

FUTURE OF AL-QAEDA

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON TERRORISM,
NONPROLIFERATION, AND TRADE

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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CONTENTS

	Page
WITNESSES	
Bruce Hoffman, Ph.D., professor, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University	5
Seth G. Jones, Ph.D., senior political scientist, RAND Corporation	11
Mr. Thomas M. Sanderson, deputy director and senior fellow, Transnational Threats Project, Center for Strategic and International Studies	25
LETTERS, STATEMENTS, ETC., SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING	
Bruce Hoffman, Ph.D.: Prepared statement	7
Seth G. Jones, Ph.D.: Prepared statement	13
Mr. Thomas M. Sanderson: Prepared statement	28
APPENDIX	
Hearing notice	50
Hearing minutes	51
The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly, a Representative in Congress from the Commonwealth of Virginia: Prepared statement	53

FUTURE OF AL-QAEDA

TUESDAY, MAY 24, 2011

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TERRORISM,
NONPROLIFERATION, AND TRADE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 3 o'clock p.m., in room 2172 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Edward R. Royce (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. ROYCE. This hearing of the subcommittee will come to order. Today we consider the impact of the death of Osama bin Laden on the al-Qaeda terrorist network and U.S. counterterrorism policy.

Bin Laden was the symbolic, ideological and strategic core of the al-Qaeda movement, and the primary source of inspiration for that organization and many associated groups. His killing is a very significant development in our struggle against al-Qaeda.

With depleted ranks and resources, with polling showing that its star is waning in the Middle East, some go so far as to declare that al-Qaeda is "in its death throes." As we will hear today, that is wishful thinking. Unfortunately, al-Qaeda has proven all too adaptive, and that is one of the subjects that we are going to be looking at today.

One analyst notes that al-Qaeda operatives were not driven by loyalty to bin Laden's personality. They were driven by his twisted ideals. They embraced those twisted ideals. And, "We need to acknowledge at the outset," says a USAID report on violent extremists, "the power of ideas." It is the power of ideas that drove this movement, and, "We need to recognize that many violent extremists are moved, primarily," as USAID tells us, "by an unshakable belief in the superiority of certain values; by a perceived obligation to carry out God's command, or by an abiding commitment to destroy a system that they view as evil." God says that system is evil, so they must destroy it.

The lesson here is that bad ideas matter. Bad ideas have bad consequences.

Unfortunately, a growing number of affiliates, a growing number of individuals, are looking to fulfill this vision that bin Laden had. Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, which has already been linked to Fort Hood, and to the failed underwear bomber, and the cargo plane plot. That is the most energetic part right now of al-Qaeda. Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb is threatening with deep roots in North Africa, deep roots in Europe. We have seen from bombings

an increasing number of European and U.S. citizens have traveled to Somalia to link up with al-Shabaab.

Bin Laden's location, his hideout, has raised yet more doubts about the intelligence services in Pakistan. Was its intelligence service complicit, or was it just incompetent?

ISI has supported militant networks inside Pakistan and Afghanistan that are targeting U.S. soldiers. Nuclear proliferator A.Q. Khan received state support. A terrorism trial in Chicago heard testimony this week that ISI provided, "financial and military assistance" to the LeT, the group that killed more than 160 in the Mumbai massacre. By the way, six Americans were killed there as well.

In the past 10 years, Pakistan has received \$20 billion in U.S. aid. Simply put, our Pakistan policy is not working.

Assuming connections between bin Laden and the Pakistani military and intelligence services, a former top IAEA official has asked, "What is to say that they would not help al-Qaeda or other terrorist groups gain access to sensitive nuclear materials, such as highly enriched uranium or plutonium?" This is not such a far-fetched question.

Intelligence work, including interrogations were key to tracking down bin Laden. It is notable that outside of Afghanistan and Iraq there have been no reported U.S. detentions of high-value terrorists under this administration. For instance, an Indonesian behind the Bali bombings was taken into custody by Pakistani authorities just months before our operation that took out bin Laden. Found near Abbottabad, he has been described as an intelligence "gold mine." Yet, the Obama administration has, according to the L.A. Times, "Made no move to interrogate or to seek custody of" this individual.

Bin Laden's death comes with the unfolding of the Arab Spring. The demise of autocracies in that part of the world is welcome for sure, but there are legitimate concerns that democracy in these countries may empower parties hostile to the U.S., confounding counterterrorism cooperation.

One witness today will compare al-Qaeda to, in his words, "a shark in the water that must keep moving forward no matter how slowly or incrementally or die." We look to today's witnesses for answers on how to kill this deadly predator. I will now turn to our ranking member, Mr. Sherman, of Los Angeles, for his opening statement.

Mr. SHERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for holding these hearings. We have an excellent panel, and we hope that they will shed some light on what we can expect from the most significant terrorist organization in the world, now that its leader and founder is dead.

We found out that bin Laden was more than just an ephemeral figurehead, just an inspirational presence, but rather he risked his own security in order to communicate with the organization and tried to play a role in day-to-day and long-term planning.

Whatever his role, it is obvious that Osama bin Laden's death does not yet mean the end to al-Qaeda. What may be less obvious is that the death of al-Qaeda would not mean an end to our struggle against extremist Islamist terrorism. Other groups of folks affiliated or unaffiliated with al-Qaeda will continue even if that or-

ganization ceases, and al-Qaeda is a Sunni-inspired organization, and its demise might have little effect on the Iran-inspired Shia radical organizations, including, especially, Hezbollah.

Bin Laden's death, I believe, should be viewed as a milestone rather than a turning point. It is an important accomplishment, but it does not mean the end of al-Qaeda, let alone the end of terrorism.

I think among the important questions we can pursue today is this. First, what impact does the Arab Spring, coinciding as it does with the death of bin Laden, have on al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations? Is it part of a one/two punch against al-Qaeda, as noted expert Peter Bergen contends, or does al-Qaeda see an opportunity in these revolutions?

It is our hope that the democratic revolutions in the Arab States will want the rejection of al-Qaeda, and violent groups, and the extremist philosophy behind them. But, we can look at history where again and again, whether it is the Russian revolution, the French revolution, or an Iranian revolution, we see circumstances where moderate pro-democratic forces take the lead in deposing a tyrannical regime only to see anti-democratic forces prevail in the end.

As long as we are focused on terrorism and its future, we need to focus on Eastern Libya. According to a West Point study, Eastern Libya provided more militants for the insurgency in Iraq, more foreign fighters with American blood on their hands, than, virtually, any other area on a per capita basis. At least some of these militants are now part of the Eastern Libyan insurgency against Ghadafi. What impact do they have on the Libyan revolt and its power structure? Why have we not pressed the transitional National Council to turn in these terrorists with American blood on their hands over to the United States? Or at a minimum adopt a formal policy to exclude from their government and from their military forces those who have sought to kill Americans in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Having met with the person who was identified as the prime minister of the transitional authority, he seems very intent upon benefitting from the American military, and benefitting from the military efforts of those who have tried to kill the American military.

Now, Pakistan is, of course, important. Obviously, bin Laden had support from inside Pakistan. Obviously, the ISI supports various terrorist organizations, and does business with others. We should not forget that Pakistan has also suffered more from terrorism than I believe just about any country, with the possible exception of Afghanistan. Even today, we read of the recent attack on their naval base and the destruction of assets and the death of Pakistani military personnel there.

Finally, if I can take a minute, I think it is important that Congress and this committee do its job. First, the Constitution makes it clear that Congress needs to be involved before we engage in military activities in Libya, and the War Powers Act gives the President only 60 days, which has expired, before obtaining congressional authorization. Congress should demand that it play its constitutional role, its role under U.S. law. We should not, in an

effort to bring democracy and the rule of law to Libya, ignore the rule of law and democracy here in the United States.

I am pleased that in this room for the next 2 days we will have hearings on Libya.

Second, the National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal 2012 will come to the floor. It contains an authorization for the use of force, known as the war on terror, that appears to expand the authorization passed in the wake of September 11th. I want to study this language carefully, but the study I would like to engage in is to have a hearing on it before this committee, have a markup on it before this committee, and have this committee play its role under House rules, which is to discuss, debate, markup, improve any act that authorizes force. So, I may have to vote to stroke that language, even if I would have supported it if it had been the product of a markup in this room.

I yield back.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Sherman.

We will go to Mr. Higgins of New York for any opening statement he might have.

Mr. HIGGINS. Yes, just briefly, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to hear the panel speak to the issue, obviously, that is before us. But, just a thought. While, you know, the killing of bin Laden symbolically and substantially is very, very important, relative to the war on terrorism, I think it is important, what I would like to get is a sense from the panel, al-Qaeda morphed into al-Qaeda-ism a long time ago, and it seems to me that al-Qaeda is younger, Egyptian-based, more aggressive, and more sophisticated with respect to the use of modern technology. And, you know, the world is smaller, because we can all communicate. Everybody can plug in and play. But, the only thing you cannot commoditize, in terms of the new technology and the ability to communicate, is the imagination that you bring to these tools of collaboration.

So, I am very interested in hearing from the panel as to their sense of, you know, what the new al-Qaeda has emerged to or has evolved to, in terms of its sophistication, its aggression, and its youth.

So, with that, I will yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Higgins.

We will hear now from Dr. Bruce Hoffman, Dr. Seth Jones, and Mr. Tom Sanderson, who are going to testify.

Bruce Hoffman is a professor in Georgetown University's Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service. He held the corporate chair in counterterrorism and counterinsurgency at the RAND Corporation. He holds a doctorate from Oxford University, and he is the author of the book, "Inside Terrorism."

Dr. Seth Jones is a senior political scientist at RAND Corporation, and he most recently served as the representative for the commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations. Jones specializes in counterinsurgency and counterterrorism, and he has a particular focus on Afghanistan, Pakistan and al-Qaeda.

Mr. Tom Sanderson is deputy director and senior fellow in the Transnational Threats Project, at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Sanderson currently co-leads an al-Qaeda

Futures Project. He just returned, I had a chance to have lunch with him the other day, from a month-long trip to North Africa, to six African nations, gauging the current state and future prospects for al-Qaeda on the continent.

All of the witnesses' complete written testimony, I will remind you again, will be entered in the record, so we would like to keep it to 5 minutes so that we can get to questions. We'll start with Dr. Hoffman.

**STATEMENT OF BRUCE HOFFMAN, PH.D., PROFESSOR,
SCHOOL OF FOREIGN SERVICE, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY**

Mr. HOFFMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and Congressman Sherman, and members of the committee, subcommittee, for this opportunity to testify.

Confronted with the sudden death of a leader, terrorist groups become cornered animals. When wounded, they lash out, not only in hopes of surviving, but also to demonstrate their remaining power and continued relevance.

Al-Qaeda is no different, and will keen for its leader by killing, but it will not necessarily attack soon. Instead, we should brace ourselves once the 40-day mourning period that some Muslims observe ends.

Given al-Qaeda's stated determination, to punish the U.S., what should we prepare for in the near and further off future, in terms of possible scenarios and potential terrorist attacks?

First, we should be concerned about planned al-Qaeda attacks already in the pipeline. Just days before bin Laden's killing, German authorities disrupted a planned al-Qaeda attack in Berlin. We must assume that additional plots are already in motion or will soon be.

Second, we need to worry about al-Qaeda harnessing the same social networking tools that facilitated the Arab Spring to spark a transnational spate of spontaneous terrorist attacks. These lower-level incidents would, thus, pre-occupy and distract intelligence agencies, in hopes that a spectacular al-Qaeda attack might avoid detection.

Third, as the May 6, 2011, al-Qaeda statement indicates, the group will seek to further strain Pakistan's relations with America, by summoning both its jihadi allies and ordinary citizens there against the Pakistani Government. Al-Qaeda will, thus, hope to undermine Pakistan's fragile democracy by creating a popular backlash against the U.S.

Fourth, we cannot discount the possibility of another major Pakistani jihadi attack in India. Al-Qaeda will see in a such scenario an opportunity to regroup and reorganize precisely when the world is distracted by a major escalation of tensions in the subcontinent.

Finally, al-Qaeda affiliates, like its Yemen franchise, al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, will remain largely unaffected by bin Laden's death. They will, however, likely embrace vengeance in order to further burnish their terrorist credentials as rising stars within the movement's firmament.

Al-Qaeda has been compared to the archetypal shark in the water that must keep moving forward no matter how slowly and incrementally or die. And, al-Qaeda has always regarded this as a

generational struggle that goes beyond the purview or interests of any one individual. The loss of bin Laden will not affect that calculus.

Accordingly, the United States should continue to kill and capture al-Qaeda leaders and operatives, as it has so effectively done, especially, during the past 3 years of stepped-up aerial drone attacks. At the same time, the U.S. must continue to deprive al-Qaeda and its leaders of the sanctuaries and safe havens that it depends on.

History has shown that al-Qaeda is nothing without a physical sanctuary or safe haven, which is why it has invested so much of its energy in recent years in strengthening the capabilities of its affiliates and associates in Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, and North Africa.

Thus, the highest priority for the U.S. must be to concentrate our attention on al-Qaeda as a network global phenomenon. This will require both continued U.S. military operations in South Asia, along side a continual scanning of the horizon to counter al-Qaeda's presence and prevent its expansion into failed and failing states.

But, equally critical are enhanced and better targeted U.S. efforts to counter al-Qaeda's propaganda efforts in the aftermath of bin Laden's killing. These should include redoubling our efforts to water down the al-Qaeda brand, targeted and enhanced communications directed toward the core demographic from which al-Qaeda continues to draw its strength, young people, enhanced use of the Internet along side traditional media as part of a coordinated cohesive information campaign, and making far better use of victims of terrorism, their stories and their formidable ability to challenge the jihadi narrative.

In conclusion, it would be dangerously precipitous at this time to declare a total victory. Al-Qaeda's hopes of renewal and regeneration in the aftermath of bin Laden's killing rests on its continued access of the geographical sanctuaries and safe havens that the movement has always depended on, and historically abused as bases from which to plot, and plan, and launch international terrorism attacks.

Only by depriving al-Qaeda of those sanctuaries, by destroying the organization's leadership, and disrupting the continued resonance of al-Qaeda's message, will this movement finally be defeated.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hoffman follows:]

THE FUTURE OF AL QAEDA

Professor Bruce Hoffman^{*}
Edmund A Walsh School of Foreign Service
Georgetown University

Testimony Presented Before
U.S. House of Representatives

Committee on Foreign Affairs
Subcommittee on Terrorism, Non-Proliferation and Trade

27 May 2011

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Confronted with the sudden death of a leader, terrorist groups become cornered animals. When wounded they lash out. Not only in hopes of surviving but also to demonstrate their remaining power and continued relevance.

Al Qaeda is no different. As its statement issued on 6 May 2011 confirming bin Laden's death declared, "The soldiers of Islam, groups and individuals, will continue planning without tiredness or boredom, and without despair or surrender, and without weakness or stagnancy, until they cause the disaster that makes children look like the elderly!"

Al Qaeda will thus keen for its leader by killing. It will not necessarily attack soon. But we should brace ourselves once the 40-day mourning period that some Muslims observe ends. The dual prospect of punishing the U.S. and re-igniting fear and anxiety following a time of celebration and relief must surely figure prominently in al Qaeda's calculus.

This is what happened in Israel fifteen years ago. On 5 January 1996, Israeli agents assassinated Yahya Ayyash, a senior Hamas field commander whose bomb making skills earned him the sobriquet the "Engineer." A deceptive quiet then ensued as Hamas licked its wounds and plotted its revenge.

Retribution came forty days later with the first of a series of four bus bombings that continued for two months. By the time they ended more than sixty persons had been killed. This bloody spate of attacks, moreover, is credited with having decisively influenced the outcome of the Israeli general elections that March.

Al Qaeda will strive to emulate Hamas's example in this respect. Its ability to avenge bin Laden's death will likely prove to be a defining moment for the organization. Failure to do so would likely spell the demise that some are now prematurely predicting. For al Qaeda now is the time to put up or shut up as the remaining leadership will surely attempt to prove that the movement retains its vitality and viability despite the death of its founder and leader.

DECAPITATION STRATEGIES AND COUNTERTERRORISM: A MIXED RECORD OF SUCCESS

In this respect, history unfortunately may be on al Qaeda's side. Decapitation has rarely provided a decisive end to a terrorist movement. During Algeria's war of independence in the late 1950s, for instance, the French apprehended the National Liberation Front's (NLF) core leadership cadre. Yet, they found that the FLN was much more networked than had been imagined and therefore resistant to even the decapitation of its entire leadership. As the French counterinsurgency theorist and practitioner par excellence, David Galula, observed shortly afterward, the "five top leaders of the rebellion, including [Ahmed] Ben Bella, had been neatly caught during a flight from Rabat to Tunis. Their capture, I admit, had little effect on the direction of the rebellion, because the movement was too loosely organized to crumble under such a blow." The FLN, of course, went on to triumph and attain independence for Algeria just four years later.

¹ David Galula, *Pacification In Algeria, 1956-1958* (SanLa Monica, CA: The RAND Corporation, MC-478-1, p. 233.

Similarly, in 2004 the Israelis delivered a seemingly devastating one-two punch against Hamas: killing the equivalent of Bin Laden and his deputy, Ayman al-Zawahiri, when they assassinated in succession Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the founder and leader of Hamas, and then a month later Abdel Aziz Rantisi, his deputy and successor. Yet Hamas is today stronger than it was seven years ago as a new generation of militants continues to prosecute its struggle against Israel.

In 2003, of course, the U.S. captured Saddam Hussein, and many assumed that the insurgency in Iraq would end. In fact, it continued—and indeed for another four years in fact escalated.

Admittedly, the killing of the leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in 2006 was an important setback to al-Qaeda's ambitions in Iraq. But even that signal American accomplishment did not sound the group's death knell as it continues to fight on today.

AL QAEDA POST-BIN LADEN: POTENTIAL SCENARIOS

Given both the less than benign historical record of decapitation's long-term effects on terrorist organizations coupled with al Qaeda's stated determination to punish the U.S., what should we prepare for in the near and further-off future in terms of possible scenarios and potential terrorist attacks?

First, we should be concerned about planned al Qaeda attacks already in the pipeline. Just days before bin Laden's killing, German authorities had disrupted a planned al Qaeda attack in Berlin. We must assume that additional plots are already in motion—or will soon be.

Second, we need to worry about al Qaeda harnessing the social networking tools that facilitated the "Arab Spring" to spark a transnational spate of spontaneous terrorist acts. These lower-level incidents would thus preoccupy and distract intelligence agencies in hopes that a spectacular al Qaeda attack might avoid detection, succeed and thereby dramatically shatter our complacency.

Third, as the 6 May 2011 al Qaeda statement indicates, the group will seek to further strain Pakistan's relations with America. By summoning both its jihadi allies and ordinary citizens there against the Pakistani government, al Qaeda will thus hope to undermine Pakistan's fragile democracy by creating a popular backlash against the U.S. The surviving leadership was explicit on this point in the statement acknowledging bin Laden's death. "We call upon our Muslim people in Pakistan," it declared,

on whose land Sheikh Usama was killed, to rise up and revolt to cleanse this shame that has been attached to them by a clique of traitors and thieves who sold everything to the enemies of the Ummah [worldwide Muslim community], and disregarded the feelings of this noble jihadi people. We call upon them to rise up strongly and in general to cleanse their country from the filth of the Americans who spread corruption in it.

Fourth, we cannot discount the possibility of another major Pakistani jihadi attack in India—either encouraged by al Qaeda or designed to provide the movement with breathing space at this critical moment in its history. Such an attack along the lines of the 2008 Mumbai incident would prompt a major Indian military reaction. This, in

turn, al Qaeda would hope, might trigger a broader regional conflict and de-stabilize the entire region—with attendant profound repercussions on U.S. interests and military operations in both Afghanistan and Pakistan. Al Qaeda would see in such a scenario an ideal opportunity to re-group and re-organize precisely when the world is distracted by a major escalation of tensions or indeed an armed clash between India and Pakistan.

Finally, al Qaeda affiliates like its Yemen franchise, al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, will remain largely unaffected by bin Laden's death. They will, however, likely embrace vengeance in order to further burnish their terrorist credentials as rising stars in the movement's firmament.

COUNTERTERRORISM POLICIES POST-BIN LADEN

Al Qaeda has been compared to the archetypal shark in the water that must keep moving forward—no matter how slowly or incrementally—or die. Whether al Qaeda can in fact do so—and thereby prove that it can survive its founder and leader's demise—is surely the most pressing question of the moment.

In these circumstances, the U.S. must remain vigilant and avoid complacency and the temptation to lower our guard. Al Qaeda has always regarded this as a generational struggle that goes beyond the purview or interests of any one individual. The loss of bin Laden will not affect that calculus.

Accordingly, the U.S. should continue to kill and capture al Qaeda leaders and operatives as it has so effectively done, especially during the past three years of stepped up aerial drone attacks. At the same time, the U.S. must continue to deprive al Qaeda and its leaders of the sanctuaries and safe havens that it depends on. History has shown that al Qaeda is nothing without a physical sanctuary or safe haven: which is why it has invested so much of its energy in recent years in strengthening the capabilities of its affiliated and associated movements in Pakistan, the Yemen, Somalia, Iraq, and North Africa.

Thus, the highest priority for the U.S. must be to concentrate our attention on al Qaeda as a networked global phenomenon—not as in the past as one enemy, in one place, at one time. Today, there are several al Quedas in a variety of places, each with different capabilities. This will require both continued U.S. military and intelligence operations in South Asia alongside a continual scanning of the horizon to counter al Qaeda's presence in, and prevent its expansion to, failing and failed states.

But equally critical are enhanced and better targeted U.S. efforts to counter al Qaeda's propaganda efforts in the aftermath of bin Laden's killing. This focus will require the recognition that al Qaeda cannot be defeated by military means alone. Rather, success will require a dual strategy of both systematically destroying and weakening enemy capabilities along with better focused efforts designed to counter the resonance of al Qaeda's message. In other words, we must continue to kill and capture al Qaeda leaders as well as break the cycle of terrorist radicalization and recruitment that hitherto has sustained the movement.

In this respect, the U.S. must adeptly anticipate and pre-emptively counter continued al Qaeda efforts to spin bin Laden's death. This should include:

- Re-doubling our efforts to water down the al Qaeda brand;
- Targeted and enhanced communications directed towards the core demographic from which al Qaeda draws its strength, viz., young persons susceptible to its blandishments;
- Enhanced use of the Internet along with traditional media as part of a coordinated, cohesive information campaign; and,
- Making far better use of victims of terrorism, their stories and their formidable ability to challenge the jihadi narrative.

In conclusion, it would be dangerously precipitous at this time to declare total victory. Al Qaeda's hopes of renewal and re-generation in the aftermath of bin Laden's killing rest on its continued access to the geographical sanctuaries and safe havens that the movement has always depended on and historically have used as bases from which to plot and plan and launch international terrorist strikes. Only by depriving al Qaeda of those sanctuaries, destroying the organization's leadership, and disrupting the continued resonance of its message will al Qaeda finally be defeated.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you.
Dr. Seth Jones.

**STATEMENT OF SETH G. JONES, PH.D., SENIOR POLITICAL
SCIENTIST, RAND CORPORATION**

Mr. JONES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Congressman Sherman, other members of the committee.

While Osama bin Laden's death is, and certainly represents, a serious blow to al-Qaeda, I would like to focus my comments here on two questions. What is the structure of al-Qaeda today, and how will it evolve? And second, how will that impact the threat to the United States' homeland, which, obviously, we care a great deal about.

To take the first question first, I think al-Qaeda, and it is certainly plausible that it has already moved in this direction anyway, will likely become more decentralized and diffused. It is unclear at this moment, for example, whether Ayman al-Zawahiri, who does not have the same pedigree as a front-line soldier the way Osama bin Laden had, will be able to provide the same kind of oversight over the affiliated groups. That is an open question.

In addition, there are questions about his focus on a day-to-day basis on the United States. Osama bin Laden was focused, predominantly, on targeting the U.S. homeland. Al-Zawahiri has clearly focused on a range of issues, including Egypt, as well as the U.S. homeland. So, there are questions about how much some elements of central or core al-Qaeda will continue to focus on the U.S. homeland.

What is important to recognize building off of some of the work that Dr. Hoffman has put together, is to understand what al-Qaeda looks like today. And, I will argue that it includes at least five rings of concentric circle. The first is Central al-Qaeda, which continues to be based in Pakistan today, and which still is a dangerous organization led, among others, by Ayman al-Zawahiri, an Egyptian, led as the primary general manager, somebody who probably does not get as much credit as he should, as a fundamental key fig-

ure, Atiyah abd al-Rahman, Libyan, in taking a lot of the information coming from affiliates and pushing it up for regular dedicated answers from the al-Qaeda leadership, Ilyas Kashmiri, a Pakistani, involved in operations, Abu Yahya, Libyan, involved in propaganda, and a range of others. But, that Central al-Qaeda is still dangerous. I will come back to that in a second.

But, outside of that then, there is a subsequent ring, which is the affiliated groups, and others on this panel, including Mr. Sanderson, will talk about the African connection and others. But, those are, obviously, the key groups who have changed their names, al-Qaeda in Iraq, al-Qaeda in East Africa, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, but are affiliated organizations.

And, outside of that is the allied groups, and this is where I think we are potentially most vulnerable, and where if al-Qaeda does become a more decentralized organization some of the more fundamental threats may come from these allied groups. These are groups who will coordinate, they conduct joint training, may conduct some joint operations, groups like Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, Tehrik-e-Taliban, Pakistan, the Haqqani Network, which pose a notable threat to the U.S. homeland, as we have seen with Faisal Shahzad, the Mumbai style plots last year and others. Then we have allied networks and inspired networks.

But, let me finish with a couple of key points. One is that al-Qaeda Central is still a very dangerous organization. We see multiple plots emanating from the Pakistan theater. I would remind everyone here that several key individuals that are Americans, or have lived in America, still remain in Central al-Qaeda, Adnan el Shukrijumah from Broward County, Florida, continues to be involved at senior levels in al-Qaeda Central in Pakistan, Adam Gadahn from California, the Riverside, California area, still involved at fairly senior levels of the propaganda realm.

Mr. ROYCE. Actually, Garden Grove.

Mr. JONES. That is right. I have, actually, interviewed some of his family members, so they are still down there.

In addition, let me just conclude, just based on timing, that I think one of the weakest areas of America's counterterrorism strategy, certainly against al-Qaeda, is that most of these individuals that, as Mr. Higgins mentioned earlier, that people are listening to, including Anwar al-Aulaqi. Look at his track record. He was arrested twice in the San Diego area for soliciting prostitutes. He has no formal education as an Islamic scholar.

Our ability to get those messages out, to make unclassified his arrest records, is something I think that would be helpful. Adnan el Shukrijumah, from Broward County, beat his sister's girls, was arrested for felony for beating girls back in the 1990s, that stuff should be publicly available.

And then finally, just to build on one of Bruce's comments, Winston Churchill observed over a century ago, during the British struggles in the Northwest Frontier, that time in this area is measured in decades, not months or years. It is a concept that does not come easy to Westerners, including Americans, but this struggle against al-Qaeda will continue, I think, to be a long one, partly be-

cause I think we are seeing a much more diffused organization across the globe.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Jones follows:]

TESTIMONY

The Future of Al Qa'ida

SETH G. JONES

CT-362

May 2011

Testimony presented before the House Foreign Affairs Committee,
Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Trade on May 24, 2011

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The RAND Corporation

*The Future of Al Qa'ida*²

Before the Committee on Foreign Affairs
Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade
United States House of Representatives

May 24, 2011

The death of Osama bin Laden has triggered a re-evaluation of al Qa'ida and its threat to the United States. Some have argued that al Qa'ida will become increasingly irrelevant. "Between the Arab Spring and the death of bin Laden, it is hard to imagine greater blows to al-Qaeda's ideology and organization," wrote terrorism analyst Peter Bergen, noting that bin Laden was on the wrong side of history. "For al-Qaeda," he continued, "that history just sped up, as bin Laden's body floated down into the ocean deeps and its proper place in the unmarked grave of discarded lies."³

Yet such assessments may be too optimistic. Al Qa'ida and allied groups continue to present a grave threat to the United States and its allies overseas by overseeing and encouraging terrorist operations, managing a robust propaganda campaign, conducting training, and collecting and distributing financial assistance. Two examples illustrate the point. First, al Qa'ida operatives like Ilyas Kashmiri, who remain at large, continue to be actively involved in plots in Europe, India, and the United States. Second, there has been an increase in the number of groups outside of central al Qa'ida that have targeted the United States. On May 1, 2010, Faisal Shahzad, who was trained by Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan bomb-makers, packed his Nissan Pathfinder with explosives and drove into Times Square in New York City on a congested Saturday night. Only fortune intervened, since the improvised explosive device malfunctioned. Indeed, the nature of the threat has changed and become more decentralized. In addition to central al Qa'ida (Pakistan), other threats to the U.S. homeland include Al Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (Yemen), Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (Pakistan), Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (Pakistan), and potentially al Shabaab (Somalia).

¹ The opinions and conclusions expressed in this testimony are the author's alone and should not be interpreted as representing those of RAND or any of the sponsors of its research. This product is part of the RAND Corporation testimony series. RAND testimonies record testimony presented by RAND associates to federal, state, or local legislative committees; government-appointed commissions and panels; and private review and oversight bodies. The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit research organization providing objective analysis and effective solutions that address the challenges facing the public and private sectors around the world. RAND's publications do not necessarily reflect the opinions of its research clients and sponsors.

² This testimony is available for free download at <http://www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/CT362/>.

³ Peter Bergen, "Bin Laden's Poisonous Ideology Began to Wither on 9/11," *Time*, May 9, 2011.

I. Al Qa'ida's Organizational Structure

A current assessment of the al Qa'ida threat requires an understanding of what al Qa'ida is today. With a leadership structure primarily in Pakistan, al Qa'ida is a notably different organization than a decade ago and can perhaps best be described as a "complex adaptive system."⁴ The term refers to systems that are diverse (composing multiple networks) and adaptive (possessing the capacity to evolve and learn from experience). One key element of complex adaptive systems is they include a series of networks, which are often dispersed and small. Different nodes can communicate and conduct their campaigns with some coordination. As terrorist expert Bruce Hoffman argued, al Qa'ida is "in the main flatter, more linear, and more organizationally networked" than it has previously been.⁵ The killing of bin Laden may accelerate this decentralization.

Al Qa'ida today can perhaps best be divided into five tiers: central al Qa'ida, affiliated groups, allied groups, allied networks, and inspired individuals.⁶

First, *central al Qa'ida* includes the organization's leaders, who are based in Pakistan. Despite the death of key figures like Osama bin Laden, several top leaders remain, including Ayman al-Zawahiri. Al Qa'ida's goals continue to include overthrowing regimes in the Middle East (the near enemy, or *al-Adou al-Qareeb*) to establish a pan-Islamic caliphate, and fighting the United States and its allies (the far enemy, or *al-Adou al-Ba'eed*) who support them. As demonstrated over the past year, Ilyas Kashmiri has been involved in plots to conduct Mumbai-style attacks in Europe and to target a newspaper in Copenhagen that published cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad. Abu Yahya al-Libi has been one of al Qa'ida's senior ideologues and religious figures. Atiyah abd al-Rahman al-Libi has played a key role as al Qa'ida's chief operating officer and general manager, serving as a conduit between al Qa'ida's affiliated groups and its leadership. A range of senior officials, including Saif al-Adel and Abu Miqad al-Masri, continue to play key roles. Finally, there are a range of Americans in central al Qa'ida (such as Adam Gadahn) and operatives that have lived in America (such as Adnan el Shukrijumah).

The second tier includes a range of *affiliated groups* that have become formal branches of al Qa'ida. They benefit from bin Laden's financial assistance and inspiration, and receive at least some guidance, training, arms, money, or other support. They often add "al Qa'ida" to their name

⁴ See, for example, Murray Gell-Mann, *The Quark and the Jaguar* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1994); John Holland, *Hidden Order* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1995); Kevin Dooley, "A Complex Adaptive Systems Model of Organization Change," *Nonlinear Dynamics, Psychology, and Life Science*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1997, pp. 69-97.

⁵ Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, Revised Edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), p. 285.

⁶ Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*.

to identify themselves as affiliated organizations, such as Al Qa'ida in Iraq (led by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi), Al Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (led by Nasir al-Wahishi), Al Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (led by Abdelmalek Droukdal), and Al Qa'ida East Africa (led by Harun Fazul). Al Qa'ida's senior leadership, including Ayman al-Zawahiri, retain a degree of oversight and, when necessary, may discipline members of these groups for failing to follow guidance.

The third involves *allied groups* that have established a direct relationship with al Qa'ida, but have not become formal members. This arrangement allows the groups to remain independent and pursue their own goals, but to work with al Qa'ida for specific operations or training purposes when their interests converge. In Pakistan, one example is Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (led by Hakimullah Mehsud), whose interests remain largely parochial in South Asia, though they have been involved in attacks overseas – including the U.S. homeland. Another is Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (led by Hafiz Saeed), which is based in Pakistan and has historically operated in India and Kashmir, though it has expanded its interests to include Afghanistan, Europe, and perhaps the United States. Outside of Pakistan, there are other allied groups like al Shabaab (led by Ahmed Abd aw-Mohamed), which operates in Somalia but has a relationship with diaspora communities across the world, including in the United States.

The fourth tier involves *allied networks* – small, dispersed groups of adherents who enjoy some direct connection with al Qa'ida. These groups are not large insurgent organizations, but often self-organized small networks that congregate, radicalize, and plan attacks. In some cases, they comprise individuals who had prior terrorism experience in Algeria, the Balkans, Chechnya, Afghanistan, or perhaps Iraq. In other cases, they include individuals that have traveled to camps in Afghanistan or Pakistan for training, as with Mohammed Siddique Khan and the British Muslims responsible for the successful July 2005 London bombing. Al Qa'ida operatives Abu Ubaydah al-Masri and Abd al-Hadi al-Iraqi were involved in the planning and training for the attack.

Finally, the *inspired individuals* include those with no direct contact to al Qa'ida central, but who are inspired by the al Qa'ida cause and outraged by perceived oppression in Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechnya, and Palestinian territory. They tend to be motivated by a hatred of the West and its allied regimes in the Middle East. Without direct support, these networks tend to be amateurish, though they can occasionally be lethal. In May 2007, a cell inspired by Anwar al-Aulaqi and Osama bin Laden planned an attack against Fort Dix and other military targets in New Jersey, but were thwarted by the FBI. But many others, such as the cell led by Russell Defreitas that plotted to attack New York City's John F. Kennedy International Airport in 2007, were rudimentary and their half-baked plots would have been difficult to execute.

Taken together, al Qa'ida had transformed itself by 2011 into a more diffuse – and more global – terror network. Osama bin Laden's death will probably speed up this development since no leader, including Ayman al-Zawahiri, likely has the unifying ability that bin Laden possessed. Bin Laden was an inspiring leader for many radicals, as well as a former soldier who was involved in the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan. He had a calm demeanor, even during stressful situations, and was viewed by radicals as a pious Muslim. This last perceived trait was an ironic one for someone willing to kill scores of civilians, including innocent women and children. Bin Laden also had a tendency to listen. When discussing issues, for example, bin Laden would often consider the opinions of everyone involved, giving each person his attention. But when he made up his mind, he could be myopic and bull-headed. As his son Omar recalled, "his stubbornness had brought him many problems. Once he wished for something, he never gave up."⁷

Zawahiri's *raison d'être*, however, has been as a spiritual leader, not a soldier. He has authored a litany of books and communiqués, but has never been a battlefield commander. He has also been more divisive than bin Laden and engaged in notorious public squabbles with members of Egyptian Islamic Jihad, the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas, and other organizations. It is unclear whether al Qa'ida's affiliated groups will seek regular guidance from Zawahiri, at least in the way they sought guidance from bin Laden.

II. Debating the Threat

There have been some disagreements about the nature and origin of threats to the U.S. homeland. In his 2011 testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives Homeland Security Committee, Michael Leiter, director of the U.S. National Counterterrorism Center, remarked that al Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula is "probably the most significant risk to the U.S. homeland."⁸ Others have argued that al Qa'ida has a nearly endless supply of sanctuaries in weak states, such as Yemen, Somalia, Djibouti, Sudan, and even Iraq. "Many of these countries," notes Stephen Biddle from the Council on Foreign Relations, "could offer al-Qa'ida better havens than Afghanistan ever did."⁹

While this argument seems reasonable, and Al Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula certainly poses a clear threat to the U.S. homeland, the evidence suggests that al Qa'ida leaders retain an

⁷ Najwa bin Laden, Omar bin Laden, and Jean Sasson, *Growing Up Bin Laden: Osama's Wife and Son Take Us Inside Their Secret World* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2009), p. 253.

⁸ Testimony of Michael Leiter, Director of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), Hearing of the House Homeland Security Committee, February 9, 2011.

⁹ Stephen Biddle, "Is It Worth It? The Difficult Case for War in Afghanistan," *The American Interest*, July-August 2009.

unparalleled relationship with local networks in the Afghanistan-Pakistan frontier. Ayman al-Zawahiri and several senior al Qa'ida leaders have a 30-year, unique history of trust and collaboration with the Pashtun militant networks located in Pakistan and Afghanistan. These relationships are deeper and more robust than the comparatively nascent, tenuous, and fluid relationships that al Qa'ida has developed with al Shabaab in Somalia, local tribes in Yemen, or other areas. Indeed, al Qa'ida has become embedded in multiple networks that operate on both sides of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Key groups include the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, Haqqani Network, and Lashkar-e Tayyiba. Al Qa'ida has effectively established a foothold with several tribes or sub-tribes in the region, such as some Ahmadzai Wazirs, Mehsuds, Utmanzai Wazirs, Mohmands, Salarzais, and Zadrans. The secret to al Qa'ida's staying power, it turns out, has been its success in cultivating supportive networks in an area generally inhospitable to outsiders.

Al Qa'ida provides several types of assistance to Pakistan militant groups in return for sanctuary. One is coordination. It has helped establish shuras (councils) to coordinate strategic priorities, operational campaigns, and tactics against Western allied forces. In addition, al Qa'ida operatives have been involved in planning military operations, such as launching suicide attacks, emplacing improvised explosive devices, and helping conduct ambushes and raids. It also helps run training camps for militants, which cover the recruitment and preparation of suicide bombers, intelligence, media and propaganda efforts, bomb-making, and religious indoctrination. Al Qa'ida provides some financial aid to militant groups, though it appears to be a small percentage of their total aid. Finally, it has cooperated with Pakistan militant groups to improve and coordinate propaganda efforts, including through the use of DVDs, CDs, jihadi websites, and other media forums.

Some pundits have argued that al Qa'ida operatives primarily reside in Pakistan, not Afghanistan. But the 1,519-mile border, drawn up in 1893 by Sir Henry Mortimer Durand, the British Foreign Secretary of India, is largely irrelevant. Locals regularly cross the border to trade, pray at mosques, visit relatives, and – in some cases – target NATO and coalition forces. Indeed, al Qa'ida migration patterns since the anti-Soviet jihad show frequent movement in both directions. Osama bin Laden established al Qa'ida in Peshawar, Pakistan in 1988, though he and other Arab fighters crossed the border into Afghanistan regularly to fight Soviet forces and support the mujahedeen. When bin Laden returned to the area in 1996 from Sudan, he settled near Jalalabad in eastern Afghanistan and later moved south to Kandahar Province. After the overthrow of the Taliban regime, however, most of the al Qa'ida leadership moved back to Pakistan, though some settled in neighboring Iran.

Other skeptics contend that informal, homegrown networks inspired by al Qa'ida have become the most serious threat to the West.¹⁰ Ayman al-Zawahiri and central al Qa'ida have become extraneous, according to this argument. Skeptics contend that impressionable young Muslims can radicalize through the Internet or interactions with local extremist networks. They don't need a headquarters, the argument goes. These skeptics contend that the threat to the West, therefore, comes largely from a "leaderless jihad" in Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and North America rather than a relationship with central al Qa'ida located in Pakistan. As discussed in the next section, however, there is sparse evidence to support this argument.

III. The Terrorist Threat to the U.S. Homeland

Many of the terrorist threats to the U.S. homeland have been connected to al Qa'ida and its allies in Pakistan, though a few have been tied to such areas as Yemen. Sparsely few serious attacks have come from purely homegrown terrorists. Central al Qa'ida has long focused on attacking the U.S. homeland.

In September 2009, for example, Najibullah Zazi was arrested for planning attacks on the New York City subway. Zazi pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court to "conspiracy to use weapons of mass destruction" and "providing material support for a foreign terrorist organization" based in Pakistan.¹¹ Several al Qa'ida operatives, including Saleh al-Somali and Adnan el Shukrijumah, were involved in the plot. According to U.S. government documents, Zazi's travels to Pakistan and his contacts with individuals there were pivotal in helping him build an improvised explosive device using triacetone triperoxide (TATP), the same explosive used effectively in the 2005 London subway bombings. In October 2009, Chicago-based David Coleman Headley (aka Daood Sayed Gilani) was arrested for involvement in terrorist activity. He is a Pakistani-American who had cooperated with Lashkar-e Tayyiba and senior al Qa'ida leaders to conduct a series of attacks, including the November 2008 Mumbai attack and a plot to attack a newspaper in Copenhagen that had published a cartoon of the Prophet Muhammad. His base in Chicago made him ideally suited for a future attack in the U.S. homeland.

In December 2009, five Americans from Alexandria, Virginia – Ahmed Abdullah Minni, Umar Farooq, Aman Hassan Yemer, Waqar Hussain Khan, and Ramy Zamzam –were arrested in Pakistan and later convicted on terrorism charges. Better known as "Five Guys," a reference to the hamburger chain close to their homes along Route One in Alexandria, they radicalized in the

¹⁰ Mark Sagemen, *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), pp. 133, 140.

¹¹ U.S. District Court, Eastern District of New York, United States of America Against Najibullah Zazi, 09 CR 663(S-1), February 22, 2010.

United States and went to Pakistan for training and operational guidance. In May 2010, Faisal Shahzad attempted to detonate an improvised explosive device in Times Square in New York City after being trained by bomb-makers from Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan.

Europe has faced similar threats. The 2004 Madrid attacks involved senior al Qa'ida leaders, including Amer Azizi.¹² The 2005 London attacks and 2006 transatlantic airlines plot involved senior al Qa'ida operatives in Pakistan, who were involved in strategic, operational, and even tactical support. Jonathan Evans, the Director General of MI5, the United Kingdom's domestic intelligence agency, recently acknowledged that at least half of the country's priority plots continue to be linked to "al Qa'ida in the tribal areas of Pakistan, where al Qa'ida senior leadership is still based."¹³ Over the last decade, there has been a laundry list of plots and attacks in the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, Netherlands, France, India, and other countries with links to al Qa'ida and other terrorist groups with a foothold in Pakistan.

IV. Countering the Threat

While the al Qa'ida threat has remained severe, the United States has struggled to pursue an effective counterterrorism strategy. In examining 648 terrorist groups, I found that most groups end in one of two ways. Either they join the political process, or else small networks of clandestine intelligence and security forces arrest or kill the leadership. Large-scale, conventional military forces have rarely been the primary reason for the end of terrorist groups, and few groups achieve victory. Military forces may help penetrate and garrison an area frequented by terrorist groups and, if well sustained, may temporarily reduce terrorist activity. But once the situation in an area becomes untenable for terrorists, they will transfer their activity to another location. Terrorists groups generally fight wars of the weak. They do not put large, organized forces into the field, except when they engage in insurgencies. This means that military forces can rarely engage terrorist groups using what most armies are trained in: conventional tactics, techniques, and procedures. In some cases, such as when terrorist groups ally with large and well-equipped insurgent groups, conventional forces may be more apropos.¹⁴

By 2011, however, U.S. policymakers seemed to better understand the utility of clandestine efforts. The United States and Pakistan increased covert efforts against al Qa'ida, improving their intelligence collection capabilities and nearly tripling the number of drone strikes in Pakistan from

¹² Fernando Reinares, "The Madrid Bombings and Global Jihadism," *Survival*, Vol. 52, No. 2, April–May 2010, pp. 83–104.

¹³ Jonathan Evans, "The Threat to National Security," Address at the Worshipful Company of Security Professionals by the Director General of the Security Service, September 16, 2010.

¹⁴ Seth G. Jones and Martin Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering Al Qa'ida* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND 2008).

2009 levels. Recognizing the importance of al Qa'ida's local hosts, the United States and Pakistan stepped up efforts to recruit assets among rival sub-tribes and clans in the border areas.

In Pakistan, there were a range of senior-level officials killed – such as Osama bin Laden, chief financial officer Shaykh Sa'aid al-Masri, and external operations chief Abu 'Abd al-Rahman al-Najdi – through a combination of U.S. Special Operations and intelligence efforts. This left perhaps less than 300 al Qa'ida members in Pakistan, though there were larger numbers of foreign fighters and allied organizations. In late 2010, Ayman al-Zawahiri ordered al Qa'ida operatives to disperse into small groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan, away from the tribal areas, and cease most activities for a period of up to one year to ensure the organization's survival. In Afghanistan, intelligence and U.S. Special Operations activities disrupted al Qa'ida, which became less cohesive and more decentralized among a range of foreign fighters. Al Qa'ida retained a minimal presence in Afghanistan, with perhaps less than 100 full-time fighters at any one time. This estimate is larger if one counts al Qa'ida-allied foreign fighter networks operating in Afghanistan.

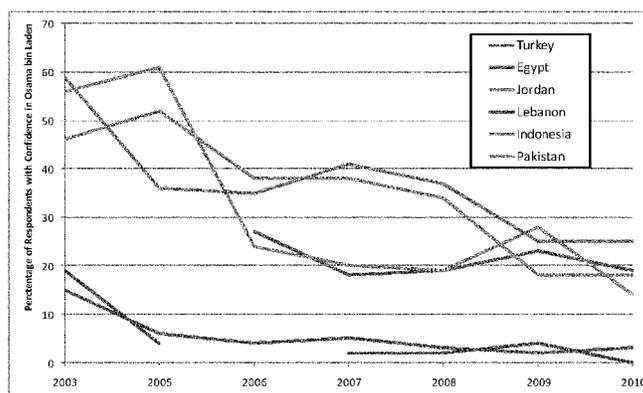
What does this fragile progress mean? For starters, the number of al Qa'ida operatives in Afghanistan and Pakistan shrunk from 2001 levels, where it was likely over 1,000 fighters. More importantly, however, Western efforts disrupted al Qa'ida's command and control, communications, morale, freedom of movement, and fund-raising activities. Central al Qa'ida was a weaker organization, though not defeated. The death of senior leaders also forced al Qa'ida to become increasingly reliant on couriers, hampered communication because of operational security concerns, delayed the planning cycle for operations, and exposed operations to interdiction.

V. Conclusion: A Long War

The landscape along Pakistan's border with Afghanistan, where al Qa'ida is largely headquartered, is strangely reminiscent of Frederick Remington or C.M. Russell's paintings of the American West. Gritty layers of dust sap the life from a parched landscape. With the exception of a few apple orchards, there is little agricultural activity because the soil is too poor. Several dirt roads snake through the area, but virtually none are paved. In this austere environment, central al Qa'ida has been disrupted. Its popularity was already declining before Osama bin Laden's death, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Poll of al Qa'ida¹⁵

How much confidence do you have in Osama bin Laden to do the right thing regarding world affairs?



Yet there are still several challenges. One is the absence of an effective campaign to counter al Qa'ida's extremist ideology. Public perceptions of al Qa'ida have plummeted. According to a 2010 public opinion poll published by the New America Foundation, more than three-quarters of residents in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas opposed the presence of al Qa'ida. A poll conducted by the Pew Research Center indicated that positive views of al Qa'ida have significantly declined across the Middle East and Asia between 2001 and 2010, including in Indonesia, Jordan, Pakistan, Turkey, Egypt, and Lebanon. In addition, there has been widespread opposition to al Qa'ida's ideology and tactics among conservative Islamic groups, especially al Qa'ida's practice of killing civilians. Public opposition of al Qa'ida, especially from legitimate Muslim religious leaders, needs to be better encouraged and publicized.

In addition, Pakistan has done a remarkable job against some militant groups in areas like Swat and northern parts of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, where scores of Pakistan army,

¹⁵ Pew Research Center, *Obama More Popular Abroad Than at Home, Global Image of U.S. Continues to Benefit* (Washington, DC: Pew Global Attitudes Project, June 2010).

Frontier Corps, police, and intelligence units have died in combat. Yet Pakistan's continuing support to some militant groups, including Lashkar-e Tayyiba and the Haqqani Network, needs to end. Even more disturbing, both Lashkar-e Tayyiba and the Haqqani Network have a direct, senior-level relationship with some al Qa'ida leaders. Supporting militant groups has been deeply counter-productive to stability in South Asia – including in Pakistan – and has had second- and third-order effects that threaten the U.S. homeland.

The struggle against al Qa'ida and allied networks operating remains a long one. As Winston Churchill observed over a century ago during the British struggles in the Northwest Frontier, time in this area is measured in decades, not months or years. It's a concept that doesn't always come easy to Westerners. Still, a failure to adequately deal with al Qa'ida will not only prolong this struggle, but it will severely undermine on-going U.S. efforts in Afghanistan, risk the further destabilization of a nuclear Pakistan, and ultimately threaten the U.S. homeland.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Dr. Jones.
Mr. Sanderson.

STATEMENT OF MR. THOMAS M. SANDERSON, DEPUTY DIRECTOR AND SENIOR FELLOW, TRANSNATIONAL THREATS PROJECT, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Mr. SANDERSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Sherman, distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to testify before this subcommittee on the Future of al-Qaeda.

Mr. Chairman, we all agree that Osama bin Laden's death is a victory. I see it as an opportunity to advance the still necessary struggle against al-Qaeda and its ideology.

Most likely it was bin Laden's hope that by the time he was killed or captured he would have helped establish and solidify a durable, largely self-sufficient movement. He was successful in this regard. Those who fought or trained in Afghanistan in the 1980s and 1990s are the spine of today's al-Qaeda movement.

Veterans of the more recent wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, have served as a new generation of credible fighters, and many of them now occupy senior leadership positions within al-Qaeda, or its affiliated groups.

What are al-Qaeda's prospects going forward? I believe the broader al-Qaeda movement will survive the death of bin Laden for several reasons. First, al-Qaeda's many associates are financially and somewhat operationally autonomous. Second, al-Qaeda's narrative that Islam is under attack is embedded, and continues to resonate with Muslims around the world, even if its violent strategy does not. Third, existing conditions, such as the safe haven in Pakistan, and the chaos in Libya, offer lifelines for al-Qaeda.

I would like to offer you some very brief insights from recent research in Africa, which took me to six nations in West Africa, East Africa and North Africa, to investigate the current state and future prospects for al-Qaeda and its associated movements.

Field work took place in Morocco, Mali, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania, and included more than 40 interviews with journalists, academics, intelligence officials, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, regional security officials, Muslim community leaders, and others.

Libya emerged as our greatest concern. Those we interviewed worried that the conflict there could soon become an arena for jihad. On April 14th, Ayman al-Zawahiri called on, "Egyptians and western desert tribes to support their brothers in Libya." al-Zawahiri added that Muslims from the region, "must rise to fight both Ghadafi's mercenaries and NATO crusaders," if American and NATO forces enter Libya.

One may question how influential al-Zawahiri is today, but these statements reflect al-Qaeda's thinking at the senior-most level.

The fears that such a scenario would greatly improve the fortunes of both al-Qaeda and the Islamic Maghreb, AQIM, as well as former members of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, some of whom were allied with Osama bin Laden. The steady flow of people

and weapons into and out of Libya, Algeria and Chad suggest that AQIM has already taken advantage of this opportunity.

My sources verified press reports that AQIM has acquired shoulder-fired SA-7 anti-aircraft missiles in Libya, and brought them to Mali. Given al-Qaeda's longstanding obsession with targeting commercial aircraft, the possibilities are obvious.

There are other militants based in Libya, which stand to gain from the current crisis. As I mentioned, in the eastern part of Libya one time LIFG fighters, Libyan Islamic Fighting Group fighters, are active in the rebellion against Ghadafi.

The Arab Spring was a major blow to al-Qaeda. In what appears to be his last statement, bin Laden voiced support for the popular revolutions across the Middle East in North Africa, but he may have been accepting reality while hoping to take advantage of the situation in due time. The uprisings implicitly vetoed several pillars of bin Laden's ideology.

In Egypt and Tunisia protests succeeded, where al-Qaeda had failed, removing longstanding autocrats. The protestors' goals were largely secular, their use of violence minimal, and their calls for democracy and a strong world for women anathema to al-Qaeda.

Only days ago I interviewed a young female member of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, who enthusiastically supported democracy and human rights. I do not believe she represents the future that bin Laden hoped for.

The trend toward political participation by Islamists is also problematic for al-Qaeda. As Peter Bergen points out, al-Qaeda has not provided for people's material needs, while Islamist organizations that actually participate in political processes do, and do so under the banner of Islam.

Over the years, militants in and out of al-Qaeda have debated how best to achieve their utopian vision of an Islamic caliphate. Arguments over the wisdom of the 9/11 attacks and the doctrine of takfir in particular, have roiled al-Qaeda and focused criticism on bin Laden and his followers.

Alternative strategic approaches may now come to the surface with the killing of al-Qaeda's founder and leader, and we could very well see some examples in the months ahead.

As we do look ahead, al-Qaeda certainly will experience setbacks in the wake of bin Laden's death. Some remaining al-Qaeda leaders will lay low in fear of what is revealed in the information gathered at bin Laden's compound, just as drone attacks have injected risk into the calculations of terrorists, so does the dramatic killing of Osama bin Laden and the data that was gathered on site.

Maintaining pressure at a moment of transition for al-Qaeda leaders could yield gains. Any adjustments by parts of the movement could leave signatures useful to counterterrorism officials.

The death of bin Laden rightly prompts talk about his ongoing influence on the broader al-Qaeda movement, but it will require much more time to sufficiently understand the nature of his influence, and to then tailor our counterterrorism policies.

Having said that, I think continuing what we have been doing in large part is right, drone strikes, denying safe haven, preventing the flow of funding, countering online radicalization, supporting regional allies, and directly and thoroughly addressing the conditions

that make violence so appealing for the young people that join the movement, will be needed in greater degrees. But, I am mindful that this will have to be done in a severely resource constrained environment.

Osama bin Laden succeeded in cultivating a far-flung, mature and capable movement and an ideology that continues to resonate. The Israel and Palestine situation, Western influence, and lethal partners in the safe haven in nuclear-armed Pakistan, and a long list of underlying conditions, will facilitate recruitment and operations.

Pursuing policies based on the notion that Osama bin Laden's death signals the end for al-Qaeda and its affiliated groups would be a premature, unwise, and dangerous position to take at this time.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Sanderson follows:]

**Statement before the House Foreign Affairs Committee,
Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade**

“FUTURE OF AL-QAEDA”

A Statement by

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Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Sherman and distinguished members of the Committee, it is an honor to testify before this Subcommittee on the Future of al Qaeda.

Mr. Chairman, we all greeted Osama bin Laden's death as a victory. I see it as an opportunity to advance a still active, difficult and necessary struggle against al Qaeda and its ideology. My testimony will outline what I think comes next for al Qaeda, both as a broad global movement and as a discrete terrorist organization.

Before I do, I think it is important to put recent events into a historic context. In the 1990s al Qaeda positioned itself as a platform for addressing a wide variety of local and global grievances. This gave it a degree of popular support. In 2003, for example, 72% of Palestinians, 59% of Indonesians, 56% of Jordanians, 15% of Turks, 19% of Lebanese, 45% of Nigerians, and 46% of Pakistanis polled by Pew expressed confidence in Osama bin Laden.

The U.S.-led war in Iraq helped al Qaeda sustain this momentum. Foreign fighters poured into Iraq and other conflict zones while al Qaeda's coffers swelled. Al Qaeda dominated the war of words with professional and timely media products that went unmatched or unanswered by the West. Osama bin Laden combined his vision of global Jihad with the local goals of like-minded terrorist groups around the world—some of which had ties to al Qaeda long before September 11.

It was likely bin Laden's hope that by the time he was killed or captured he would have helped establish and solidify a durable, self-sufficient movement. He was successful in this regard: those who fought or trained in Afghanistan in the 1980s and 1990s are the spine of today's al Qaeda movement. Veterans of the more recent wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Somalia have served as a new generation of credible fighters, and many of them now occupy leadership positions within al Qaeda or affiliated groups. These affiliates include al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula in Yemen, al Shabaab in Somalia, and al Qaeda in Iraq, among others.

Many of these groups were nourished with support by bin Laden. In certain cases, bin Laden's patronage led to public statements of backing for him, organizational name changes to reflect formal alliances, and operations against Western targets. Also appearing throughout the past several years were self-radicalized individuals who, though empowered by al Qaeda's narrative, were often inspired by leaders other than bin Laden. "Lone wolves" represent one of the most difficult facets of the terror threat.

So what are al Qaeda's prospects going forward? I believe the broader al Qaeda movement will survive the death of bin Laden for several reasons. First, al Qaeda's many affiliates are financially and operationally autonomous and their day-to-day activities will not be significantly

altered by bin Laden's removal. Second, al Qaeda's narrative that Islam is under attack is embedded and continues to resonate, even if its violent strategy does not. Third, existing conditions, such as the safe-haven in Pakistan and the chaos in Libya, offer lifelines for al Qaeda.

On this final point, I would like to offer you some very brief insights from the recent research in Africa. For the past month I conducted field work in six nations as part of an investigation into the current state and future prospects for al Qaeda and its associated movements. I visited Morocco, Mali, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania. More than forty interviews were conducted with journalists, academics, intelligence officials, diplomats, Muslim Brotherhood representatives, regional security officials, military officers, and Muslim community leaders. Later this summer I will visit South Asia and the Middle East for similar research.

One of our most interesting findings concerns Libya. Many of our interlocutors expressed concern that the conflict there could soon become an arena for defensive jihad. Such a development, our sources worried, would benefit al Qaeda-related groups and individuals. In particular, the situation in Libya could raise the fortunes of both al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) as well as former members of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, some of whom were allied with Osama bin Laden.

AQIM grew out of a preexisting Algerian jihadist group and now operates across the ungoverned parts of several countries in Africa's Sahel region. Although AQIM's membership and leadership is mostly Algerian, it has successfully recruited fighters from surrounding countries. One source of fighters has been Libya. According to a former leader of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), 40 Libyans have joined AQIM over the past 18 months. These Libyan recruits aside, AQIM's networks already extended into southwest Libya, which positions it to trade on the ongoing chaos there.

The steady flow of people and weapons into and out of Libya, Algeria, and Chad suggests that AQIM is already taking advantage of this opportunity. My sources verified press reports that AQIM has acquired shoulder-fired SA-7 anti-aircraft missiles in Libya and exported them to Mali. Given al Qaeda's longstanding obsession with targeting commercial aircraft, the possibilities are obvious. Another source indicated that AQIM penetrated Libya after the fall of Tunisia in mid-January, and reportedly engaged in a firefight with Libyan police in the far southwest. With Libyan security forces battling rebels in the east, it is even more likely that AQIM will penetrate the western border.

Looking forward, the looming concern is that following the removal of Gaddafi—if it happens—the rebels will likely fail to establish firm and effective control of the country. This could rejuvenate AQIM. It is important to also keep in mind that AQIM has its eye on more than just

Libya. It is involved in all manner of illegal trafficking across the Sahel and West Africa. Additionally, AQIM recently offered material and moral support to Muslim militants in northern Nigeria, in particular to the group known as Boko Haram, in that movement's vicious sectarian battle with Christians.

There are other militants based in Libya which also stand to gain from the current crisis. In the eastern part of Libya one-time LIFG fighters are active in the rebellion against Gaddafi. Militancy in this area of the country is not a surprise. According to an analysis of captured documents by West Point's Combating Terrorism Center, the second highest number of foreign fighters in Iraq per capita came from eastern Libya—areas now under rebel control. Libyans have also played very senior roles in al Qaeda core, with Abu Yaha al-Libi being one of the most important ones today.

What's clear from our time on the ground is that Libya is gaining a lot of attention and can readily serve as a training ground for other militants drawn to this battlefield. With an inchoate democracy next door in Egypt and years of fragility ahead, instability and militant activity in Libya will threaten the promise that popular revolutions have offered for the region. And it is just this dynamic change sweeping the region that also presents a significant challenge to the al Qaeda movement.

The Arab Spring is a major blow to the al Qaeda movement. In what appears to be his last statement, bin Laden voiced support for the popular revolutions across the Middle East and North Africa. But he may have been accepting reality while hoping to take advantage of the situation in due time. The uprisings implicitly vetoed several pillars of bin Laden's ideology. In Egypt and Tunisia the protests succeeded where al Qaeda had failed, removing longstanding autocrats. The protesters' goals were largely secular, their use of violence minimal, and their calls for democracy and a strong role for women anathema to al Qaeda. Only days ago I interviewed a young female member of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt who enthusiastically supported democracy and human rights. I do not believe that she represents the bleak future that bin Laden hoped for.

In fact, I believe al Qaeda has little prospects for gaining traction in Egypt. Several factors make Egypt an infertile ground: societal fatigue with Jihadists who had their moment in the 1970s and 1980s, and for the actions by the terrorist group Gamaa al-Islamiyah, which in 1997 killed over 50 tourists in Luxor—severely damaging the tourism industry. Furthermore, those Egyptians who remained committed to global jihad were assimilated by bin Laden's organization long ago.

Despite my optimism there are some risks in Egypt. One is the inevitability that millions of people will feel that their lot in life has not in fact improved since the change, and some of them may be susceptible to calls for violence against the new government. Do not forget that

52% of Egypt is under the age of 25. Sectarian tension between Muslims and Coptic Christians is a fault-line that could be exploited.

In East Africa, the threat from al Shabaab is of a different nature and of deep concern for the region. Al Shabaab is a complex group operating in a convoluted environment. It is the most recent expression of Islamist militancy in Somalia, which has endured despite the destruction of al-Ittihaad al-Islami and the Islamic Courts Union. Al Shabaab includes local Somalis, Somalis from the sizeable Diaspora, and foreign jihadists with ties to al Qaeda. With well-known cases of Somali-Americans traveling to the Horn of Africa to engage in fighting, this is an issue that has implications for US territory.

Given this composition, it is unsurprising that there are disputes within the organization over tactics and strategic goals. This confusing mosaic is further complicated by the divisive clan politics of Somalia. Assessing the current threat from al Shabaab is difficult—we heard many competing opinions throughout our interviews in both Nairobi and along East Africa’s Swahili coast. On one hand the group is under severe strain. It is being confronted militarily along multiple fronts and its harsh administration has alienated sizable portions of Somalia’s predominately Sufi population. On the other hand, the group has been able to successfully operate outside of Somalia, as evidenced by a 2010 bomb attack that killed dozens in Uganda, a nation that has supplied troops to the African Union Mission in Somalia currently engaging al Shabaab’s forces.

In addition to the group’s transnational reach, al Shabaab’s ability to recruit transnationally is also of concern. The first American citizen to kill himself in a suicide bombing, Shirwa Ahmed, died in an attack attributed to al Shabaab. Another American, Omar Hamami, grew up in Alabama and now plays an important role within the organization. Ahmed and Hamami highlight the role that Americans and Europeans of Somali descent have already played within the organization. In the future, one is concerned about what may happen if Western volunteers return home with the skills and ideological conviction they obtained in Somalia.

Across Africa, al Qaeda and its associated movements have made significant inroads. But it also found places such as Somalia and, eventually, the Sudan to be difficult and inhospitable operating environments. Al Qaeda does not offer the only model for Islamist militants in Africa or in other areas where it is active.

The trend toward political participation by Islamists is also problematic for al Qaeda. As Peter Bergen points out, al Qaeda has not provided for peoples’ material needs, while Islamist organizations that actually participate in political processes do—and do so under the banner of Islam. Other foreign terrorist organizations, such as Laskar-e-Taiba, Hamas, and Hezbollah have robust “above ground” welfare and political organs, which provides them with an advantage

over al Qaeda and its violence-only approach to change. Increasingly sophisticated terrorist organizations offering these goods and the ability to exert influence through elections has made al Qaeda's approach look outdated and incomplete. Al Qaeda must have taken note of this disadvantage, and perhaps those rising in the movement will seek to modify their approach.

Over the years militants in and out of al Qaeda have debated how best to achieve their Utopian vision of an Islamic caliphate. Arguments over the wisdom of the 9/11 attacks and the doctrine of Takfir in particular have roiled al Qaeda and focused criticism on bin Laden and his followers. Alternative strategic approaches may now come to the surface or get more air-time with the killing of al Qaeda's founder and leader—and we could very well see some examples in the months ahead. The death of Osama bin Laden marks a very important transition point for al Qaeda, the group. With bin Laden's passing, longstanding strategic debates within al Qaeda's senior leadership will likely intensify. This could take the group in a different direction.

Looking ahead and recommendations

Al Qaeda certainly will experience set-backs in the wake of bin Laden's death. Some remaining al Qaeda leaders will lay low in fear of what is revealed in the information gathered at bin Laden's compound. Just as drone attacks have injected risk into the calculations of terrorists, so too does the dramatic killing of Osama bin Laden and the data that was gathered on-site. Maintaining pressure at a moment of transition for al Qaeda leaders could yield gains. Any adjustments by parts of the movement could leave signatures useful to counterterrorism officials. Those who may now reevaluate their role in or commitment to the organization may be seen as liabilities by others. This could instigate internal discord and violence.

One caution in respect to the upcoming elections in Egypt and those likely to take place in other nascent Muslim-majority democracies is to avoid a repeat of Algeria in 1991. The Algerian government postponed the second round of elections following a strong showing by the Islamic Salvation Front and eventually dissolved the Parliament. What followed was years of brutal violence by all sides with more than 100,000 people being killed. If Islamist parties appear poised for a major victory in Egypt or elsewhere and were somehow prevented from gaining power, the results could be similarly catastrophic. At this point this seems unlikely, but this recent example merits a caution.

The death of bin Laden rightly prompts talk about his ongoing influence on the broader al Qaeda movement. But it will require much more time to sufficiently understand the nature of his influence and to then tailor our counterterrorism policies. Having said that, I think continuing what we have been doing, in large part, is right. Maintaining pressure on al Qaeda and associated groups will include drone strikes, denying safe haven, preventing the flow of

funding, countering online radicalization, supporting regional allies, and directly and thoroughly addressing the conditions that make violence so appealing for the young people who join the movement. But over time this approach will have to change as conditions and available intelligence dictate. Additional exploitation of the captured data will afford us a better understanding of bin Laden's influence on the wider network he began in Pakistan in 1989. In those intervening years, Osama bin Laden has succeeded in cultivating a far-flung, mature, and capable movement and an ideology that continues to resonate. Both will continue to do damage.

The movement will change or even splinter, but al Qaeda will remain relevant for a host of reasons. The intractable Israel-Palestine situation, Western influence and military forces in Muslim-majority countries, lethal partners and a safe haven in nuclear-armed Pakistan, and a long list of underlying conditions can all facilitate recruitment and operations. With so many unknowns, the US and its allies will have to maintain pressure on al Qaeda and its associated movements for the foreseeable future. Pursuing policies based on the notion that Osama bin Laden's death signals the end for al Qaeda and its affiliated groups would be a premature, unwise, and dangerous position to take at this time.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Tom.

Let me ask you about the comments the director or head of MI5 in Britain made about the possibility of terror attacks by al-Shabaab. He recently said that they are worried about terrorism on the streets, inspired by those who learned that craft alongside al-Shabaab fighters, because so many, a "significant number," I think, was the quote, a significant number of people were traveling to Somalia.

You were in Kenya and Tanzania, and you saw a little of that. What do you think the prospects are for attacks on the British homeland? We have also received reports that al-Shabaab, along with the Somali Americans, are making the trek to the region through Kenya.

Mr. SANDERSON. They, in fact, have, Mr. Chairman. We are aware that the first suicide bombing involving America was Somali American who traveled from the States to the Horn of Africa in an attempt to push back the Ethiopian invasion and fight those individuals.

The Somalis have quite a significant diaspora. They have individuals around the world, the UK, Australia, United States, and the fact that they are members of an organization that is extreme, and driven to push back neighbors such as Ethiopia that have been supported by the United States, merits caution and concern.

I think the director of MI5's comments are reasonable. I think that we do need to look at this potential threat. At this point, the individuals have gone and focused on Ethiopia and focused on Somalia, or into claims in the area, not on the United States. So, I don't want to put too much stress there, but it is a valid thing to look at.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Hoffman, Mr. Jones, any thoughts on that question?

Mr. JONES. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

One thing I would like to add is, one of the growing concerns with al-Shabaab in the United States is not just for communities in places like Minneapolis, but also what we are seeing is an increase in special interest daily in networks that are bringing Somalis into and out of the United States, including those connected to, directly or indirectly, to al-Shabaab.

So, we have a pipeline that can move individuals from the United States to Somalia, through Latin America, particularly, Mexico, as well as move them back. In some cases, it may be to visit family, but I think there is a growing concern of the use by al-Shabaab of a range of trafficking and other networks in Latin America, especially, Mexico, that were they to decide to fundamentally target the U.S. homeland there is a well-defined ability to get into the U.S.

Mr. ROYCE. I would also like to ask you about the former Pakistani commando by the name of Kashmiri. There have been multiple terrorism plots that he's been linked to in Europe, in particular, and sort of these large-scale Mumbai-style plots that he's tried to pull off in cities there last summer.

You see some speculation he might try to take over the organization. Do you have any thoughts on whether or not that is plausible?

Mr. JONES. Mr. Chairman, in my view, partly because he is a Pakistani, he is not an Arab, I think it would be unlikely he has the strategic level support across the affiliates to, actually, take control of the organization. But, he has a well-developed network of operatives in Europe, in South Asia, and in a range of other places, to put him in a very influential operational level position.

So, I would not assess he would take over Central al-Qaeda, but, certainly, plays a very important operational level role, including links with David Headley, for example.

Mr. ROYCE. Right. Right.

Well, let me go to Mr. Hoffman here for a minute, because on these Mumbai-style attacks there was the comment that the LeT holds the match that could start the war between India and Pakistan. A Mumbai attack itself could have led to that kind of escalation.

What can we be doing to stop another one of these attacks that would originate in Pakistan by organizations linked to al-Qaeda, or linked to these terrorist networks, that attempt to create this kind of mayhem in India, with a hope for tit for tat.

Mr. HOFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, this was precisely one of the scenarios I painted in my testimony, the fear that one of these groups either operating on their own or operating at al-Qaeda's behest, or, perhaps, someone else's behest, might attempt to trigger some confrontation with India to deflect attention from the war and terrorism and from Afghanistan.

I think groups like LeT are enormously valuable to al-Qaeda, because they provide what al-Qaeda does not, the social welfare services. They have gone beyond being a mere terrorist group.

And, in LeT's case, I think they are extremely dangerous, because the bottom line is that they are the Hezbollah of South Asia. They are so embedded in Pakistani society, in terms of running schools, clinics, training camps, a relationship with the government, one could say even also a state-sponsored relationship with the government, that their power is dangerous. They have operatives and a presence throughout the world I think that al-Qaeda could only dream of, and in this sense they are so embedded in Pakistani society that they represent a threat to, I think, its stability.

Mr. ROYCE. They have an open campus where they can routinely recruit new graduates.

Mr. HOFFMAN. Well, precisely, and estimates of upwards of 2,000 facilities in total in Pakistan.

And, even when you spoke about Ilyas Kashmiri, I think you put your finger on one of the dangerous trends we are seeing, is that individual groups do not matter any longer. You see people gravitating from one group to another, that joining a group like LeT or Harakat-ul-Jihad, which was Ilyas Kashmiri's group, is just a gateway to other groups. And, you see someone like Kashmiri going from having served in the Pakistani army, having trained the mujahideen in the 1980s, going to a radical Pakistani jihadi group, and then being tasked by al-Qaeda to engage in international terrorism. And, this loops back to what you were asking about al-Shabaab.

This is an entity that 10 or even 5 years ago none of us would have heard of or would have cared about.

Mr. ROYCE. Sure.

Mr. HOFFMAN. But, they are a group that now seeks to operate on the international scene.

Mr. ROYCE. But, we did have a steady flow of information coming in about these terrorist personalities, partly by the information that we were getting from those that we were interrogating, those who we were interviewing.

And, I mentioned earlier the highest ranking terrorist, I guess you would call him, captured in the last several years is this Indonesian, Umar Patek. Despite the fact that he is described as a "gold mine," we have not interrogated him.

What do you make of this? Do you have an explanation of why the administration has been so reluctant to do so, and how big a target is he? How valuable is the information he could provide?

Mr. HOFFMAN. I do not, sir, have an explanation. I think that like all terrorist leaders, he has a potential wealth of information, even if it is not actionable intelligence, but helping us to understand the wiring diagram of terrorist organizations, helping us to understand the decision-making processes, helping us to understand the relationships between them, that has, as I just described, drifted people from one terrorist group to another.

So, all that, of course, is enormously important, not just in a tactical sense of killing and capturing other terrorists, but also building up the strategic picture of how these groups operate, so we can prevent their regeneration.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Dr. Hoffman.

Mr. Sherman.

Mr. SHERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In this room for 15 years, I have criticized the State Department for failure to enforce the Iran Sanctions Act and its progeny, so I should bring up that they have done a good day's work today, they just released a statement that seven companies have been sanctioned, including the State Oil Company of Venezuela.

Now, as to the issues of this hearing, Mr. Hoffman, one thing that I am interested in is how much money did bin Laden die with, and who controls it now? Do you have any insight or knowledge of the answers to those questions?

Mr. HOFFMAN. No, sir, I do not, but one thing I would point out is that in recent years al-Qaeda has turned more and more to self-funded operations, on a modest amount of spending.

Mr. SHERMAN. He seems to have been rather stingy with his own personal money, or his personal money was wildly exaggerated. He notoriously only bought one-way airplane tickets, saving money and tipping us off to some extent.

Mr. Jones, you preferred an interesting idea, and I think it is a good idea that we try to discredit these terrorists, whether it be at large or otherwise. We may not be believed, but the public is interested in little salacious details.

I, for one, think that it would be a good idea not to satisfy my own prurient interest, but rather as an effort to discredit, to relieve some of the personal and embarrassing things found in bin Laden's compound.

Do we have legislation to carry out the program you have outlined? I mean, we have laws to protect life, liberty and property of Americans, and yet, when you are a terrorist we do take, you know, the SEALs do knock down your door, presumably, they are willing to take their life, we are going to invade their privacy. Is legislation necessary in order to say that if you are indicted on terrorism and refuse to present yourself to American authorities, that we can violate your privacy and talk about your arrest record?

And, by the way, the individuals you were talking about, are they easily indictable or have they been indicted on terrorism?

Mr. JONES. Some of them, including Adam Gadahn, have been indicted. He was indicted in the early 2000s.

Mr. SHERMAN. Okay.

Mr. JONES. I think, frankly, with most of the individuals we are talking about, it probably is not necessary to establish legislation to release information about them, especially, because the vast majority are not even Americans.

And, even those like Adnan el Shukrijumah, who have lived in the United States, he is not an American citizen. So, I would suspect—

Mr. SHERMAN. I am not sure that the average guy in my district who is an immigrant to the United States, but does not have his citizenship, should just have his arrest record released for the purpose of embarrassing him, unless, you know, and then I draw a distinction between that individual and these terrorists.

Go ahead.

Mr. JONES [continuing]. But, certainly, releasing Anwar al-Awlaki's solicitation of prostitutes in San Diego, I think would be helpful in denigrating his character. Whether it would contribute to individuals not seeking his guidance, as we saw with Major Hasan, the Fort Hood shooter, is unclear.

But, I think making that information publicly available, again, I am not sure if legislation is required, or if better strategic thinking is required.

Mr. SHERMAN. Well, I look forward to getting your analysis on a case-by-case basis, and would be willing to carry legislation if it was carefully drafted.

Last question, is Peter Bergen right, is Saif al-Adel the interim leader of al-Qaeda, and if so, or even if not, he spent many years in Iran, supposedly, under house arrest. Was it house arrest or was he a house guest?

Mr. Jones?

Mr. JONES. Sure. Sir, in my personal view, I have seen no strong evidence that Saif al-Adel has taken on the role as the senior leader of Central al-Qaeda in Pakistan.

He, certainly, has played a very historically important role, sat on the inner shura, traveled to Iran after the overthrow of the Taliban regime in December.

My understanding is it was "house arrest," that many of al-Qaeda's leaders in Iran were monitored quite closely, in a few cases were encouraged to leave. Some have left, actually, somewhat recently, but, certainly, not arrested.

Mr. SHERMAN. And, the fact that some have left Iran, it is not like they had to evade Iranian law enforcement in order to leave the country, is that correct?

Mr. JONES. I cannot give you details on every case, but that is my understanding in at least some of them.

Mr. SHERMAN. Well, usually, if you are under house arrest you cannot leave, and if you are a house guest you can, you may even be asked to.

I yield back.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Poe of Texas.

Mr. POE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have questions about Pakistan and then Libya.

How ingrained, if they are, are al-Qaeda or other terrorist groups in the Pakistan Government?

Mr. Jones?

Mr. JONES. The Pakistan Government and its intelligence service has had a history of providing direct assistance to a range of proxy organizations to pursue its interests in India, including Kashmir, as well as in Afghanistan.

So, a range of these groups includes Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, the Afghan Taliban, Haqqani Network.

The concern I would have is that several of these groups, including the Haqqani Network, as well as Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, have a very close relationship with senior al-Qaeda leaders. So, at the very least one could draw a conclusion that there is a, to use the Kevin Bacon analogy, very close, perhaps, one or two degrees of separation between elements of Pakistan's Government and al-Qaeda.

Mr. POE. Since the taking out of Osama bin Laden, there has been a lot of discussion about how trustworthy an ally Pakistan is. I think they are playing both sides, at least two sides, maybe more sides than that.

If what you say is true, how should we be moving forward to make sure that the intelligence service in Pakistan does not go further and help these groups obtain uranium capability that they can use? Is that a concern that we should have, the United States should have, that the intelligence service in Pakistan is working with these groups so that maybe they could obtain uranium and move in a nuclear capability?

Mr. Sanderson, anybody want to answer that?

Mr. SANDERSON. It is clearly a concern. I do think they are playing both sides, because they have a lot of interests that go beyond what we are interested in. But, I would yield to Dr. Jones, given that is his area of expertise.

Mr. POE. All right.

Mr. Jones?

Mr. JONES. I think it would be helpful, as a general principle, as we consider future amounts of assistance and types of assistance to provide to Pakistan, that they increasingly rethink their policy of providing assistance to proxy organizations.

There are clearly terrorist organizations that they have fought, have died fighting. The Tehrik-e-Taliban in Pakistan is one good example. So, they have serious threats to their homeland, some of which overlap with ours, but some of which do not.

I would suggest strongly encouraging them, including through the types and amounts of funding we are providing to them, that they must stop providing direct assistance in some cases to militant groups, because it creates a sanctuary in that country that is extremely unhelpful and dangerous for America's national security.

Mr. POE. Military support that we have sent to Pakistan, our own Government is now saying that 40 percent of the bills they give back to us are rejected by our Government as invalid bills for what they are billing us for in Pakistan regarding their military.

How do we know, or give me a take on what you think our military support turns out to be going through Pakistan, the intelligence service, and going to one of these groups ended up being used against us. Is that a possibility, a probability, or not?

Mr. JONES. I have seen no evidence, that does not mean it does not exist, of abusing our equipment or any other monies and pushing it toward militant groups.

But, as a general policy, organizations that we have a relationship with in Pakistan have provided assistance.

So, in a sense, I am not sure it matters that much. At the very least, they are taking knowledge in some cases, and pushing it to some militant groups.

Mr. POE. Last question is Libya.

Who is in charge of the Libyan rebels?

Mr. Sanderson? They are looking at you, so I will let you answer.

Mr. SANDERSON. Absolutely, Mr. Congressman.

I cannot answer that specific question for you. What I can answer is your initial question as to the threat and role of al-Qaeda there.

I do not know who is running the rebellion, but I can tell you that al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb is on the western flank, has networks into the country, and can certainly trade on the chaos there. On the eastern side, which we know from previous statements, and from the West Point study, that is where you had a tremendous number of extremists who traveled to Iraq to fight, the second highest number per capita for any country.

Then you have Libyan Islamic Fighting Group members, former members, one of the senior former members of the LIFG recently reported that in the last 18 months 40 former LIFG—or 40 Libyans, not, necessarily, LIFG, 40 Libyans have joined AQIM. So, you have a crossover between the groups. You have the rebels in the east being infiltrated by former LIFG members into AQIM poised to make gains in this chaos.

And, that has, I think, great implications for what is going on next door in Egypt, as they start to right themselves you do not want that degree of instability next door in Libya.

Mr. POE. Thank you.

I yield back.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Poe.

We will go to Mr. Higgins of New York.

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to just talk about al-Qaeda in Pakistan. And, if you are talking about the future of al-Qaeda, I also think it is fundamentally important to talk about, you know, how they sustain themselves, you know, how do they exist.

And, in Afghanistan, which I have heard some estimates that the heroin trade is about 60 percent of Afghan's entire economy. And, Taliban does not own the poppy fields, but it presides over it. It charges protection, it makes money in the movement of drugs.

And, I also understand that drug movement becomes more profitable the further away from its point of origin.

To what extent is al-Qaeda involved in the movement of heroin from Afghanistan through Central Asia and South Asia?

Mr. JONES. My understanding, Congressman Higgins, is, and I am not an expert on the drug trade, is they make some money off of the transportation of opium-based products, but it is by no means their primary source of assistance, which may come from a range of other activities, Gulf financing, kidnapping.

So, they have, like many groups, significant redundancy in where they get financing from. I would say they do not need a large amount of funding, but other groups, including the Afghan Taliban, are the primary beneficiaries, as well as government officials on both sides of the border, of most of the drug money.

Mr. SANDERSON. Mr. Congressman, I cannot give you a figure, of course, but I will say that you correctly characterized the increasing amount of money as it goes out of Afghanistan. You know, this is between 6,000 and 8,000 tons per year, with about half of it going west through Iran, 20 percent going through Central Asia, the rest through Pakistan.

Incidentally, we learned while on the Swahili Coast, and in other parts of Africa, that heroin was coming down there and causing problems among the Somali community.

So, this is tremendously dangerous and does increase in benefit to them as it goes further and makes money for those along the route.

Mr. HIGGINS. Well just, it seems to me that there is what a book by Gretchen Peters called Seeds of Terror, she puts the number at about half-a-billion dollars a year the Taliban makes in taxing, charging protection, and presiding over those opium-based products.

But, the point is, if an economy, you know, that is 60 percent, you know, heroin based, the movement around that country cannot be all that profitable, but the heroin has to get to more places where a lot of money can be made.

And, if you assume that the Taliban's involvement is confined to Pakistan, then other elements are involved in moving those opium-based products, as you said, throughout the world and making an lawful lot of money.

Mr. JONES. Sir, if I can just add one issue.

Based on the fact that much of that opium, or a chunk of it, does go to areas like Eastern Europe and Western Europe, you see in Dubai, for example, where a lot of the drug money is funded by large numbers of Russian mafia, so I think the end areas where that drug money is coming, is going to, and Gretchen has outlined this as well in her work, does mean that a lot of the conduits are in areas like Dubai and in Eastern Europe.

So, I would say those appear to be the primary recipients of the assistance and the funding as it comes through on its way to areas like Eastern Europe.

Mr. HIGGINS. Just a final question.

Again, you talked about al-Qaeda is now decentralized, diffused, and other influences is gaining, but their popularity seems to be declining, particularly, in the Islamic world, as evidenced by the Arab Spring and other indicators.

So, you know, where would you put the relative strength of al-Qaeda today, versus, let's say, 5 years ago?

Any of you.

Mr. HOFFMAN. I would say it is stronger, beyond any doubt.

Mr. HIGGINS. Stronger.

Mr. HOFFMAN. 20 years ago al-Qaeda, perhaps, had seven international networks worldwide. Today it has 11.

You show me any entity in the past 2 or 3 years when most governments throughout the world had been, you know, immersed in cutbacks and laying off personnel and so on, al-Qaeda has been able to expand by more than 50 percent its worldwide presence.

So, I think that is a reflection of a conscious strategy, both to decentralize, and as Dr. Jones said, but also to deflect attention away from South Asia to strengthen the core group, because the core group then still remains a player.

Mr. ROYCE. We are going to go to Mr. Duncan.

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Folks, thank you for being here today.

You know, some say the attention given to the al-Qaeda leadership struggle risks placing personalities and individuals above ideas and ideology. And, I tend to agree with that.

And, I don't believe has been said about the threats to world peace, and, definitely, peace in the Middle East, posed by the Muslim Brotherhood. I don't believe we talk about the Muslim Brotherhood's influence in the region enough, and you are really just starting to hear about that in recent events.

And, furthermore, I cannot say enough about the despairing language of terror within the administration. If you look at the 9/11 Commission report, and the terms, it had words like terrorism and jihad, and Muslim Brotherhood, and al-Qaeda and others, mentioning that, and then look at the lexicons that are out there in the services, intelligence services, even within the administration.

I am concerned about that, because I believe you have got to define your enemy.

Dr. Jones, I am going to take a different line of questioning here, because I am concerned about closer to home. What is your opinion on the threat level from the terrorist organizations, Hezbollah and al-Shabaab in, say, Latin America, and even closer to home in Mexico, along our border?

Mr. JONES. That is a very good question.

My personal view on the two you noted, Hezbollah and al-Shabaab, is both do present a threat, but it is not clear that it is an imminent threat to the U.S. homeland.

I am not an expert on Hezbollah, like some others, including Dr. Hoffman here, and that general region, but I would say that their primary focus still appears to be the general Lebanon, Israeli area.

However, I would also note that an incident like Israeli or U.S. attacks against Iranian nuclear facilities could obviously change that very quickly.

The same thing is probably also true of Shabaab, whose primary focus remains in and around Somalia. There are growing concerns of a linkage between al-Qaeda East Africa, but I would say the threat streams through Latin America to the U.S. homeland, active plotting, based on al-Shabaab, I have not seen evidence of a very serious threat.

I would say the most serious threats continue to come from Central al-Qaeda, al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, and some of the Pakistani groups, including Tehrik-e-Taliban in Pakistan, and Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, all of which have some number of networks operating through Central America.

Mr. DUNCAN. That is interesting.

Mr. Sanderson, and then I will ask Mr. Hoffman questions.

Mr. SANDERSON. Thank you, Congressman.

I would just like to remind everyone that there is significant penetration by Hezbollah supporters on the level of a criminal nexus that clearly could also serve as the beachhead of a future attack.

If you look at the trading, illegal trading of cigarettes that came out of the Carolinas with the Hamoud brothers, the profits from that were used to buy laser range finders, night vision goggles, blasting caps that were sent back to the Bekaa Valley.

A second group up in Canada bought pseudoephedrine tablets, brought them in to the northern United States, traded them with Mexican methamphetamine gangs, who then created methamphetamines, and the profits from that were also sent back to Lebanon.

So, that is a significant threat in my mind.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Hoffman, last July we had the first IED explode in this hemisphere, and in Mexico. Can you elaborate, or can you talk about the influence that Hezbollah may have with the Mexican drug cartel, any involvement there?

Mr. HOFFMAN. Well, sir, Hezbollah has long been involved in the Western Hemisphere, going back at least several decades. Its strength has always been in the triple border area between Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina.

I think in recent years it has been able to establish a more auxiliary beachhead in the northern part of Latin America and Venezuela, in particular.

So, I think its influence in these areas, its involvement in illegal smuggling narcotics trafficking, as Mr. Sanderson described cigarette smuggling and so on, its presence in the United States, I think, and its infrastructure throughout the region is quite strong.

I have no evidence at all, but I would be skeptical that it was necessarily engaged in an act of alliance with, for instance, the Mexican drug cartels, because Hezbollah modus operandi, as Dr. Jones has described, is, essentially, to lay low and to be ready in the event some adversarial action is taken by the United States or some other country against Iran, or, perhaps, against Lebanon, and then to mobilize its operatives in other hemispheres to strike.

It is not inconceivable that that technology would be transferred by Hezbollah, but I think, unfortunately, what we have seen since Iraq is that the IED technology has really spread to many different theaters, and is not confined to any one group any longer. But, that sort of technology not least because of the Internet, not least as I described earlier because of the flow of individuals now between

multiple terrorist groups, unfortunately, has spread, and may, indeed, be a harbinger of the future when you see IEDs elsewhere.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you.

We are going to go now to Mr. Connolly of Virginia.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for having this hearing, and welcome.

Mr. Jones made reference to the Haqqani Network. It seems fairly convincing evidence that the elements of the ISI have provided protection to them, to the Haqqani Network, which has operated openly and with impunity in Pakistan, or at least parts of Pakistan, Peshawar, to wit.

My question goes to, I mean, the title of this hearing is the future of al-Qaeda, but I think we are particularly increasingly focused on the Pakistani relationship.

How should the United States look at Pakistan? And, you know, it seems to me that there are competing theories. You could look at Pakistan and say, duplicitous, manipulative, and we have to do something about that.

You could look at Pakistan and say it is a conveniently compartmentalized government. So, there are legitimate elements here of the Pakistani Government who are cooperating openly and honestly with the United States in the fight against terror. After all, they have lost Pakistani military personnel in that fight.

And then, there are other elements in other compartments that are not, or you could, I suppose, say given the money on the table they know how to play us beautifully. We do not have a lot of choices, given the fact that we have a nuclear capacity, and so they are cynically opportunistic in our relationship.

Now, I think there is a quandary up here on the Hill as to, well, we need to figure out how, in fact, we see the relationship, because there are so many conflicting variables in this very complex relationship.

So, I want to give you all an opportunity to tell us what you think, how you are advising the House Foreign Affairs Committee, how should Congress look at this relationship, given recent events?

Dr. Hoffman.

Mr. HOFFMAN. Well, sir, I think you have given a very accurate description of the problem, it is all of the above. It is all of those things. It is duplicitous and manipulative, it is convenient and compartmentalized. I would argue it is also very selective in its cooperation.

It cooperates with the United States against those groups that it believes most directly threaten the Pakistani Government, that is the TTP, the Pakistani Taliban. It gives other groups, if not a pass, then turns a blind eye, or in some respects is actually involved in supporting them.

The trial, I think, currently underway in Chicago, that involves Tahawwur Rana, a Pakistani National based in the United States, and David Headley another, actually, a dual Pakistani American citizen, sheds a lot of light on this, because, of course, according to David Headley's testimony the senior major in the ISI, Major Iqbal, was one of his handlers, and not only knew about the Mumbai attacks, but had an active role, and he certainly did not try to stop the attackers when he learned that Americans were being delib-

erately targeted, and for that matter American Jews were also being, specifically, targeted in a Chabad House. And, I think that, and the trial, and that information, controvertibly, I think, provides us a wedge to push back.

We cannot completely forsake Pakistan. We need their assistance clearly, and as you, yourself, pointed out, not all elements of the Pakistani Government are uncooperative or inimical to U.S. interests, but I think we have to make it clear that their selective backing of some groups and going after other groups has to end, and that should be one of the main pre-conditions for aid in the future.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you.

Mr. Jones.

Mr. JONES. I think it is useful, in answering your question, to understand what motivates, what likely motivates Pakistan as very similar to what motivates all countries in that region, maximizing its own national security interests.

It acts to protect its own borders. It has serious concerns about its relationship with India. It has serious concerns about India's very close relationship with Afghanistan.

It has, since its creation in 1947, used proxy organizations, because it is a relatively weaker state, to deal with the Indians. It did it from the moment it was established in the Kashmir area.

So, I would say in general the more I think that we can argue that policy of providing assistance to proxy groups ends up undercutting Pakistan's own security interests in the long run, because any of these groups will and have turned on Pakistan itself. It cannot control these groups in all aspects, certainly undermines its own security.

But, I would just say very bluntly that I find it very difficult to believe we can continue to provide the amounts and degrees of assistance that we provide them, to the government, who is structured, if you look at the structure of the ISI, to provide assistance to proxy groups. That just—I do not think that is the best way to provide American taxpayer dollars to a country that continues as a matter of foreign policy to provide assistance to militant groups.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, would you indulge me, not for me to ask anymore questions, but to allow Mr. Sanderson to respond as well?

Mr. ROYCE. Certainly, Mr. Connolly.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I thank the chair.

Mr. SANDERSON. Thank you, Congressman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would echo Dr. Jones' comments about the interest, and no doubt about it, we are left with a terrible choice, and we are held over a barrel to a degree here.

But, the recent attack on the Pakistani naval base, I think, is a good reminder to the Pakistanis about how unwieldy some of these internal groups can be.

And, speaking of interests, we also have to look beyond our specific interests on extremism in al-Qaeda, to interests in Asia, and we do not want to move away too much from Pakistan, given their relationship with China, and our interests with India and China, at large.

So, I think that leaves us in a position where we have clear to continue, but certainly not at these numbers.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Hoffman, you noted that decapitation strikes have rarely provided a decisive end to a terrorist movement, instead they often paralyze a group, only to see the rise of an even more dangerous successor. Hamas, which has had several of its top leaders eliminated is a case in point, some argue. Yet, the death of al-Zarqawi, al-Qaeda's leader in Iraq, is believed to have seriously degraded that group.

Why was the case of Zarqawi different, and where does the death of bin Laden fall on that scale?

Mr. HOFFMAN. Well, sir, that is an excellent parallel to draw, and you are absolutely right, the death of al-Zarqawi in May 2006 degraded al-Qaeda in Iraq, but, of course, it did not eliminate the threat. Al-Qaeda in Iraq continues today, weaker, but, nonetheless, still with an ability to inflict pain and suffering on the Iraqi people and to target—tend to undermine the fragile democracy in Iraq.

Mr. JOHNSON. Okay. Many point to the Internet as an increasing source of radicalization for home-grown terrorists. In a message after bin Laden's death, al-Qaeda's online propaganda arm sought to rally supporters by low-tech means, and they said something like this: "We say to every mujahid Muslim, if there is an opportunity do not waste it. Do not consult anyone about killing Americans or destroying their economy. We also insight you carry out acts of individual terrorism with significant results, which only require basic preparation."

How do you assess U.S. efforts to combat what one analyst has called a virtual caliphate?

Mr. HOFFMAN. Anemic, I think under resourced, under prioritized. I think that in the past 10 years that is the one arm on the war on terrorism that we have not devoted sufficient attention or resources to.

I think it is something that people tend to shy away from, because the metrics are not clear. And, because the metrics are not clear, there is a devaluation of it, but I think it is absolutely essential. In and of itself, it is not going to win the war on terrorism, but in a sense it is an essential adjunct to kinetics to killing and capturing terrorists.

For example, the Voice of America's budget, over 90 percent of it is dedicated to traditional media sources, television, radio and newspapers, and it has been that way for years. Yet, we are in the 21st century in the Internet age, and yet, only roughly 6 or 7 percent of its budget is designed to communicate across the Internet.

There are only a handful of individuals in the State Department, I think, in the single digits, that, actually, engage in counter messaging.

So, I think we have this nascent capability, but it is one that is being completely under resourced and, really, I think, completely unexploited.

Mr. JOHNSON. And, am I interpreting your answer correctly, do you see this as a significant security threat?

Mr. HOFFMAN. Absolutely, sir, and, of course, the example of Inspire magazine, which al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula has produced, is clear evidence of that.

There is now a raft of individuals that have been inspired by Inspire, Major Nidal Hasan, the Fort Hood shooter, Faisal Shahzad, for example, in terms of the Times Square bombing, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, the Christmas Day bomber, and the list goes on. This is a very effective tool. It is a way to animate, to mobilize, and, ultimately, I think, to activate or, actually, to engage individuals, just as you described, in low-level violence, that I say reflects an al-Qaeda strategy that is designed to throw at us this multiplicity of low-level threats, in hopes of creating so much noise, and so many distractions, that it is al-Qaeda's hope that bigger, more spectacular attacks or attempts will then prove more successful.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. Sanderson, bin Laden has been credited with unifying Islamist terrorist groups to target the far enemy, the U.S. and the West, and wage a defensive jihad to protect all Muslims against the West's reported war on Islam.

Without bin Laden, some argue that the al-Qaeda affiliates will further fracture and focus on local issues, as they were postured prior to al-Qaeda's rise in the '90s.

Is that where you see the organization going, and if not, where?

Mr. SANDERSON. Thank you, Mr. Congressman.

Bin Laden was successful in overlaying his global jihad with the local goals of a number of associated groups around the world, and that was effective, and I think there are elements within some of those groups that still believe in that.

But, I do think that with his death some will reconsider that.

There are also competing theories out there and strategies, Abu Musab al-Suri pointed out the consequences of targeting the far enemy, a technically advanced United States, that resulted in the destruction of the Islamic emirate in Afghanistan.

So, there were already people who were challenging that focus, and I do think that as his influence recedes, with his death, to the degree that it will, I think others will start to voice their opinions, and you will see people push in different directions.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. ROYCE. Well, let me just thank our witnesses, not only for their testimony and traveling here today, but for their expertise. Bin Laden is dead, but we have a lot to grapple with in the aftermath.

Thank you all for appearing at this hearing. We stand adjourned. [Whereupon, at 4:20 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X



MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade
Edward R. Royce (R-CA), Chairman

May 24, 2011

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade, to be held in **Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live, via the WEBCAST link on the Committee website at <http://www.hcfa.house.gov>)**:

DATE: Tuesday, May 24, 2011

TIME: 3:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: Future of al-Qaeda

WITNESSES: **Panel I**

Bruce Hoffman, Ph.D.
Professor
School of Foreign Service
Georgetown University

Seth G. Jones, Ph.D.
Senior Political Scientist
RAND Corporation

Mr. Thomas M. Sanderson
Deputy Director and Senior Fellow, Transnational Threats Project
Center for Strategic and International Studies

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202-225-5021 at least five business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade HEARING

Day Tuesday Date May 24, 2011 Room 2172

Starting Time 3:00 pm Ending Time 4:20 pm

Recesses (___ to ___) (___ to ___)

Presiding Member(s)

Rep. Ed Royce, Chairman

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session
Executive (closed) Session
Televised

Electronically Recorded (taped)
Stenographic Record

TITLE OF HEARING:

"Future of Al-Qaeda"

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Reps. Ed Royce, Brad Sherman, Brian Higgins, Ted Poe, Renee Ellmers, Jeff Duncan, Gerry Connolly, Bill Johnson.

NON-SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: (Mark with an * if they are not members of full committee.)

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes No
(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: (List any statements submitted for the record.)

Rep. Gerry Connolly

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____
or
TIME ADJOURNED _____


Subcommittee Staff Director

Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade Subcommittee
Member Attendance

Republicans

- Rep. Edward Royce (Chair)
- Rep. Ted Poe
- Rep. Jeff Duncan
- Rep. Bill Johnson
- Rep. Tim Griffin
- Rep. Ann Marie Buerkle
- Rep. Renee Ellmers

Democrats

- Rep. Brad Sherman (Ranking Member)
- Rep. David Cicilline
- Rep. Gerry Connolly
- Rep. Brian Higgins
- Rep. Allyson Schwartz

The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly (VA-11)

**Terrorism, Nonproliferation & Trade Subcommittee Hearing: Future of al-Qaeda
Tuesday, May 24, 2011
3pm**

In the wake of Osama bin Laden's demise, there has been speculation about the future of al Qaeda. Here is what we do know: Osama bin Laden is dead, U.S. Special Forces collected a "treasure trove" of information from his compound, and on May 6 al-Qaeda proclaimed that the organization would not end with bin Laden's death.¹

In recent weeks, Pakistan has bared the brunt of retaliatory attacks by militants. Just yesterday, Pakistan finally took back control of its naval base—PNS Mehran—in the major port city of Karachi. Details are sketchy, but according to news reports, about a dozen Taliban militants attacked the naval air wing headquarters with several weapons, including rocket propelled grenades; one attacker blew himself up. They destroyed at least one aircraft, a U.S.-built P-3C Orion maritime patrol aircraft, and killed at least 16 people. It is unclear how such an attack was planned and executed with such precision.

On May 13, two suicide bombers affiliated with Tehrik-i-Taliban attacked a police training center in northwest Pakistan near Peshawar; the death toll was almost 100, and close to 140 were injured. In another attack on a Pakistani military facility in October of 2009, Taliban fighters attacked the Army's General Headquarters in Rawalpindi, and took 42 people hostage; in the end nine gunmen, 11 soldiers and three hostages were dead.

It is slightly unclear why Pakistan is being attacked by militants, since that country's role in bin Laden's evasion of authorities is unclear. Moreover, militants in Pakistan are targeting Pakistanis, the vast majority of whom are Sunni Muslims. There is a lot of murkiness in this situation, though militants are certainly consistent when it comes to a lack of even rudimentary logic.

Most notably, when contrasted with the Arab Spring, these violent attacks may assist in relegating Islamic militancy to the realm of complete extremity and possibly obscurity. Perhaps one day, Islamic militancy will be a complete anachronism. After all, Egyptian al Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri advocated for an overthrow of the Egyptian government when Anwar Sadat was in power. Decades later, Zawahiri's erstwhile countrymen and countrywomen peacefully overthrew Hosni Mubarak in the hopes of a true democracy, not a Caliphate.

¹ According to news reports, al Qaeda's interim leader is Egyptian militant Saif al-Adel, a man linked to the death of *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl, who was kidnapped and beheaded by al Qaeda in Pakistan in 2002. Al-Adel is also wanted by the FBI in connection with the August 7, 1998, bombings of the United States Embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Nairobi, Kenya. The US Government is offering a reward of up to \$5 million for information leading directly to the apprehension or conviction of Saif Al-Adel.

The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly (VA-11)

Osama bin Laden's end coincided with the pro-democracy revolutions across the Middle East. The end of bin Laden interrupted neither the rebel fighting in Libya nor the transition in Egypt. Observers theorized that the "Arab awakening" showed the people of the Middle East the efficacy of directed protests. It is as if bin Laden's end was a blip on the radar of men and women who had more important matters to attend to—namely permanently shifting the political paradigm in their countries.

I look forward to the testimony of today's witnesses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

