting to the new and sometimes daunting media environment of the 21st century.

These initiatives, however, do not stand in isolation. Public diplomacy and strategic communications must continue to deploy all instruments at our disposal and must rely on the best and most up-to-date research data. We need to expand our use of the Internet and other new media, while continuing to support effective and more targeted educational exchanges, democracy programs, youth initiatives, et cetera.

More importantly, we must continue to work harder to integrate our overall U.S. Government efforts, embrace new communication technologies and enlist the support of our allies overseas. We must continue to work toward a proactive position instead of one that is only reactive.

The battle for the hearts and minds is one that will only succeed if we embrace innovation and use our Nation's great communication talents and creativity to the best effect.

Thank you, sir.

[The prepared statement of Mr. MacInnes can be found in the Appendix on page 32.]

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. MacInnes.

Captain Pittman.

STATEMENT OF CAPT. HAL PITTMAN, USN, ACTING DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (JOINT COMMUNICATION), DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Captain PITTMAN. Chairman Smith, Congressman Thornberry and distinguished members of the subcommittee, good morning.

First, I would like to thank the subcommittee members for all you have done to support our military men and women in uniform. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today about the Department of Defense's efforts in strategic communication.

As a military officer and a professional communicator by trade, I have served in multiple joint assignments, and I have observed firsthand many of the communication challenges we face today against a cunning adversary that does not have to tell the truth.

While the U.S. military conducts a largely kinetic campaign complemented with communication efforts against violent extremists, our adversaries conduct an information campaign punctuated by kinetic exclamation points—suicide bombings, spectacular attacks and the like—to highlight their cause. In a long war where the real battle is a battle of ideas, America's enemies place a premium on telling their story, regardless of the truth.

How we engage in this sphere is important. I believe in the need to maintain the credibility of our military and also in the need for transparency. At the same time, we must collaborate and synchronize our actions, words and images within both the Department and the interagency to maintain that credibility.

Above all, strategic communication is a process, and the process of communication integration will require a long-term commitment and sustained effort by the Department in support of the U.S. Government.

Today I will focus somewhat on process and try to briefly describe for this subcommittee some of the efforts to date that the Department of Defense has undertaken in this regard, specifically: the Quadrennial Defense Review Strategic Communication Execution Roadmap; the Strategic Communication Integration Group, or SCIG, process, which is the Department's strategic communication planning effort; support the State Department and the interagency; and education efforts focusing on helping strategic communication thinking occur naturally in every action.

In September of 2006, Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England signed the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Strategic Communication Execution Roadmap. Mr. England cited three primary objectives in this document: first, to institutionalize a DOD process by which the principles of strategic communication are incorporated in the development of policy formulation, planning and execution; second, to define the roles, responsibilities and relationships and develop doctrine for strategic communication and its primary communications-supporting capabilities—and those primary supporting capabilities include public affairs, aspects of information operations, principally PSYOP, visual information, DOD activities of military diplomacy and defense support to public diplomacy; and third, to properly resource military departments and combatant commands to organize, train and equip DOD's primary communications-supporting capabilities.

One of the most significant successes of the roadmap to date is the establishment of both an integrating process and creation of a Strategic Communication Integration Group, or SCIG. The SCIG secretary coordinates and synchronizes communication plans and concepts within the Department. And a SCIG Executive Committee, or EXCOM, provides oversight and guidance. And I am the

Director of the Strategic Communication Integration Group Secretariat.

The DOD has also significantly increased in communication collaboration with the interagency. My office participates in working groups and has joined Under Secretary Hughes' Policy Coordinating Committee and sub-PCCs on a variety of topics and issues, including research, new media engagement, and content sharing, as Mr. MacInnes has indicated. We attend a collaboration group with DOD, State and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and a weekly fusion cell meeting as well.

DOD had direct input into the national strategy on public diplomacy and strategic communication through the SCIG process and has provided military manpower and expertise to the interagency Counterterrorism Communications Center, which was recently established and just mentioned.

The Defense Department has also conducted multiple strategic communication education and training initiatives over the past two years to help institutionalize strategic communication as a process. Strategic communication and public affairs blocks of instructions are being incorporated into the joint professional military education, working closely with the war colleges. Advanced and expeditionary joint public affairs training courses are being developed as an Strategic Communications (SC) roadmap task, and they will be taught at the Defense Information School at Fort Meade.

Simultaneously, DOD and State Department are exploring ways to leverage training resources. Interagency participants attended the first-ever DOD strategic communication interagency worldwide seminar in July 2007. And a State Department public diplomacy officer just attended the DOD strategic communication workshop which was just held a couple of weeks ago in Monterey, California, at the Naval Postgraduate School.

In summary, we have come a long way in the past four years, particularly in the past two years since the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (DASD) for joint communication was established. But the Department has a ways to go yet in realizing our long-term goal of institutionalizing strategic communication across the Department.

We certainly appreciate your support of our efforts and the interest that you have shown by conducting this hearing. And I look forward to answering your questions.

Thank you, sir.

[The prepared statement of Captain Pittman can be found in the Appendix on page 39.]

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Dr. Doran.

STATEMENT OF DR. MICHAEL DORAN, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY), DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Dr. DORAN. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I thank you for inviting me to speak on the issue of countering ideological support for terrorism.

My written testimony provides more detail about this concept, but I would like to devote a few minutes in my oral remarks to highlight a few key aspects of it.

The war we are fighting today is an information war, a global conflict of perception. Terrorist attacks, even ones of the magnitude of 9/11, are not designed to cripple the United States but, rather, to generate the perception of American weakness and vulnerability among key audiences across the globe. The spectacle of the attack is as important to the terrorists, sometimes more important, than the destructive effect itself. At their essence, terrorist attacks against America are tools in a contest for power and authority within Muslim societies.

Our goal is to purposefully join and influence a political process, an ongoing multi-sided conversation that is proceeding independently of the United States.

The recent success enjoyed by General David Petraeus and his Iraqi allies has dramatically demonstrated to us the primacy of intra-Muslim politics in counterinsurgency and in countering ideological support for terrorism. The General has taught us that coordinating our statements and actions is an important component to influencing the internal Iraqi debate over legitimate political authority in that country.

But countering ideological support for terrorism is not primarily about creating brand America. It should not be reduced solely to executing public diplomacy campaigns whose objective is to burnish the image of America. Those are laudable efforts, and we fully support and encourage them, but they are not the essence of what countering ideological support for terrorism is all about.

The key question is, how do we join and influence this intra-Muslim conversation in order to undermine the intellectual and perceptual underpinnings of terrorism? Terrorists actively foster the perception that the global Islamic community is under severe threat. To counter this perception, we must inject critical doubt among key populations about the terrorists' vision of hate and fear.

For their vision to have any credibility, terrorist groups seek to foster a sense of doom, a sense that midnight is fast approaching. To manufacture this threat, al Qaeda and others argue that the United States and our allies are somehow placing the global Islamic community in peril. To counter this, we must chip away at the bleak picture of helplessness and vulnerability that supports it.

Our enemies foster a culture of blame to foment anger, hatred and a sense of victimization. They offer their violence as the only solution to the challenges of today. To be successful, we must focus on the self-perceptions of key audiences rather than perceptions of America. Our core message must outline an alternative future that is more attractive than the bleak future offered by the terrorists. This positive narrative must contain more than just antiterrorist rhetoric. It should include elements that will positively impact the future lives of Muslims everywhere.

To promote this objective we cannot simply focus on getting our message out. Success requires taking actions that make the alternative narrative real. Thus, key components of the successful strategy include civil affairs, security, education reform and economic opportunity.

In Iraq's Al Anbar province, we are beginning to see the process of combatting ideological support for terrorism done correctly. Just a few short months ago, public commentary in this country widely suggested that al Qaeda was firmly ensconced in Iraq. In fact, we now know that al Qaeda is not as welcomed in Iraq as outside commentators claimed, especially after the Anbar Salvation Council emerged in late 2006 to oppose al Qaeda's violence, extremism and attacks on civilians.

This trend appears to be accelerating, since, just last week, Major General Joseph Fil, Commander of U.S. forces in Baghdad, told the media that al Qaeda in Iraq has been cleared out of the Iraqi capital and that Iraqi families are returning to their homes.

By countering ideological support for terrorism, we seek to appeal to the self-interest of local communities whose values and aspirations find no expression in al Qaeda's world view. Although it claims to speak on behalf of all Muslims, we should not be taken in by al Qaeda's propaganda or endorse its inflated sense of its own ideological appeal.

Our countering-ideological-support-for-terrorism approach seeks to force al Qaeda to live as an actor in our alternative pro-future narrative. The reality is that governments and citizens today are fighting against al Qaeda. I am not declaring universal success, but to paraphrase a famous quote from Winston Churchill: In Iraq, what we are seeing is not the end, it is not the beginning of the end, but it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.

With that, I conclude my oral remarks. My written testimony will be submitted as part of the record, and I look forward to your questions. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Doran can be found in the Appendix on page 52.]

Mr. SMITH. Thank you all for your testimony.

I will pass, and I yield to Mr. Thornberry.

Mr. THORNBERRY. I yield.

Mr. SMITH. Ms. Castor.

Ms. CASTOR. Good morning.

How do you divide the differences and responsibilities in missions of the Department of State and the Department of Defense? I know you all work together and collaborate on a lot of different initiatives when it comes to worldwide communications, but I would like you to detail how they differ and where your concerns lie with, maybe, mission creep of one agency to another.

Captain PITTMAN. With regard to my specific area of expertise, it is the Strategic Communication Integration Group, essentially the development and staffing of strategic communication plans on behalf of the Department of Defense. Obviously any efforts that we make are designed to plug into the greater effort of State Department.

But, you know, the process of staffing plans and development is a time-consuming process of ensuring that all the offices with tasks and responsibilities in a particular communication plan come together in harmony, horizontally integrating all of those efforts kind of across multiple lanes.

A perfect example is the recent Afghanistan strategic communication plan that we worked on. It took probably about four

months to complete that plan, but once completed, it had elements of interagency support. It was nested with the plans that were already in place from the State Department and through North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). And it had, specifically, execution pieces that were the responsibility of Central Command elements, of other elements within the theater of operations there.

It is a challenging responsibility, but we have multiple meetings on an ongoing basis with our colleagues, kind of, across this spectrum and in larger groups. Again, it is about integrating the process. It is not about creating new stovepipes or organizations, but, rather, making sure that we are all working in harmony and synchronization. It is a challenge. It is hard to align those efforts, but we are working to that end.

Ms. CASTOR. Are the DOD communications efforts concentrated on the Central Command (CENTCOM) area and then, of course, through Special Operations Command (SOCOM) especially?

Captain PITTMAN. I would offer to you, ma'am, that there are certainly discrete efforts across all the combatant commands. And I use the CENTCOM example because it is one example of a pretty robust plan that we recently tackled, but there are multiple efforts.

Obviously, there is a lot of time and energy currently spent on our activities and operations in the Central Command theater, so there is a lot of effort that goes into that. There is a lot of resources, and a lot of people working at different levels, kind of across the spectrum, on those particular issues, just because they are so dynamic and they involve our Government to such an extent.

Mr. MACINNES. For the State Department's view, two things mentioning what Captain Pittman talked about. We are actually doing a lot more things than in the past. I mean, the scope of what we have to handle is global, and the borders for Internet and other activities don't exist.

And we have a very close coordination relationship with public affairs. That is traditional; that has always been that way. PSYOPS and operations that were theater-based, meaning in areas of active war, are now global because of the nature of the global war on terror. In other words, it has moved beyond being localized.

And that means that we have had to learn how to coordinate our efforts globally on issues like information operations, PSYOPS and public affairs and public diplomacy. It is not an easy thing, and, actually we didn't do it well, certainly at the turn of the century.

But we actually have taken this on. We have realized that, because so many different elements are now involved in this activity of what you might call strategic communications writ large, that we do need these coordinating mechanisms to be able to sort out and to reinforce and to not duplicate but to also not stumble over each other. And we have actually created, I think, ways that we are moving in that direction quite robustly right now. I think that was missing before. But that is all.

Dr. DORAN. If I could just add to that, since Duncan set up the CTCC, that has been enormously helpful for us. We in the Department of Defense recognize that State has the lead on this, and we need their leadership.

The problem that we had before the CTCC existed, I think, was not so much that we were getting in each other's business but that we were synced up and that we weren't working as closely together as we might have been. And we hadn't explained, I think, to State what we need from them by way of leadership in this area.

Now that the CTCC is there, we have developed processes and relationships that I think allow for the two agencies to understand each other much better and to work much more effectively together in this area.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

The gentlelady's time has expired.

Ms. Drake.

Mrs. DRAKE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Well, first, is there anything that Congress needs to do, or the executive branch, for you to be able to work more effectively together? Or, under the current structure, do you have what you need? Is there anything we need to do to help you?

Mr. MACINNES. I believe that we have actually moved—we have set up mechanisms that are beginning to really show that we can do this and we can do it well. And what we are trying to avoid is setting up layers and big bureaucracies. I mean, the Counterterrorism Communication Center is really 12 people. That is a very small group, but what we need to do here is coordinate, not reinvent. And so, I don't see, particularly, any new authorities that we need.

Captain PITTMAN. I would second what Duncan has indicated. A lot of the sub-PCC efforts are now working at looking at efficiencies and the sharing of information and content, things like a shared databank of photography imagery, shared strategies on engaging new media and that sort of thing. These are the sorts of things that we are working toward right now.

On the resourcing side, how I would respond to your question, ma'am, is that there is a strategic communication roadmap which lists a variety of discrete issues which represent capability gaps across the spectrum, or across the enterprise for strategic communication. There are specific issues about developing the capabilities of the Department to be more robust and to be able to meet all of our challenges. And that roadmap actually looks at funding across the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP). It is not a short-term effort, but rather it is a longer-term effort.

I will give you a couple of quick examples. For example, in fiscal year 2008 funding, we have allotted $10 million to the Digital Video Transportation System (DVTS), which is a portable satellite communications system that is predominantly deployed in the Central Command theater but also deployed in other areas, that allows our commanders and subject-matter experts to be able to broadcast live, real-time, back to organizations in the States to be able to address the media in real-time.

Another example is the Joint Public Affairs Support Element, which is based at Joint Forces Command down at the Joint Warfighting Center in Suffolk, $3.3 million allocated in fiscal year 2008 funding for that evolution. And that is a capability, a small unit of about 50 people, that is able to deploy in expeditionary in-

stances around the world to support the public affairs, public communications efforts of the Department.

So these kinds of things.

Another example is, just within the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, $2 million that will go toward the Defense Information School for bolstering courses and the development of a couple of courses which essentially meet the requirement for roadmap tasks to provide intermediary and senior courses for our communicators.

So these kinds of efforts are discrete, and they are kind of built in to separate budgetary requests from different offices of primary responsibility. But they go a long way toward developing the capabilities of the Department.

Mrs. DRAKE. And I am going to assume that the bulk of your message is sort of a moderate Muslim message, as opposed—to kind of offset the extreme message? I mean, I didn't get the impression this is a U.S. message. This is more in support of a moderate Muslim message?

Dr. DORAN. I was putting the emphasis there. I think it is both. We definitely have to get our message out. But I was putting the message there, the emphasis there, because I think there needs to be a culture shift in how we perceive the threat that we face and how we develop the tools to deal with it.

And that is how I would answer your original question, about what you might do. I think you can help us in shifting the culture.

To give you a more specific example, our intel communities, both within the Department of Defense and the intel community writ large, they tend to collect against threats, against specific terrorist threats to the United States. And they don't tend to collect against open source, public discussions about politics and public opinion and so forth. And in some elements of the intel community, you find out that they don't consider public opinion to be part of intel collection.

But if you consider the example that I gave in my oral remarks here of Iraq, the appeal of the terrorist message in Iraq among Sunnis is not so much the intrinsic content of the message but the sense that Sunnis had that they were going to be dominated by Shias as a result of the change in Iraq.

So focusing in on the domestic Iraqi debate about relations between Sunnis and Shia would have been or should be a central U.S. national security objective. But our intel community, coming out of the Cold War, is much more inclined to look for that terrorist who might be about to carry out an attack. That is very important to do, but there is this wider spectrum.

Representative Thornberry's bill, 2800, has one mechanism for bringing about this kind of shift and developing the kind of cultural sensitivities that we need to develop.

Mrs. DRAKE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mrs. Drake.

Mr. Conaway.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MacInnes, the digital outreach teams, can you talk to us a little bit about how you oversee that or the oversight to make sure that they are staying on message? And that when you use the word "creativity," how do you make sure that it stays within the white

lines that we think is appropriate, given that this, I suspect, is being conducted in Arabic or Farsi or some language that not many of us can interpret?

Mr. MACINNES. That is a very good question. Those are questions we struggled with when we set this up.

It is clearly difficult for a government organization to do blogging, because blogging tends to be a very informal, chatty way of working. And, of course, it is actually very dangerous to blog, because when you make a statement to the press in a press conference, you know what you are going to be saying; in a blog, you have to actually have a conversation rather than just a lecture, so it is very difficult.

But what we have, though, is we developed a technique and a paradigm. We have a senior State Department—a very experienced officer who served in Iraq who understands the Muslim world, and he is the supervisor for that group. They discuss each posting before it goes up and look at it. And we do not make policy there. We stick with policy. But what we are doing is getting at the issue sometimes of motivation.

Many of the things that are on the Web ascribe to America's bad motivations for what we do. You know, they may be perfectly aware of what our policy toward Iraq is, but they are doing it because you are there to destroy Iraq for Israel or you are there for oil or other things. Our job is to address that motivation issue and show them that is not the motivation.

You need the creativity and what I call the bridging. Because you can't just say, look, here is our policy and drop it into a blog. You have to have what I call a bridge. And we use bridges, we use sports, poetry, current events to do those bridges that are noncontent-related but allow one to get to be in a conversational mode with people.

What we have found, though, most interestingly—because we worried that we would be, in the parlance of the Internet, flamed when we came on, well, "These Americans, get the heck off my site," you know. What we found instead—and we deal with mainstream sites; we are not actually going to the hardcore terrorist sites. We are going to the mainstream sites, because we believe that we must convince the general public in the Arab-Muslim world not to support terrorism even tacitly, and we are trying to counter those messages. But what we found is people were very glad that we were there. We had postings like, "We don't like your policies, but we are sure glad you are here talking to us about it," or, "We appreciate the fact that you have taken the time to come and speak to us."

Mr. CONAWAY. Right.

Given that we have got a message, can you talk to me a little bit about your perception, any of the three of you, as to why the moderate Muslim world, the vast majority of peace-loving, peaceful Muslims, have not been a better help to us? I mean, my simplistic view is this is a battle for the heart of Islam. And it is not our fight, in the sense that I don't know that I could effectively have that kind of input.

But the 80-percent-plus that are moderates, why have they not joined the ruckus to say and to be more open and more vocal in

terms of trying to reclaim this religion from the far extremists, and being more of an ally for us as opposed to simply a silent majority out there that does not seem yet to have taken sides the way I would have expected them to?

Dr. DORAN. I am not sure that I would put it that way, exactly.

If I go back again to the example of what is going on in Iraq, you see the Sunnis in Al Anbar are risking their lives standing side by side with us against al Qaeda, whereas a year ago they weren't. So it isn't love of the ideology, and it isn't an inherent weakness in people, because these people are being very courageous today. It is a set of local circumstances on the ground.

I think, more often than not, it is a lack of a tradition in the Middle East of participatory politics, and it is fear: fear from the security services and fear from al Qaeda. And when those circumstances are changed, then we find people standing up. So it is a whole complex of issues.

Mr. CONAWAY. Excuse me, Dr. Doran. What about the folks who aren't in those security positions, who aren't threatened daily by—let us get out of Iraq and—poor phrase from my side of the aisle—and look at the Muslim population at large across the world. You know, they are not all directly threatened. But why is the mindset that it is okay for them to sit on the sidelines and allow the extremists to hijack their religion? Any insight there? I don't have any.

Dr. DORAN. I think the single most important factor is a lack of a tradition of participatory politics. You just don't find them organizing for any issue, not just along this.

Mr. SMITH. The gentleman's time has expired. If you have one more quick one, I will let you fire it off there.

Mr. CONAWAY. I will wait for another round.

Mr. SMITH. Thanks.

Mr. McIntyre.

Mr. MCINTYRE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for holding this hearing today.

If I could ask you a couple of questions in my time allowed, so let me ask the first one. If you can tell us, does the U.S. Government have a human capital strategy that supports our national strategic communications effort? And, specifically, does that human capital strategy—how does that impact on recruiting, retention and personnel management?

Mr. MACINNES. For the Department of State, we have very little trouble recruiting, certainly. We have a long waiting list of people trying to come in. We currently and at all times have always needed more people. I mean, in fighting wars of ideas, you have never done your job, because there is always something else to do.

I think getting area expertise has been very important and getting language training. We have made a major effort at the State Department to increase our cadre of fluent Arabic speakers to be able—and that has paid some results now. We now have people that have come through that system that are going on the air and speaking in Arabic on television and radio.

But we have always had a strong area of expertise, but that is an area that we actually have to expand that even further. And language has been one of the key issues for us.

Mr. MCINTYRE. So if recruiting is not a problem, is retention a problem?

Mr. MACINNES. Retention has not been a problem. The biggest problem, I think, is overall numbers maybe are not at the level we would like to have. We have more positions than we have people, at this time.

Mr. MCINTYRE. Can you tell us, with regard to personnel management, if there are issues there, as part of your human capital strategy? Are you comfortable with the personnel management as it is in place, or do you think there need to be improvements made?

Mr. MACINNES. Well, there always can be improvements. One of the problems that those of us who work overseas a lot have encountered is that the dynamic of serving overseas with families is harder, because spouses expect to work. The dual-spouse working is standard now. In the 1950's and 1960's, you could go overseas and basically the spouse did not work. Nowadays, there is a different expectation level for that.

And the other is it can be difficult for people with children, because levels of schooling vary widely across the regions out there. And school matters a lot to people.

So those are issues that we work on all the time, that we have made a lot of accommodations for tandem couples and for people working together and for other things. But, of course, more needs to always be done on that.

Mr. MCINTYRE. So are you saying it does not negatively impact, though, your retention of personnel?

Mr. MACINNES. It has not.

Mr. MCINTYRE. And when you say there are more places available than people but yet you say there is not a problem recruiting, how do you solve that issue? Do you think you need to be more proactive in recruiting or what?

Mr. MACINNES. I think we have certain ceilings that are set in terms of numbers we are allowed to have. I am not sure. I could take that question, because I am not really—personnel is kind of a little far from my area of expertise. I wouldn't want to venture——

Mr. MCINTYRE. If you could check into that and get back to us on that.

Mr. MACINNES. I will.

Mr. MCINTYRE. If you would do that by the first week in December. Can you do that?

Mr. MACINNES. Yes.

Mr. MCINTYRE. All right, thank you.

The other thing is we obviously need to be from a legal standpoint, being the legislative branch, whether there are any legal or regulatory impediments that we need to address in Congress or that you believe the executive branch needs to address to make this strategic communications effort more effective. Can any of you speak to that?

Dr. DORAN. I think it would be worth looking into something like the 1206, 1207 authorities, so that when you have situations on the ground where, let us say you have a moderate imam who is preaching a message that we think should have a larger listening audience, and you find out that the Department of Defense has part of

a broadcasting facility and USAID has another part, that the two of them could more easily transfer resources. If the heads of both agencies agreed, I think that kind of thing could be very helpful for facilitating exchanges in the field.

We often find a situation where the Department of Defense has lots of resources and the authorities or responsibilities fall to the Department of State. And if there was a more streamlined mechanism for moving resources back and forth, it could be helpful. It is worth at least looking into.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Mr. MCINTYRE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Saxton.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

And I want to thank the ranking member for calling our attention to this piece that was written by Mr. Satloff of The Washington Institute for Near East Policy. I think it has a real nugget of value in it. It talks about what we need to do to be successful in this situation. And he says here, "This requires a conceptual revolution. Rather than expand effort on winning Muslim friendship for America, our engagement with Muslim publics—what we call public diplomacy—should focus on identifying, nurturing and supporting anti-Islamist Muslims." I think that says a great deal in just a few words.

And I have watched our Republican Administration, I have watched the previous Administration try to deal with programs to accomplish what I think we can all agree is a very worthwhile and necessary goal. But we, it seems to me, for the last 15 years, almost 16, going into our 16th year, in the last two Administrations facing this situation, it is natural for us to view this situation and how to achieve that goal based on our perception of success, based on our perception of what values in the West and around the world should be, and, I think, a very basic failure on our part to be able to cross a bridge, a bridge of understanding other cultures, particularly the Islamist culture.

We have advocated education programs. We have advocated economic advances in Muslim countries. We have advocated establishing and supporting democracies in other countries. And I think that we have not crossed that bridge of understanding, of understanding what motivates people from the countries that we desire to have an effect on.

I think of Lebanon often. And I was never there when Lebanon was in its glorious years, influenced by the West, ruled by a democratic process, with a great economy. All of the elements in a Muslim country that we would like to see today, from a Western perspective, were there, and we all know what happened.

And when we look at the countries where we are engaged today, there are failures and there are successes. And I would submit that the successes, in establishing Satloff's well-stated goal, I would submit that the successes that we have had have been partly because of us but mostly because of Muslims who have been influenced by the situation.

In the Anbar province, for example, great successes today. In the Diyala province, success is perhaps not as good, but great successes, because somehow tribal leaders, Muslims, Sunnis, became

influenced to help carry out this goal. And so, somehow or another, we crossed that bridge, at least in a couple of places, in order to carry out the goal that we would all like to see carried out.

And I guess I would just conclude, and then ask for your comments on this—I would just conclude by saying this. One of the understandings that seems to be prevalent, at least in Anbar, in the Diyala province, is that tribal leaders became convinced of two things: Al Qaeda was bad, and the United States and the West wasn't going to go away; we were going to stay there and support them.

Mr. SAXTON. And to the extent that we should learn from those lessons, Lebanon on the one hand and Anbar and the Diyala Province on the other hand, there are some real lessons to be learned there in how to carry out and achieve Satloff's goal.

What do you think?

Mr. SMITH. And you have 10 seconds to express your thoughts on that. I will give you slightly more to that. We have got a vote coming up shortly.

Mr. MACINNES. I would say on—I mean, Iraq is a very special case because it is deeply into war; and actually, when you talk about the broader Muslim and Arab world, one of the things in terms of getting our values and talking to people about these issues is that we have sent out quite a number of American Muslims to talk about precisely those issues: about what it means to be—what it means to have a site engaged, and discussing and fighting back against extremists.

We also have brought a lot of clerics—several hundred clerics from overseas, Muslim clerics—to the United States to look at how we do diversity and religion and how society can be supportive of religion and opportunities.

And, last, a lot of our programs overseas look to try to create the kind of economic and political opportunities to keep people—they make people involved in a positive way in society.

Mr. SMITH. Ms. Gillibrand.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have two areas of inquiry that I want to cover if I can. The first is, you are here to talk about communications strategy, and I want to talk about the use of language, because one concern I have is that this Administration has painted all terrorists as Islamo-Fascists, and if we look at this article, How To Win the War of Ideas, by Robert Satloff, he calls them Islamists.

Now, if we are trying to win a war of ideas using the fundamental tenet of Islam in the middle of a world that connotes terrorists, is that an effective communication strategy? It seems to me that when we are creating our foreign policy to deal with various elements that we are concerned with, they have different leadership, they have different values, they have different goals; they will require a different attack strategy. And so to paint them with one brush, I would find as—if you painted a Christian group with a Christian label and framed it as a terrorist group, I would be offended.

So have you heard or is there any feedback from your expertise that this broad brush is actually counterproductive?

Mr. MACINNES. Yes. Two things.

One of the things that we look at when we do messaging in the Counterterrorism Communications Center and with DOD is, we have to be keenly aware of what we say—what we say may not be what they hear—and that you want to be saying things that they hear the way you want them to be hearing it.

When we say "Islamo-Fascism," whether that term has meaning or not, what they hear is, "We are Islam, attacking my religion." When you say "Islamist," they don't; they hear "Muslim," you know. And as one of my Arab friends said once, you don't start a conversation by poking a stick in the eye of the person that you are trying to talk to; and that is—when you say "Islamo-Fascism," it is the verbal equivalent of poking a stick in somebody's eye.

And they do not—and bin Laden has been very good at taking our words and turning them to his advantage by saying, See, they are actually at war with Islam. And we fall into the trap of, you know, of having to answer that question, like, Have you stopped beating your wife? You can't answer that well.

Mr. SMITH. If I could interrupt, I want to draw a point on this.

I think what you are saying basically is, the word Islam-Muslim should be no part of how we describe al Qaeda and who we are fighting. Again, that is something we have struggled against, the Islamo-Fascist comment, "Islamists," no matter how you put it. And I have been through this over the years figuring out how to put it, because you think, well, logically they have a certain religious bent.

But I think the ultimate answer, what Ms. Gillibrand is pointing out, is, there is no way you can put Islam in there; and is that a decision that our strategic communications folks have made? Let's call them—you know, al Qaeda, call them Qutb, which is one person that they followed—find something else to call them that does not give them any piece of the Islam label.

Is that a decision that you have made?

Mr. MACINNES. We basically call them terrorists, murderers, what—basically what they are. But when you want to talk to them as Muslims, you are better off using a positive Muslim voice saying that.

When we talk about Islam, we are not credible in terms of, you are not a Muslim. So what we actually have examined—and Dr. Doran talked about it earlier—is, we are looking at getting and collecting those positive statements made by leading Muslims against terrorism. And they can say—you know, they can use the word "Islam" and talk about Islam, and they are very convincing. And we are finding that there is a lot more of that going on now than was previously.

I mean, there are editorials. There are great concerns that poke fun at terms. And I think that Muslims are concerned very much about their religion being hijacked. But, as Dr. Doran said, they are not a society that tends to have a lot of public debate.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. And what is your experience in the military? Are we beginning to change our terminology?

Captain PITTMAN. I think lexicon is always important, and we look at these kinds of things when we are working together to develop messaging. And we have some people who have studied these

areas quite a bit. We are always focusing on trying to get more regional, cultural expertise, et cetera.

But part of the challenge is pushing it down to the very lowest levels because when you have operational, you know, activities going on in a country, then you need to be able to have specific cultural expertise in that area.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Do you make these recommendations to the higher levels, too? Because this is something—I mean, if you watch the Presidential debates, you will have Presidential candidates using this terminology, you will have the Administration using this terminology.

Have you made those recommendations to the higher-ups that if you are going to have a better communication strategy, choice of identifying language is something that has to be a priority.

Captain PITTMAN. I think language is something that leadership focuses on. I think that phrases like "violent extremists" as opposed to using "Islam" in a characterization or whatever, I think that is something that we have evolved to over time. I don't think it is something that we naturally can bow at the beginning of this.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. I would encourage you all in your positions of expertise and advocacy to help improve how we address this issue.

The second question I just want to raise quickly is, in your digital outreach teams, you only have two individuals doing it now. What kind of recruiting are you doing on college campuses? This is an area where I would think, for the military, there are enormous numbers of young individuals who would love to be part of winning the war on terror, whom we could develop to look to become foreign language experts, to work in a different capacity for the military to do things like blogging and reviewing Websites.

What is your long-term plan, strategy to build that capability?

Captain PITTMAN. I will address that from the defense side, and Duncan can roll in as well.

There are actually—I mean, the digital outreach team at the Counterterrorism Communication Center is one cell. But there are also discrete operations within combatant command headquarters. For example, Central Command has a blogging capability that they used at that headquarters level.

There are new media-type engagement efforts at lower levels. The Joint Forces Command, for example, has a blogging engagement capability, and they have written a pamphlet or a brochure on how to go about doing that. So it is an area that we are moving into.

The Department of Defense has new media engagement as well.

Now, does that mean that we have Arabic speakers or Farsi speakers? It doesn't necessarily mean that. Sometimes in the field there may be contracted capabilities that are working in these areas to address these types of new media. But it certainly is an area that we are sharing with State in trying to better our knowledge.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. But are you actively recruiting on college campuses for these new kinds of talents that could be brought into either our diplomatic side or our military side to really add value to our mission here?

Captain PITTMAN. I would tell you that I don't believe that it is drilled down to the extent that we are specifically seeking those skill sets. Rather, for example, in recruiting military personnel, we would look for a background, perhaps, in media. I mean, almost all young people coming into the military today have some experience in using new media, and much more than people our age, for example.

Mr. SMITH. The gentlelady's time has expired.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. I have just a couple of questions.

One, in terms of how our audience in this war of ideas gets their information, you know, what is the best medium for reaching them? And there are a whole bunch of different mediums out there, depending on who your audience is and where they get their information.

From my own campaign experience when I was first running, you know, for Congress, there were a lot of different ways to reach the people in my district, the ones who are going to vote—radio, mail—but just sort of walking around and having grown up there, I knew that television, if you will, that is the killer app. If I had a limited amount of money, and I did, it should all go there because that is where they are going to get the bulk of their information.

That was 12 years ago, so things may have changed.

But in the audience out there, sort of the disaffected Muslim world, the ones we are trying to persuade, have you discovered sort of what is that best source of information? Where do they get their information? When they develop an opinion, where is it coming from? And what have we done to try to get into that medium in the most effective way possible?

Mr. MACINNES. That is a very good question and one we grapple with all the time.

First of all, what happened in the modern 21st century is, audiences have segmented a lot.

Mr. SMITH. It is a lot more difficult.

Mr. MACINNES. I watch television a lot—news. My son, who is in high school, never watches television, but gets lots of information off the Internet.

Mr. SMITH. There are hundreds of channels.

Mr. MACINNES. So, for the general public in the Muslim world, television is the most powerful medium, without question. For the youth audiences in much of the Muslim world that is well connected to the Internet, it is Internet without—okay. So we need to do both.

But what happens is, there is a relationship between the Internet and television. You know, bin Laden puts a video on the Internet and if it gets picked up by TV, TV runs something, the segment gets put onto YouTube.

So we need to do both.

Mr. SMITH. And if I may make the observation, based on a previous hearing we had on this subject, we need to do a lot more on the Internet.

And I think you guys get it. I think the people in the top leadership now understand that. We have not—and this sort of follows

up on Ms. Gillibrand's question, we have not put the resources into it. I mean, once I discovered that television was the thing, I stopped doing everything else, and every nickel I could, you know, I put into that.

I don't sense that we have seen—we have done the same with the Internet. We are vaguely aware of it. We don't have enough people involved, and we need to do more, dramatically more; and we would like to be helpful here on this committee and in Congress in doing that.

Is that a fair assessment?

Mr. MACINNES. I think that is a fair assessment. I think we have identified that we are weak there and we need to move into it.

One of the things, to answer—Ms. Gillibrand's earlier question was on recruitment. One of the things we are looking at for Internet is, do we need to have it done within the government? Is that the most effective way to be doing it?

We need to be doing some of it. But we also have been working, like, with the University of Southern California School of Diplomacy on, are there ways we can get people outside the government to be doing it? Because they will be more effective. They can be freer. They can say, I don't like this policy, but—which we—we are in somewhat of a straightjacket.

So we would like to seek out ways that we can get nongovernmental organizations involved in using the Internet against extremist terrorism in ways that amplify, because the Internet is best done, often, as a decentralized——

Mr. SMITH. I just have one more question, and we are going to have to wrap up.

We are blending a new regime now. We are actually doing votes now in 15 minutes, instead of a half hour, so I have to let members go to get over there in time.

And that is: Who is really in charge of the operation? Because we have heard a lot of different organizations, I sort of get the sense, that the CTCC coordinates; and on the other hand, we have the position that Karen Hughes is currently occupying and leaving. Someone will be taking that post.

You know, if we were to say, Who is the person in charge of strategic communications within the whole government, and State is the central, but is it the CTCC? Is it Karen Hughes's shop? Is it you?

I mean, who really is in charge of the overall operation?

Dr. DORAN. Karen Hughes.

Mr. MACINNES. Karen Hughes.

I do have a proviso there on overt strategic communications. We don't have authorities on the internal side. And there are things that need and have to be done on that side.

Mr. SMITH. Understood.

And it is really, I mean, the covert piece—I mean, there are a lot of different things going on. I think it is more of the overt piece that we are interested in.

And so it flows from Karen Hughes, down; the CTCC then coordinates.

So does the head of the CTCC then report directly to Karen Hughes on a fairly regular basis?

Mr. MACINNES. Yes, very much so. But again, the CTCC is interagency. The deputy director is a DOD officer, and it is interagency in its nature and makeup.

Mr. SMITH. But from a hierarchy standpoint, they then report up and go on from there?

Mr. MACINNES. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. That is all I have.

Do you have anything to wrap it up?

Mr. THORNBERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a few questions in the limited time we have.

I just mentioned—in response to the point you were asking about, my understanding is that for a substantial segment of the Muslim population, short-wave radio is still a big deal, and yet too many—there is some issue of funding where we are no longer funding some initiatives of the government that we have funded in the past. And so, while I agree with you completely on the Internet, different strategies, different mechanisms seem to make sense in different places.

I want to get briefly back to Mr. Saxton, because I think he very eloquently laid out the heart of this issue and not everybody had a chance to respond.

I am looking back at that Defense Science Board report I mentioned before, and it talked about building on an in-depth knowledge of other cultures and factors that motivate human behavior, which it does seem to me is the heart of the matter. He laid out the contrast between Lebanon and some of the recent successes in Anbar.

Dr. Doran, on a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate our in-depth knowledge of other cultures and factors that motivate human behavior as are applied to our strategic communication strategies?

Dr. DORAN. I would give us a five or a six. It differs in different areas. I think we can do a lot better on that.

But I would put the emphasis on, as I said before, the need for a huge cultural shift. It isn't because people aren't trying, but the institutions and the processes that we have set up are really geared for another era and another threat.

Mr. THORNBERRY. I guess that is—let me ask you.

Mr. SMITH. I apologize. I have to run. I will let you wrap up the meeting, if that is okay, and finish your questions, but I have to get to my office before I get to the floor.

Thank you.

Mr. THORNBERRY [presiding]. Mr. MacInnes, how many folks do you have working at the Communications Center?

Mr. MACINNES. The Communications Center is 12 people. We have kept it deliberately very small because we are not trying to be a production unit, but more of a——

Mr. THORNBERRY. So you don't intend to expand?

Mr. MACINNES. We don't intend to expand. We might go to 18, but I doubt more than that.

Mr. THORNBERRY. This may be an unanswerable question, but what you have essentially described, an interagency cooperation collaboration, that seems really hard to make effective in a time when communication goes at the speed of light.

Now, if you are to develop a—you know, I think maybe you said earlier, before you post on a blog, you have to talk about it and make sure that posting is going to be okay. How can that possibly be effective?

Mr. MACINNES. It can be effective, but the turnaround time needs to speed up, there is no question.

One of the things Karen Hughes set up is this rapid response unit because we used to, like, read the news in the morning and get somebody on the air about 5 in the afternoon. Well, in Europe, that means you have missed the nightly news; it means you missed 24 hours of the cycle.

Now we actually have it so that, by 7:30 in the morning, we have heads up; we will get somebody on the air to answer a question in Europe by 11 in the morning, which means you get on the nightly news.

Doing that on the Internet requires greater efforts on our part. It requires more robust efforts and a more 24/7 effort.

It is true when we have the cycle, it is relentless and it is very difficult. And we are grappling with that because bureaucracies do not move as fast as—we need to be more entrepreneurial. We need to figure out ways to be more entrepreneurial in how we deal with this, because the traditional ways do not work, often.

Mr. THORNBERRY. And wouldn't you agree, in power, people on the front lines—understanding they may make a mistake here or there, but you are going to have to tolerate that; we are going to have to tolerate it too, by the way—in the interest of speed.

Let me ask one other question. Then I am going to have to go. I may have some others for the record, if you don't mind.

How are the things you all do plugged in to the NCTC because as I understand it, the overall planning in the government for the war against terror is by the NCTC. Defense Science Board and everybody else says you can't have strategic communications as a plug-in; you know, it has got to be an integral part from the beginning. And so the work you do, to be effective, has to be integrally plugged in and integrated to the strategic planning that the NCTC does.

Are you integrated yet?

Mr. MACINNES. We are very integrated. We have a full-time NCTC person sitting in the office. He is one of the 12 people, and he does 4 days with us, one back at NCTC.

We also, when we do messaging, we run it by the NCTC analytical unit. In fact, we use the intel to inform how we think about addressing these issues.

Mr. THORNBERRY. But do you have folks at NCTC to be part of the planning process?

Mr. MACINNES. There are State people there, but probably not—I don't know if they are in the planning division.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Okay.

I appreciate the work you all do, and I appreciate your being here. I am sorry we are cut short a little bit. We are going to have a whole bunch of votes. We may have some questions for the record, if that is all right.

Thank you again, all of you, for your testimony and for your work.

And with that, the hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:23 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

November 15, 2007

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

NOVEMBER 15, 2007

Subcommittee Chairman Adam Smith
Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee
Hearing re: Strategic Communications and Counter Ideological Support for Terrorism

November 15, 2007

"Our fight against al-Qaeda and their message of violent, totalitarian subjugation has many different pieces to it, but central to them all is an ideological struggle – a war of ideas. We cannot just fight al-Qaeda and their current supporters. We must strategically communicate a better message in a better way to stop the spread of extremism and deny al-Qaeda new supporters.

"Strategic communications were a central component of our struggle against communism during the Cold War. In our current battle of ideas, they should remain front-and-center as we work to roll back al-Qaeda's spread among disaffected populations. Various organizations within our government are working in some way to counter these messages, but my sense is that we lack a coordinated, comprehensive, adequately resourced strategy to confront al-Qaeda's ideology through a strategic message campaign.

"Al-Qaeda as an organization are very adept communicators. They aggressively seek opportunities through a variety of new and traditional media to promulgate their arguments and radicalize and recruit local populations. Through clever use of the Internet and a steady trickle of video messages distributed to and through the media, al-Qaeda drives its central messages and takes us on in the marketplace of ideas.

"The subcommittee plans to focus on four key areas today:

1). How is the U.S. strategic communications effort to counter terrorist messages organized and coordinated?

2). What is the current state of strategic planning for these inter-agency efforts?

3). What are the metrics and feedback mechanisms for measuring the effectiveness of these efforts?

4). What are the plans for the next 5 years?

"I want to thank our witnesses for taking time to discuss a central issue in our current struggle against al-Qaeda."

U.S. House Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats

"Strategic Communication and Countering Ideological Support for Terrorism"

Statement of Duncan MacInnes
Principal Deputy Coordinator
Bureau of International Information Programs
U.S. Department of State

November 15, 2007
10:00 a.m.

Chairman Smith, Congressman Thornberry and distinguished Members of the Sub-Committee on Terrorism and Unconventional Threats and Capabilities. Thank you for inviting me here today to discuss the central strategic communications issue of countering ideological support for terrorism.

Combating ideological support for terrorism poses a variety of daunting, new challenges for U.S. public diplomacy. Terrorists have shown themselves to be adept at exploiting the freedom of the Internet to spread their propaganda, including video messages and images, directly to young Muslims around the world. Our traditional communication tools are designed for mainstream media and have little impact in this new information 'battlefield.' Our audience stretches beyond the traditional opinion leaders and political elites to include the general public and specifically the youth who are the target of extremist propaganda.

During the Cold War, we fought a traditional enemy in the USSR and our tools included traditional public diplomacy tools such as educational exchanges, publications, and mainstream media. These tools are still very effective at winning "hearts and minds," but are not sufficient by themselves. Our themes to win the "war of ideas" against communism stressed our core values – our dedication to liberty, democracy, freedom of speech and religion, and free markets – and our opposition to intellectual coercion, and political and economic oppression. These principles remain relevant and powerful today, but we need to continue to develop new tactics to counter an elusive and decentralized non-state foe who uses the Internet and new technologies to spread its ideology of violence.

We are meeting this challenge by shifting a portion of our efforts and resources from programs aimed at elite audiences and key opinion-makers to ones aimed at a broader audience, which includes potential recruits to terrorism – many of whom are young, marginalized or disaffected and hostile towards and suspicious of the United States.

We are in a struggle that will take years. While we must focus on the threat of the moment, we also need to take on the long term tasks of promoting freedom and democracy, which create conditions that do not allow extremism to flourish. We need to reach those who might be vulnerable in the future to extremist lies and messages of hate. We are dealing with the immediate and organizing for the long haul through educational and cultural programs, libraries, publications and English teaching.

Interagency Cooperation

We have come a long way in our efforts to coordinate strategic communication across the interagency.
On April 8, 2006, the President established the interagency Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC) on Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication, with Under Secretary Karen Hughes in the chair, to lead international strategic communications messaging within the Administration. Over the past year, Under Secretary Hughes has reorganized the PCC to ensure more active interagency coordination and synergy in the struggle with violent extremism. She established the interagency Counterterrorism Communication Center, and created sub-PCC's to look at State-DoD Cooperation, coordinate Research, Analysis & Polling and study the issue of Branding.

Last week, Dr. Doran and Captain Pittman and I were all together at a Global Synchronization Conference held by SOCOM. The week before that, we met as part of a State-DoD sub-PCC on planning and coordination of our activities. Overseas, in the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Europe, our Public Diplomacy Officers work closely with military Public Affairs and PsyOps officers. Military Information Support Teams (MIST) are integrated into the work of an increasing number of our embassies.

Our State-DoD sub-PCC explores ways to enhance our cooperation and develop shared communication strategies. Already in the works are initiatives on coordinated web hosting and content, video and blogging, a renewed effort to identify and find ways to empower credible Muslim voices, develop a

shared image databank and strengthen the effectiveness of MIST work in our overseas missions.

The Research and Analysis sub-PCC is developing interagency protocols for sharing information as a first step toward the creation of an electronic clearinghouse for unclassified foreign and security policy-driven public opinion polling and audience research by USG agencies. This is an unprecedented initiative, a demonstration of the determination of the participating agencies to work with each other to the advantage of U.S. national interests. Our intention is that the clearinghouse for all this interagency data will be housed on the USG-only INFOCENTRAL guidance web portal, managed by my bureau, International Information Programs (IIP) for the interagency.

The Counterterrorism Communication Center

Under Secretary Hughes established the Counterterrorism Communication Center (CTCC) last summer to coordinate overall overt USG strategic communications messaging in the war of ideas and to produce and disseminate effective messaging to counter terrorist ideology, especially in the Arab and Muslim world but also in Europe and elsewhere.

The CTCC is a small but truly interagency organization, with staff currently drawn from the Department of State, Department of Defense, the National Counter Terrorism Center and the intelligence community. Working with State, DoD and other USG agencies, it produces strategic communications plans, develops effective narratives and themes to undermine and counter terrorist messaging, and produces specific messages for use by State and DoD communicators. It responds with talking points to breaking events and works closely with the Rapid Response Unit in the State Department's Public Affairs Office to put out a regular anti-terrorism message. CTCC messages go to more than 2,000 key U.S. government communicators, including the Combatant Commands and all U.S. Embassies, who build on the themes and information in the messages, customizing them for local audiences in order to achieve the greatest impact. Our efforts focus on undermining and putting extremists on the defensive by exposing how terrorists recruit and exploit young people, destroy mosques and religious sites and murder women, children and innocent victims, such as the tragic events of last week that resulted in the deaths of 59 schoolboys, five teachers, police officers and other innocent adult bystanders in an effort to target members of the Afghan parliament, six of whom died in the attack.

The CTCC is intended to be a small, collaborative, interagency resource with a daily mission of providing the intellectual leadership necessary for countering terrorist ideology and extremist propaganda through coordinated messages. The mission and functions of CTCC were developed in response to needs identified by the defense, foreign policy and intelligence communities. The effectiveness of the CTCC is dependent on its interagency staffing, and we intend for the CTCC to continue drawing on expertise from across the entire government.

The Interagency Strategic Communication Fusion Team

In 2002, we established the Interagency Strategic Communication Fusion Team, our first effort to coordinate across the agencies. Managed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, it has been bringing together strategic communication professionals from State, DoD, the Broadcasting Board of Governors, the intelligence community, and other agencies to exchange ideas and information on a weekly basis. In a government as large and complex as ours, the Fusion Team plays a valuable role in making connections between the many people working on the counter terrorism agenda and encouraging interaction among different bureaucracies and trading information about "best practices" and new ideas. Speakers from inside and outside government are selected for their ability to contribute useful information on strategic communication, especially countering ideological support for terrorism. The elegance of the Fusion Team rests in its flexibility and ability to network communication professionals.

Internet and New Technologies

The Digital Outreach Team

The Digital Outreach Team was launched just one year ago as a pilot initiative to counter ideological support for terrorism. It employs Arabic speakers to post entries on influential Arabic-language blogs, challenging misrepresentations and providing accurate information about U.S. policy and American society. These bloggers speak the language and idiom of the region, know the cultural reference points and are often able to converse informally and frankly rather than adopt the usually more formal persona of a U.S. government spokesperson. This is a major departure from our previous ways of conducting public diplomacy. It requires both creativity and a new set of skills.

The cultural sensitivity that this approach affords has been very successful, but it is labor-intensive. We are currently in the process of expanding the original team of two Arabic bloggers to six, while also adding one Urdu and two Farsi (Persian) linguists. The team does not engage hardcore militant sites, but concentrates on mainstream sites with heavy traffic that discuss U.S. policy, such as BBC Arabic, Al-Jazeera Talk, and Elaph On-Line News. We are also exploring how we can use the applicability to our mission of new cyber-technologies such as Second Life and cell phone games to further advance our mission.

Arabic and Persian Websites

Our Bureau of International Information Programs is fully engaged in dramatically expanding public diplomacy and countering extremist ideologies through the Internet. Our English language website and six foreign language sites – including Arabic and Persian – are being revamped to use more videos, blogging, podcast and webchats designed to reach younger audiences. The Arabic web site has the specific goal of countering violent extremism by offering a positive vision rooted in American values. It attracts more than 200,000 visitors per month, top users coming from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and Morocco.

The Internet also provides the most effective way of reaching Iranian youth. Our Persian web site has been highly successful with an average of 42,000 users – mostly from inside Iran -- visiting each week, making this one of the State Department's single most-viewed public diplomacy websites. We have attracted over 125,000 visitors to the Persian language version of our electronic journal on "Countering the Terrorist Mentality," which was publicized through an on-line ad campaign.

Credible Voices

The decline in favorability of overseas public opinion toward the United States has resulted in increased skepticism about the motives that drive our policy. On the practical side, this has led to distrust that undermines the effectiveness of our messages against extremists. We address this issue by working with our embassies overseas and with the American Muslim community to reinforce the messages of credible anti-extremists voices. For example, we have sent out dozens of American Muslims to predominantly Muslim countries to engage with counterparts. These Citizen Dialogue programs counter al-Qaida's negative propaganda message that the U.S. is at

war with Islam. The CTCC collects and disseminates anti-terrorist statements, editorials and cartoons by Muslims from around the world in order to amplify their voices. Our Digital Outreach Team uses these statements in its Arabic blogging. We are in the process now of finding new ways to empower credible Muslim voices throughout the Muslim world.

"Diplomacy of Deeds"

Under Secretary Karen Hughes talks about the importance of "waging peace" by showing that the United States is a positive force for good in the world, in stark contrast to the destructive ideologies espoused by al-Qaida and other terrorist groups. The strongest messages are sent not through words, but through the diplomacy of deeds. Americans are generous and committed to helping others. Our humanitarian aid – private and public – is unmatched in the world. We have worked hard with DoD to promote understanding among foreign publics of our humanitarian efforts. These have included the dramatic story of our emergency relief for tsunami and earthquake victims in Pakistan and Indonesia. These well-known efforts complement many other USG activities, such as visits by the U.S. hospital ships *Comfort* and *Mercy* to Latin America and the Far East, where they treated hundreds of thousands of patients. Our diplomacy of deeds dramatically reveals the lies of the extremists' misinformation and anti-American propaganda.

Countering Violent Islamic Extremism: The Pilot Countries Project

The Pilot Countries Initiative provides funding for special projects in 19 key countries with predominant or sizable Muslim populations. Funded by an emergency supplemental, the Pilot Country Project seeks to find ways to counter ideological support for terrorism through innovative projects identified by the Ambassador and senior embassy staff in each country. The focus of many of these projects is to reach young people who are vulnerable to radicalization and help them develop the skills and confidence they need to resist recruitment by committed extremists.

An example of a Pilot Country Project is the very well-received "Greetings from America" radio show, which broadcasts on local overseas radio programs the first-person accounts of life in America presented by Pakistani and Indonesia high school students studying here. Reaching several million young Muslim listeners, this program dispels myths and misinformation about the United States.

Mr. Chairman: I have given you and the members an overview of our current and new initiatives to counter extremist ideologies. I have also highlighted the very positive trend towards great interagency cooperation between the Departments of State and Defense. This struggle against the evils of terrorism will take many years, and we still have a great deal more to do to meet the challenge of violent extremism. We believe we have made major strides in adapting to the new and sometimes daunting media environment of the 21st century. But these initiatives do not stand in isolation. Public diplomacy and strategic communication must continue to deploy all instruments at our disposal and must rely on the best and most up-to-date research data. We need to expand our use of the Internet and other new and traditional media while continuing support for effective and more targeted educational exchanges, youth initiatives and English teaching programs. More importantly, we must continue to work harder to integrate our overall USG efforts, embrace new communication technologies and enlist the support of our allies overseas. We must continue to work towards a proactive position instead of one that is only reactive. The battle for the hearts and minds is one that will only succeed if we embrace innovation and use our nation's great communication talent and creativity.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

U.S. House of Representatives Armed Services Committee
Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities

"Strategic Communication and
Countering Ideological Support for Terrorism"

Statement of Captain Hal Pittman
Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Joint Communication)

Thursday, November 15, 2007

Chairman Smith, Congressman Thornberry, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, Good morning. First, I'd like to thank the Committee for all you have done to support our military and our men and women in uniform. In particular, some of you have military bases in your districts, and as a uniformed service member, I am grateful for your efforts to ensure our war fighters have the tools and training they need to accomplish our mission.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today about the Department of Defense's efforts in strategic communication. As a military officer and professional communicator by trade, I have served in multiple assignments in the Central Command's area of responsibility, and have observed first-hand many of the communication challenges we face today. I believe strongly in the need for collaboration, coordination, and horizontal integration of our actions and words within both the Department and the Interagency, and I realize this process of communication integration will require a long term commitment and sustained effort on the part of the Department of Defense.

Today, I will try to briefly describe for this Subcommittee some of the efforts to date that the Department of Defense has undertaken in this regard. Specifically, I'll cover a couple of areas where the Department is working to institutionalize the process of strategic communication –

- The Quadrennial Defense Review Strategic Communication Execution Roadmap, designed to track the development of supporting capabilities across the Department;
- The Strategic Communication Integration Group, or SCIG, process, which is the Department's collaborative planning effort for strategic communication;
- Support to State Department and Interagency;
- And education and cultural change efforts focusing on helping strategic communication thinking occur naturally in every action.

The information environment we live in today has radically changed from a decade ago. New technologies, collaborative social media, and the proliferation of 24-hour-a-day news and information sources have created an explosion of information. Information speed has exponentially increased, and traditional barriers and gatekeepers have diminished. We live in a world of citizen journalists, where every action or operation is witnessed, taped and reported, individual actions are amplified, and organizations face the challenge of strategic implication. In today's flat world, a seemingly isolated interaction in the morning becomes fodder for bloggers immediately, appears on local television news by noon, and is international news by evening.

Our enemies—violent extremists around the world—have also recognized the utility of this environment for their cause, where the virtual world can be used to proselytize, recruit, raise money, and coordinate violence against American citizens and interests.

Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England, during remarks at this past summer's DoD Worldwide Strategic Communication Seminar, stressed that strategic communication has assumed an integral role in the military's operational environment, calling strategic communication "professional war fighting," and indicating that the Department needs to integrate SC at the beginning of all operational planning.

Since 9-11, the Department of Defense has wrestled with improving the process that integrates actions, words and images of the Department. Senior leaders in the Department recognized the growing importance of information, and the need to enhance the supporting communication capabilities of Public Affairs, Visual Information, Defense Support to Public Diplomacy, and Information Operations, including Psychological Operations.

In 2005, the Joint Chiefs of Staff approved the recommendation to create the Joint Public Affairs Support Element (JPASE) at U.S. Joint Forces Command. With its creation, JPASE was given the responsibility of providing dedicated and sustained improvement of joint public affairs capabilities; enhanced, integrated PA training for joint warfighters; and a trained, equipped, scalable and expeditionary PA capability to support regional combatant commanders worldwide.

Since its creation, JPASE has been fully integrated into the U.S. Joint Forces Command's Combatant Command training and mission rehearsal program. It has been involved in helping Joint Force Commanders develop and execute effective communication strategies, and has provided a rapidly deployable expeditionary PA capability for contingency and humanitarian relief operations on eight separate occasions -- twice in support of hurricane relief efforts in the U.S. in 2005, as well as in support of Pakistan earthquake relief, where JPASE efforts significantly impacted audiences that had previously held negative views of the U.S.; deployed supporting military operations facilitating the departure of U.S. citizens from Lebanon in 2006 during hostilities there; and this year deployed to Afghanistan supporting the NATO International Security and Assistance Force. In the last few weeks, JPASE has provided extra public affairs support for military units fighting California wildfires.

Recently, JPASE was designated a component of the Global Response Force a rapid response capability available for world wide deployment within 72 hours. This organization provides a substantial capability to the Department, but even upon reaching full operational capability, JPASE will still have less than 50 people.

In their proponency capacity, JPASE has also sponsored studies regarding the Department's public affairs and visual information capabilities—studies that are helping to identify and fill gaps in the Department's ability to communicate.

Another milestone in developing the strategic communication capability of the Department was the creation of the billet I currently occupy. After briefings to the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 2004 and 2005 which outlined the Department's capability gaps in conducting public affairs in a war fighting environment, senior leadership identified a requirement for a Flag or General Officer in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs to coordinate efforts helping develop some of these supporting communication capabilities.

On December 1, 2005, my predecessor, Rear Admiral Frank Thorp was assigned duties as the first Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Joint Communication, or DASD (JC). The office of DASD (JC) is responsible for overseeing Department of Defense activities directed at shaping department-wide communications doctrine, organization, and training for the joint force.

The efforts of DASD (JC), working with the DASD for Support to Public Diplomacy, directly complement efforts led by the Department of State.

Joint Communication focuses on two major mission areas -- Communication Integration, which includes future communication planning within the Department of Defense, and Communication Proponency, which includes helping ensure the Department's communicators are properly organized, trained, and equipped to support the Joint War Fighter.

Other Joint Communication responsibilities include assisting with the development of doctrine and policy to infuse "SC thinking" at the front end of operations, securing resources to develop, sustain, and enhance SC supporting capabilities, standardizing SC education and training, and institutionalizing the SC process across the Department.

Under the Joint Communication proponency mission, my office is assigned as the primary office overseeing implementation of the QDR Strategic Communication Execution Roadmap.

Thirteen months ago, on September 25th, 2006, Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England signed the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Strategic Communication Execution Roadmap. The creation of the Quadrennial Defense Review SC Execution Roadmap is a milestone in institutionalizing strategic communication across the Department.

As the QDR concluded, several important initiatives were identified that warranted a greater degree of attention prior to execution, and the Department of Defense instituted follow-on QDR Execution Roadmaps in these areas. The roadmaps define important objectives, timelines, and an oversight process.

The SC Execution Roadmap defines strategic communication as:

"Focused United States Government processes and efforts to understand and engage key audiences to create, strengthen or preserve conditions favorable to advance national interests and objectives through the use of coordinated information, themes, plans, programs, and actions synchronized with other elements of national power."

While there is still some debate over this specific definition, the combatant commands and military services have implemented it and have implemented processes for communication integration.

The SC Execution Roadmap articulated three primary objectives:

1) Institutionalize a DoD process by which principles of Strategic Communication are incorporated in the development of policy formulation, planning and execution.

2) Define roles, responsibilities and relationships, and develop doctrine for Strategic Communication and its primary communication supporting capabilities: Public Affairs (PA); aspects of Information Operations (IO), principally PSYOP; Visual Information (VI), and the DoD activities of Military Diplomacy (MD) and Defense Support to Public Diplomacy.

and

3) Properly resource Military Departments and Combatant Commands to organize, train, and equip DoD's primary communication supporting capabilities.

These Roadmap efforts are ongoing. Roadmap tasks are assigned to offices of primary responsibility (OPRs) across the Department, and these offices are responsible for the development of their assigned capabilities or completion of specific actions. Roadmap implementation is guided by roadmap co-chairs, and an advisory team reviews task progress bi-monthly and advises co-chairs on key issues.

One of the most significant successes of the Roadmap to date is the establishment of an integrating process with the creation of a Strategic Communication Integration Group and a process for implementing strategic communication within the Department.

On August 25, 2006, the Deputy Secretary of Defense directed establishment of a Strategic Communication Integration Group (SCIG) Secretariat, tasked with ensuring that communications plans and concepts from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commanders, and the Military Departments are coordinated and synchronized, and also established a SCIG Executive Committee, or EXCOM, to provide senior leadership for the Department's strategic communication initiatives.

I serve as the Director of the SCIG Secretariat—which means that more than half of my day-to-day focus is on ensuring Department-wide communication plans and annexes are staffed and approved through the SCIG process.

In early 2007, DASD (Joint Communication) established a Strategic Communication Directors' Group (SCDG), composed of general and flag officer-level SC directors from the combatant commands, the military services, Joint Staff, and offices of the Under and Assistant Secretaries of Defense. The SCDG conducts weekly video teleconferences to facilitate staff action, information sharing and collaboration across the Department on SC-related actions, and serves to bring issues of importance into the SCIG process for resolution.

An early Strategic Communication planning effort coordinated through the SCIG process was focused on countering al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan. The plan was signed out on 12 September 2007 and is comprehensive and actionable. An execution matrix directs tasks, assigns leads, and includes desired effects and measures of effectiveness. Some of the tasks listed in this plan are being accomplished as we speak, some are not yet started, and some may require additional examination or resources. An initial assessment of planned tasks and measures of effectiveness will be compiled within the next few months, and will be updated every six months thereafter.

Development of this initial Afghan Plan took time, but enabled us to refine the Department's process for Strategic Communication planning. Our current vision relies on broad, strategic guidance synchronized with other US Government departments and agencies to frame the effort, with the actual deliberate planning occurring within service or combatant command staffs, where there resides a greater depth of understanding and expertise. Some cross-cutting SC plans may still be created in Washington, but under

this model, most strategic communication plans or annexes will be created in a decentralized fashion.

Under this process, a strategic communication issue, concept, or proposed plan is submitted to the Strategic Communication Integration Group by a COCOM or service SC Director for staffing. It is coordinated across the Department by the SCIG Secretariat, staffed in the Interagency through regular staffing channels, passed through the 3-person SCIG EXCOM, and is approved at the Deputy Secretary of Defense level.

Dialogue, discussion and information-sharing with the Interagency, especially between DoD and the State Department, has greatly increased. DASD (JC) participates in working groups and has joined Sub-Policy Coordinating Committees on a variety of topics and issues, including research, new media engagement, outreach, and content sharing.

There are standing meetings at various levels, including a Collaboration Group with DoD, State, & USAID, and a weekly Fusion Team meeting in which members reach across bureaucratic boundaries to offer or to seek support for their strategic communication plans and activities.

DoD also has had direct input into the National Strategy on PD and SC through the SCIG process, and has provided military manpower and expertise to the Interagency Counter Terrorism Communication Center established recently by the State Department.

In addition to communication integration efforts and the development of capabilities, the Department has also undertaken multiple strategic communication education and training initiatives over the past year to help institutionalize the SC process.

We have conducted SC workshops and seminars to educate and inform leadership on the SC process. Strategic communication and public affairs blocks of instruction have been developed and are being incorporated into Joint Professional Military Education, working closely with the various academic institutions and the military war colleges. Advanced and expeditionary Joint Public Affairs training courses are being developed as part of SC Roadmap tasks and incorporated into the Defense Information School curriculum at Fort Meade.

The Defense Information School (DINFOS) conducts 32 separate joint courses in nine separate career fields. Thirty-two-hundred students complete these courses each year, and twenty-five percent of those are Reservists and Guardsmen.

In April 2007 a curriculum for more advanced training was introduced at DINFOS with the first Senior Public Affairs Seminar for our more senior public affairs officers. The second iteration of that course is scheduled for the spring of 2008. For our mid-grade officers and senior enlisted, the first Joint Expeditionary Public Affairs Course is scheduled to be taught in January at the school's field exercise facility, and the first Joint Intermediate Public Affairs Course is scheduled in 2008.

Development and delivery of all these courses will provide increased public affairs capability across the Joint Force while fulfilling several Roadmap tasks on education.

Last year DINFOS ventured into the field of Advanced Distance Learning - or Internet classes, and that effort has led to including distance learning as part of DINFOS basic courses -- thus expanding the school's capacity, particularly in the training of Reservists and National Guardsmen.

Simultaneously, DoD and State are exploring ways to leverage training resources across the interagency. Interagency participants attended the first-ever DoD Strategic Communication Worldwide Seminar in July 2007, and a State Department representative attended the DoD Strategic Communication Seminar held two weeks ago at Naval Postgraduate School.

In summary, we've come a long way in the past four years and particularly in the two years since the DASD (JC) was established, but the Department has a way to go yet in realizing our long term goal of institutionalizing strategic communication.
The United States will not win the war on terrorism or achieve other crucial national security objectives by military means alone. Instead, the application of unified statecraft, at the Federal level and in concert with allies and international partners, is critical. In addition to coalition- and partner supported combat and preventive operations, simultaneous effective interaction with civilian populations will be essential to achieve

success. Victory in the long war ultimately depends on strategic communication by the United States and its international partners.

We most certainly appreciate your support of our efforts, and the interest you show by conducting this hearing.

We will look forward to responding to any questions you may have at this time.

STATEMENT OF
DR. MICHAEL DORAN
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR
SUPPORT TO PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I thank you for inviting me to speak today about the significant issue of Countering Ideological Support to Terrorism—or CIST. Increasingly, we are gaining a deeper understanding of how this mission is a vital component of our overall foreign policy. The very nature of the challenges that we face ensures that over time CIST's importance will only continue to grow.

This is driven by the fact that the war we are fighting today is an information war-- a global conflict of perception. When al-Qaida launched its attacks on 9/11 its primary goal was not to cripple the United States, but to create a perception of American weakness and vulnerability among key audiences. Similarly, when terrorists launch IED attacks in Iraq today, we see them expending great effort to capture the event so that it can be posted on the Internet, often within hours. The spectacle of the attack is as important to them -- sometimes more important -- than the destructive effect itself.

At their heart, these attacks against Americans are tools in a contest for power and authority within Muslim societies, and within Muslim diaspora communities. The goal of CIST is, therefore, to purposefully join and influence a political process – an ongoing, multi-sided conversation if you will – that is proceeding independently of the United States.

The recent successes of General David Patraeus and his Iraqi allies have dramatically demonstrated to us the primacy of politics in CIST. Gen. Petraeus has taught us that we must coordinate our statements and our actions in an effort to

influence an internal Iraqi debate about legitimate political authority in that country. Iraqi perceptions of American intent and capabilities are of paramount importance for the success of our efforts.

The Iraqi example underscores the idea that CIST is not primarily about creating "Brand America." It should not be reduced solely to public diplomacy campaigns with the objective of burnishing the image of America. Those are laudable and important efforts, carried out principally by the US Department of State, and we fully support and encourage them. They are a critical element of the CIST mission, but they are not its essence.

The key to the CIST mission is influencing a primarily intra-Muslim conversation, with the goal of undermining the intellectual and perceptual underpinnings of terrorism. Much of the appeal of terrorist groups rests on a collective sense of victimization, a sense of an impending existential threat. Terrorist leaders actively foster the perception that the global Islamic community is under threat of extinction. To counter the terrorists, we must inject critical doubt among key populations about the terrorists' singular vision of hate and fear. It is important for us to realize that this sense of threat often derives from internal Muslim political processes as much as it does from perceptions of American intent.

We associate this vision of hate and fear primarily with al-Qaida. An examination of Arabic-language media, however, shows that key elements of that vision are echoed

and reinforced by the media of Iran, Syria, and other opponents of US policies. The fatalist destructive narrative that we commonly associate with al-Qaida is but one tool that our opponents use to thwart the development of democratic political systems, individual rights and, not least of all, the ordinary hopes and dreams that spell danger for dictatorships. For their vision to have any credibility, terrorist groups seek to foster a sense of doom--that "midnight" is fast approaching. In nurturing this sense of threat, al-Qaida, Iran, and others, argue that the United States and our allies are somehow placing the global Islamic community in peril.

To counter this narrative, we must chip away at the bleak picture of helplessness and vulnerability that support it. Our enemies foster a culture of blame to foment anger, hatred and a sense of victimization. Then, they offer themselves and their violence as the only solution to the challenges of today. The DoD attempts to counteract these responses by promoting a sense of individual responsibility, common human values across religious divides, empowerment, and a desire to fix current problems in a cooperative spirit rather than through a resort to violence.

For CIST to be successful, it must focus on the self-perceptions of key audiences rather than perceptions of America. Its message must outline an alternative future that is more attractive than the bleak future offered by terrorists. The positive narrative that explains these differences must contain more than just anti-terrorist rhetoric. It must include elements that will impact the future everyday lives of Muslims everywhere – fairness, justice, opportunity, liberty, health, education, and hope. To promote these objectives,

therefore, we cannot simply focus on "getting our message out," or on writing better talking points. To be sure, public diplomacy and public affairs are vital tools for CIST, but it primarily requires taking actions that make the alternative narrative real, and building partnership capacity among our Muslim allies. Thus, other key components of an effective CIST program include civil affairs, security, education reform, establishing the solid rule of law, and opening economic opportunity for all. In Iraq's al-Anbar province we are beginning to see the process of CIST done right.

CIST IN ACTION: COUNTERING AL-QAIDA IN IRAQ

As recently as a few short months ago, public commentary widely suggested that al-Qaida had established a secure stronghold in Iraq. The truth, we now know, is that al-Qaida was not as welcomed in Iraq as many experts and outside commentators claimed. Based on an assessment of their local interests, Iraqis in al-Anbar province have openly declared common cause with U.S. and Iraqi security forces against al-Qaida in Iraq (AQI). In late 2006, the Anbar Salvation Council emerged to oppose al-Qaida's excessive violence, ideological extremism, and attacks on civilians.

Success in al-Anbar inspired courageous leaders in other provinces to also mobilize. Diyala, a demographically mixed province northeast of Baghdad, became the scene of intense activity after terrorists were run out of Anbar. As the terrorist presence in Diyala grew so did local opposition to it, from both Sunni and

Shi`a Iraqis. The campaign in Diyala has expanded beyond its tribal basis to include mainstream politicians and parties and has created an opportunity for sectarian reconciliation. These developments, in turn, opened up a widening rift between al-Qaida's senior leadership and AQI.

This is not to imply that al-Qaida is defeated or to take credit for the hard work the Iraqis did for themselves. This example, however, raises questions the answers to which have important implications for our strategic approach to CIST. For example, in Iraq, are we witnessing a strategic defeat for al-Qaida's information warfare campaign? What can the Iraqis' experience tell Afghans, Pakistanis, Algerians, and others who wish to cast off the oppressive vision being hammered into their daily lives by al-Qaida's ruthless thugs?

These setbacks are instructive for what they tell us about Muslim communities and their relationship to al-Qaida. There is evidence of a deepening ideological divide between al-Qaida, with its uncompromising agenda of global jihad, and local groups with their more nationalist and community-focused objectives. We often mistakenly group these movements together and characterize al-Qaida as the leader of a monolithic movement, loyal to Osama bin Laden's vision and the primary symbol of Islamic resistance worldwide. Neither Islam nor al-Qaida is monolithic. Despite al-Qaida's depiction of itself as the vanguard of the Muslim community, there is a long history of disagreement among radical, Islamist

groups that stems from divergent local and international objectives, political and ethnic divides and differences over the means to accomplish their agendas.

Local insurgent groups and even individuals may adopt al-Qaida's rhetoric, but they often have their own ideas of how to operate and differ with al-Qaida on fundamental beliefs. This does not diminish the threat posed by these groups in their regions, but it does suggest that al-Qaida, with its religious and ideological rigidity, carries the seeds of its own destruction.

Through CIST, we seek to appeal to the self-interest of local communities, whose values and aspirations find no expression in al-Qaida's worldview. Although al-Qaida claims to speak on behalf of all Muslims, we should not be taken in by its propaganda, or inadvertently endorse its inflated sense of its own ideological appeal. The objective of our CIST approach is to force al-Qaida to live as a minor actor in our alternative, pro-future narrative.

Al-Qaida builds nothing; it only destroys. For this reason, we will eventually prevail. Nevertheless, winning will not be easy. In Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, and the Palestinian Authority we are working to help build responsible, stable, pluralistic governments. This process takes time, particularly in deeply divided societies living in the shadow of states that turn a blind eye to terrorists operating within and across their borders. Building trust is hard. Carrying out acts of destruction and intimidation is much easier.

Nevertheless, the reality is that governments and citizens are fighting against al-Qaida. Local groups from Iraq to the Philippines have rejected al-Qaida's stagnant ideology. And the timing of these events contradicts claims that U.S. policy in Iraq has radicalized Muslims worldwide. Currents of opinion in Muslim regions are more complex than polling data can ever show. Even where polls suggest growing anti-Americanism, the link between attitudes and behavior is a complicated one. Muslims may not like U.S. policy, but it does not follow that they will turn to al-Qaida.

I am not declaring success against al-Qaida, but to paraphrase the famous quote from Winston Churchill, in Iraq this is "not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning."

WHAT IS SUPPORT TO PUBLIC DIPLOMACY?

Now I would like to take explain the role my office, Support to Public Diplomacy (SPD), plays in this process and some thoughts about forging a larger "community of interest" in strategic communication across the US government.

SPD was established in December 2006. I would like it to serve as a transmission belt between the Department of State and Defense, and between policy ideas and actions. A core element of this is, I believe, empowering entities of DoD, particularly the Combatant Commanders, to implement CIST strategies.

We envision this implementation taking place in partnership with State, as well as other US government agencies, foreign allies, and even the private sector. OSD Policy helps define objectives and coordinates themes; others execute programs. We strive to create—or recreate as some would argue—a system that supports the dissemination of a single, core message through multiple means.

Internal communication, between OSD, the Joint Staff, and the Combatant Commanders, is essential to the execution of successful external strategic communication. SPD and others in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy must provide clear guidance and policy statements. We also require clear diagnosis of problems—and successes—from operators. We require some hierarchy for quality control, but need to assess the layers we create in DoD and determine what "gates" are necessary to provide correct information in a persuasive manner.

As a "start-up" office, inside an enormous department, SPD possesses a little extra maneuver space in which to operate. While we cannot immediately change existing authorities, and we certainly don't intend to subvert them in any way, I would like to harness SPD's entrepreneurial mindset to forge a "communities of interest" approach among those groups, agencies and offices across the government who are interested in CIST. We recognize that our current governmental structural was not meant to resolve the problems of the global Information Age – the mismatch between authorities for public diplomacy

in State and the resources in DOD—being one obvious proof of this. The difficulty of being agile and responsive to information needs in a hierarchy is another. SPD is not the answer to resolving these challenges. We can, however, improve the situation. For instance, we can help develop a "global script," with our partners and allies to improve our capacity to act in the Information Age. SPD's goal, therefore, is to purposefully join and influence the primarily intra-Muslim conversation that I mentioned earlier in a way that strengthens the security and legitimacy of Muslims who are striving to make real a positive view of our collective futures. The War of Ideas will not be won by DoD, or for that matter, by the US government alone, but rather, by our Muslim partners working with us.

Congress' role in this effort is crucial. I see today's hearing as an opportunity to build, or enhance, a community of interest on CIST with you and other like-minded members of Congress. As we will discuss today, much of what the Departments of Defense and State seek to accomplish in CIST and strategic communication cannot be done without Congress. As we look at resources and organizational structures, Congress—and this committee in particular—is vital to America's future success.

However, as you are well aware, Congress' importance to strategic communication goes well beyond just authorizations and appropriations. You are all key communicators to both domestic and foreign audiences. In word and

deed, Congress' actions illustrate to our Allies and adversaries this country's dedication to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness through respect for law, a balance of power, and peaceful resolution of conflict.

SPD can serve as a catalyst for the community—to enliven the debate, mitigate difficulties, enlarge the dialogue, and break down barriers. Our goal is simply to help strengthen DoD's use of information as a way to support military operations and achieve national objectives.

This is not a new idea. As a nation and a government we have successfully pursued such strategies in the past. Let me just briefly read to you a passage that I think aptly captures the informational and communications challenges we face.

"We must formulate and put forward for other nations a much more positive and constructive picture of the sort of world we would like to see than we have put forward in the past. It is not enough to urge people to develop political processes similar to our own. Many foreign peoples...are tired and frightened by the experiences of the past and are less interested in abstract freedom than in security. They are seeking guidance rather than responsibilities."

These sentences were not penned by Ambassador Ryan Crocker from Baghdad, but rather were part of the famous "Long Telegram" that George Kennan, the

intellectual architect of America's successful post-war strategy of containment, wired to the State Department in 1946.

While focused on confronting the expansionism of the Soviet Union, Kennan's words still carry meaning for us today. Our goals today and the goal Kennan succinctly captured--are still the same. We must communicate through word and deed a more compelling vision of the world than the competing vision that our enemies today are attempting to seed across the globe. What is markedly different, however from Kennan's time, is the range of means we have available for use to communicate that different vision. The Internet and the proliferation of cell phones has revolutionized and individualized the information environment. In working with the Department of State, the Intelligence Community, the Department of Homeland Security, other elements of DoD, SPD intends to make full use of traditional and new media for CIST.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this issue and I look forward to your questions and to our common work together. The journey is just beginning.

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

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How to Win The War Of Ideas

By Robert Satloff

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The resignation of Karen P. Hughes as undersecretary of state for public diplomacy gives President Bush an opportunity to fix one of the most glaring blunders in his administration's response to the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 -- a failure to prioritize ideological warfare over public relations.

Today, most Americans believe that the United States is fighting three wars: in Iraq, in Afghanistan and against violent Islamist extremists around the world (i.e., "the war on terror"). But as the Sept. 11 commission pointed out, we are, more accurately, engaged in what can be considered a fourth war, against the spread of the ideology of radical Islamism. In this war, the battlefields are the many cities, towns and villages where extremists seek to impose their absolutist view of sharia-based rule. The stakes in this contest are no less consequential for U.S. interests than those in the other three wars -- perhaps greater.

In terms of the narrow "war on terror," there is considerable evidence that the terrorists are losing. Captured al-Qaeda documents paint a portrait of a movement in distress, fearing defeat. Al-Qaeda and its satellites have failed to overthrow local Muslim governments, galvanize popular support or make headway toward replacing the international order with one based on the collective action of the world's Muslims.

In the ideological battle, however, radical Islamists are doing well. They have taken advantage of the administration's "freedom agenda," and in Lebanon, Egypt and the Palestinian territories, they have made substantial progress. Elsewhere, Islamists are expanding their influence in other ways, exploiting governmental weakness or failure in educational, financial and social welfare systems.

The U.S. government has a great stake in the outcome of this contest. But our government operates as though this war barely exists and has focused its energies on the wrong problem.

Since Sept. 11, the Bush administration has fixated on dismal public opinion surveys in Muslim countries and viewed the core task for public diplomacy to be: "How do we fix foreigners' perceptions of the United States?" The result was that, despite persistent poor results in polls, Hughes succeeded in improving America's public relations capacity. This included creating media "rapid response" teams, energizing diplomats to engage with local journalists, and repairing the content and message of the "speaker abroad" programs.

But these tactical achievements cannot hide a stunning strategic failure. Because Hughes was the most senior government official responsible for the "battle of ideas," her principal task should have been to answer the question: How can the United States most effectively empower anti-radical Muslims around the world to combat the spread of Islamist extremism? After all, the "battle of ideas" is not a popularity contest about us; it is a battle for political power among Muslims, in which America's favorability rating is irrelevant.

Hughes clearly was attracted to polls as a metric of success. In a Sept. 17 Post op-ed, she twice referred to positive poll numbers as signs of progress in the fight against al-Qaeda. In so doing, she lost all right to claim that the ideological struggle is, as she sometimes said, "the work of a generation." Journalists who criticized Hughes for failing to improve America's poll numbers abroad were only judging her by the measurement she chose to extol America's successes.

Hughes's resignation gives Bush one last chance to get this right. This requires a conceptual revolution. Rather than expend effort on winning Muslim friendship for America, our engagement with Muslim publics -- what we call "public diplomacy" -- should focus on identifying, nurturing and supporting anti-Islamist Muslims, from secular liberals to pious believers, who fear the encroachment of radical Islamists and are willing to make a stand.

This strategy would involve overt and covert ways to assist anti-Islamist political parties, nongovernmental organizations, trade unions, media outlets, women's groups, educational institutions and youth movements as they compete with the radicals. It calls for marshaling government resources -- our embassies, aid bureaucracies, international broadcasting units and intelligence agencies, as well as our commercial, educational and civic relationships -- to give anti-Islamists the moral, political, financial, technological and material support they need. A key feature of this includes empowering local Muslims with information about the salafist or Wahhabi connections of their radical Islamist adversaries.

Our goal is to help anti-Islamists prevent extremists from controlling public space, public speech and public behavior. If our allies win, their societies have a chance to join the globalizing world and America benefits; if anti-Islamists fail, they lose, we lose and no bump in America's poll numbers will ever offset the gravity of the defeat.

With 15 months left, victory in the "battle of ideas" will not come on President Bush's watch. But he has the power to make sure America is at least in the fight.

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