

# **Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)**

**Global Security Forum 2011:**

**Subject: ‘Deradicalization’: Oasis or Mirage?**

**Moderator:**

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**Speakers:**

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**The Honorable Frances Fragos Townsend,  
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RICK NELSON: OK. Well, we're going to have some stragglers with the lunch, I'm sure, so we'll go ahead and get started. We're going to start as close as we can on time and then end on time as well. We also – as many of you have been here today probably know, we also have this being live webcast. So in the back, we're already – we have an additional about 35, 40 people on through webcast right now, and that number will go up, obviously. So this is a good crowd.

So welcome you all again to the CSIS Global Security Forum. My name is Rick “Ozzie” Nelson. I'm director of the Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Program here at CSIS. We have a wonderful panel here with some esteemed experts with government experience and academic experience to discuss, I think, is an intriguing issue and – on deradicalization or counter-radicalization.

Before we get into the session, though, I have been given this list of administrative announcements. May I ask for people to please turn off their cellphones. At the end of the session, please make your way out of the room to your next session. But this is the last session, so I have to read – please pick up your lunch from the table – but you've already done that too. So my admin announcements are done.

So one of the things – this is a global security forum – is a vision that Dr. Hamre had since his time at CSIS. Last year was the first one. This is the second one. Last year, we had about 450 attendees. This year, we had over 750 RSVPs. We had to shut down reservations because we were booked, and I think it's because we get some, you know, engaging and interesting topics like this.

So this panel is designed to be a little edgy, to be a little aggressive, to really kind of drill down into some of the challenges that are facing this issue. I'll go ahead and introduce the panelists and then I'm going to give about five minutes of overview remarks. Each of our panelists will then speak for approximately five to eight minutes. And then the real value of this panel, especially with the experts that we have at the table, is going to be the questions and the discussion that we have after that. So we look forward to that.

First, to my immediate right here is Fran Townsend. Fran Townsend is the senior vice president at MacAndrews and Forbes Holdings. Prior to that, she served as assistant to the president for homeland security and counterterrorism in the George W. Bush administration, and chaired the Homeland Security Council to – 2004-2007, and previously she spent 13 years at Department of Justice. I worked for Fran at the National Security Council, and she's been a great mentor, and I appreciate her continued support.

Next we have Chris Boucek. He's an associate at the Middle East program at the Carnegie Endowment of International Peace, where his research focuses on security challenges in the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa. He's a leading authority on disengagement and

rehabilitation programs for Islamist militants and extremists. I met Chris in – we went on a trip to Saudi Arabia, and there was about 10 of us. And I was overwhelmed that when Chris walked into the room – we were talking of de-rad programs – the number of Saudi officials that went out of their way to express and to show Chris all of the great things they were doing. So I figured Chris must have some voice in the community or they wouldn't be going out of their way, because nobody was – nobody was talking to me. (Laughter.) That happens a lot, though. (Chuckles.)

Next, we're honored to have Steve Kappas. Steve is currently a partner at Torch Hill Investment Partners, but many of you know prior to that, Steve Kappas had a very long and distinguished career at the Central Intelligence Agency. His last assignment was as a deputy director there; a wealth of practical, on-the-ground experience. And we're really honored and it's a privilege to have you here, Steve.

And then lastly, we have Major General Doug Stone. Doug has had various command staff positions within the Marine Corps. He was – served in Operation Desert Storm and Desert Shield and also a variety of contingency and humanitarian relief operations throughout his career. But more importantly why Doug is here is because from 2007 to 2008, he was the deputy commanding general for detainee operations in Baghdad and was credited with some of the successful reforms that under – went under way at Iraq's detention facility. That was probably one of the most – (inaudible) – jobs I would argue that went on in Iraq, is dealing with the issue of detentions there. And then he also was responsible for reviewing our detention policies in Afghanistan as well.

So again, what a fantastic policy panel here, and I think we'll see a variety of different viewpoints.

I'm going to frame the issue and set the discussion up and then turn it over to Fran. How we got to – came to this idea for this panel was basically it came out of the idea or the – or the concept of radicalization of U.S. citizens and legal residents was a growing threat inside the United States. It's not a significant threat, it's certainly narrow, but it is growing.

And these are individuals – these are individual – homegrown extremists, as they're known, who have attempted to commit acts of terrorism motivated by al-Qaida-linked beliefs. These acts of violence or this – these acts increased 2009, 2010, and we continue to see it today. Some of the cases that many of you are well-aware of that meet this – fall under this rubric are Najibullah Zazi, Hasan, the Minnesota Somalis; David Headley, who's been back in the news again recently; the Northern Virginia 5. Each of these cases serves to demonstrate the diversity of the homegrown recruits. Again, these individuals were recruited by a variety of different al-Qaida-affiliated or terrorist organizations. They had various backgrounds, socioeconomic backgrounds, and there were certainly no cookie-cutter description for what a would-be extremist or terrorist would look like from a homegrown perspective, but they were linked in many ways to al-Qaida.

Also what we're seeing is the FBI with the very difficult job of trying to thwart these attacks inside the United States. The FBI is given the very difficult challenge of having to

interdict these threats before they happen. And if they do it too soon in the cycle, they come under criticism for perhaps, you know, setting up the operation or phasing individuals into action they might not otherwise have taken; or, the other extreme, they're perceived too slow or not fast enough in the eyes of some folks and they're considered to be a failure because they didn't stop the attack.

With homegrown extremism, the FBI has an obligation to protect to some degree the rights of free speech, and we protect that in the United States, but inside the United States – so the FBI is given the task of having to determine when an individual moves from rhetoric to violent action. And that's almost impossible, most difficult to do, especially in a country like the United States, where we value our civil liberties so dearly.

So, going forward, how do we get to that rhetoric? How do we address that rhetoric? How do we stop individuals from becoming radicalized or embracing extremist ideas, and how do we keep them from crossing that very important threshold from rhetoric to violent action? Other countries that we'll hear about today have begun to address these challenges of rhetoric, and attacking what we call the narrative, through deradicalization programs and counter-radicalization programs. And there's a difference that we'll talk about today. Some of the countries – United Kingdom, Indonesia, Singapore, Saudi Arabia – have created some of the most well-known programs to combat – address their own homegrown threats. Each country has approached it in a very different way.

So going forward, some of the questions we want to ask ourselves, in fighting the radicalization of U.S. citizens – or addressing it – I wouldn't say fighting, at this point, but addressing this issue – are there any – are there anything we can learn from counter-radicalization programs and deradicalization programs that are being conducted overseas? Are they applicable to the United States? Are they models that we can learn from or are they models that are only useful outside of the United States?

And if these programs such as counter-radicalization or deradicalization are not good models for the United States, what are some other things we can do about individual U.S. citizens or legal residents who seek to embrace this extremist ideology and would eventually cross that line from rhetoric to violent action?

So those are some of the ideas we want to explore today. With that introduction – and we can stay seated here, if you'd like, at the table, just have more casual conversation. I'm going to go ahead and turn it over to you, Fran, and we'll go from there.

And again, thank you all for attending.

FRANCES FRAGOS TOWNSEND: Ozzie, thank you.

I thought what I would do is begin by talking a little bit about what is the difference – when we use terms, we might as well all be using the same terms – between deradicalization and counter-radicalization. Probably the best-known individual that poses a threat because of his radicalization activities, of those inside the United States, is Anwar al-Awlaki. He is the Yemeni

cleric, the leader of al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula. All of the senior officials in the intelligence and counterterrorism community have said al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula poses the greatest threat to an attack inside the homeland.

Why is that? Well, look at Anwar al-Awlaki. He's American-born. He understands our culture. He speaks idiomatic English. He not only is savvy about his use of the Internet to further radicalization activities, but he's also disseminated, around the world, tapes that are sold, distributed, and they're entirely meant to inflame young men into joining this movement. And so it represents a real challenge in terms of the law enforcement and intelligence activities of the United States. I don't have to tell you that is no more – that could hardly be any more true right now, given the chaos inside Yemen and the leadership of Yemen.

So what do we mean when we say deradicalization versus counter-radicalization? Well, what the United States government tends to engage in is counter-radicalization. That is, what you want to do is thwart the Anwar al-Awlakis of this world from being able to convert those inside the United States to his ideology, to his – to the violence that he espouses, because, of course, we've put up – the reason that the al-Qaida has moved in this direction, by the way, is because as we strengthened our border screening procedures, they had to find another way to move and be successful around our security strategies. And of course, homegrown terrorists, radicalizing those who are already inside the United States, looked like a good option.

So what the United States government tries to do is – Juan Zarate is here, who's also a member of the CSIS staff. We spend a lot of time talking about how does the U.S. government combat the battle of the narrative. How do we put out an alternative narrative? The deradicalization program is really ones where somebody's already been radicalized and the government puts in place – our government puts in place a program that tries to, if you will, brainwash them back, bring them back from the brainwashing that they've been through, to abrogate and sort of re-teach people how to think, how to reject this ideology of violence.

The program of sort – Ozzie mentioned a number of them. There's the U.K. Prevent program. The one I'm most familiar with is the Saudi – the one in Saudi Arabia. I visited with the therapists there and the intelligence service there. I've walked through the program. I've been to their facility. And so I have a fair understanding about it.

Let me talk for a second about deradicalization programs. I think the first thing you're likely to hear when people talk about them is, well, how effective are they? What's the measure of effectiveness? And the problem with that, of course, is recidivism rates. I would caution you, yes, that's one metric you've got to look at, but think of the U.S. prison population now, just the general criminal population, terrorism aside for a moment. What is the – we have a rehabilitation policy in this country in U.S. prisons. We do get people into drug programs. We do educate them. And what is the recidivism rate? Well, depending on who you talk to and what the facility is, it's anywhere from 70 to 90 percent recidivism rates in state and local prisons.

And so when you look at a Saudi deradicalization program and you apply the same sort of expectations, and you talk to Saudi officials and say, well, if you are only as – pick your

choice of words – if you are as unsuccessful at this as we are in our general population, why have the program? And I will tell you that the senior Saudi official I spoke to said, look, if there are 10 people we put in this program, we think we've been successful with all 10, and nine of the 10 return to the battlefield and I've only taken one off the battlefield, it was a good investment; there's one less guy trying to kill Americans, Saudis; it is a worthwhile program to me.

And so I think in some ways when we talk about deradicalization programs, we have to have, one, realistic expectations, and be willing to make a judgment about measures of effectiveness. Is it – are we satisfied? If we can take one off the battlefield, I will tell you, having been responsible for working with the intelligence and military communities, my attitude was if the Saudis could take one guy off the field that wasn't coming back at our soldiers, I was OK with that. It was one less, that we wouldn't have taken off the field but for their program.

And so I do think as you look at these deradicalization programs around the world, you have to be mindful they're certainly – we shouldn't expect them to be any more successful than our rehabilitation efforts in U.S. prisons. And we ought to be mindful that at least if they're making the effort and taking somebody off the field, that's a good thing.

I will also tell you that I think the reason that they tend to be more successful inside these foreign countries is, unlike the U.S. system – if I commit a crime, we'd hold Fran responsible for that crime, not Fran's children or husband or parents or family. In these countries it's a cultural – it's just a different cultural approach. The entire family, and in some cases the entire tribe, is shamed by virtue of that individual's having gone over into terrorism activities. And so as part of the deradicalization process, the entire family is enlisted. And they'll sign an obligation that they are taking responsibility. And oftentimes the Saudis found when an individual who had been deradicalized returns to the battlefield, the way they knew about that was from the family, who felt an obligation, then, to report it to authorities. And so in some ways, building that larger community who feels a sense of responsibility for an individual who's been through one of these programs is very important. It becomes your early-warning system.

So counter-radicalization – look, we have been, I think it is sort of undeniable – in this country it has been a resounding failure cross-administrations. By the way, you know, Juan and I were there and pitching the counter-narrative and counter-radicalization. There was the Karen Hughes effort at the State Department to work cross-government. The U.S. government is not set up to do this. We don't have the expertise to do it. And, not shockingly, we're not very good at it.

It doesn't mean we shouldn't get better at it. It doesn't mean we don't have to do it. You know, it was General Pete Pace, when he was vice chairman, who said to me, we can keep fighting and we can keep killing them, but if somebody's not working on draining the swamp, we're never going to be finished with this. And so I'm not suggesting that somebody doesn't need to do it.

What I am suggesting is it's not at all clear to me that the federal government is the right – the right entity to take the lead on this. Most of your most effective messaging campaigns – stop rock and roll when you were a kid; remember the anti – the fire-prevention one; or for those

– I don't think – there's not a lot of people old enough to remember the air raid drills where you climbed under the desk – but they were taught at a local level, in schools, in communities, by respected community leaders. The stop-smoking campaigns. The most effective campaigns are at state and local levels, empower state and local communities to get these messages out. And that we've not done. And that we've not been very good at.

And I think when we think about counter-radicalization, we have to think less about the federal government and more about those voices in the communities that are likely to be most effective. Frankly, nonprofits have a role to play. And when the government has tried to do this, the federal government has at points tried to empower what we would call alternative voices, we don't pick them very well – right? – because, again, we're working outside our area of expertise. So the minute the FBI or the Department of Homeland Security picks a partner to be an alternative voice to carry this message, next thing you're – they're working with someone who's been implicated in a terrorism investigation, against whom there is bad – there is derogatory intelligence information about their activity overseas.

I frankly just think the federal government needs to empower others, be supportive. That may include state and local grants and funding. But they need to get out of the substantive business of this, because I think our track record is we've not been very good at it.

And with that, I'll turn it back.

MR. NELSON: Terrific. Thank you so much, Fran.

Chris?

CHRISTOPHER BOUCEK: Great. Thank you very much. It's a real pleasure to be here. And I want to thank the organizers for the invitation to come and talk about some of the research I've done on Saudi Arabia and their programs that Fran had mentioned.

And I think I'd start out by saying that when I first started looking at this four or five years ago, I was incredibly skeptical. I was reading these stories in the Saudi press about guys that came back from Guantanamo who got new cars and weddings, and I thought, you've got to be kidding me, right? And I say that in part because I spent almost four years working for the Saudi government, so I know how the Saudis do or do not always deal with problems and challenges.

That said, I was in Saudi Arabia doing research on something else and was kind of curious about this, started talking to people, and the more time I spent with the people who run this program, who put it together, the people who go through the program, the more fascinated I got, the more interesting this became, especially from a research point of view, which is – and the question is all about kind of how does the state use its power to affect societal change. So over the course of these years, I've spent an awful lot of time, like Fran, in Saudi prisons and rehabilitation centers, going to these classes, spending time with the people who are in these classes, who have graduated from these classes, as well as the people who kind of conceptualize this, and the doctors and the scholars and sheiks who put this stuff together.

You know, when you talk about counterterrorism in Saudi Arabia, or rehabilitation in Saudi Arabia, there are three things that the Saudis use. It's force, money and religious ideology. And the things that I'm going to be talking about today, and the rest of the panel, I believe, are all about money and religious ideology in differing combinations.

I think it's probably very easy to focus on the financial inducements, right? The money, the cars, the salaries, the apartments that the Saudi government provides. And much less attention is focused on kind of the intense relationships that are built between the people who go through these programs and the doctors and the scholars and the sheiks who are in these programs. Obviously, there is a very healthy dose of religion that's involved in all of this. There could be no other way in Saudi Arabia but to do that. But over time, this has shifted to include a lot more social welfare, a lot more job support, employment opportunities, training things – training opportunities for people when they leave custody.

You know, when you look at Saudi Arabia, the way the Saudis structure this program and everything else, it's almost with the presumption that everyone is a victim. Society's a victim of terrorism, the government is a victim of terrorism, the person who dies in the attack or is wounded in the attack is a victim of terrorism, and the person who is recruited to do this is a victim, as is their family. And, you know, the upside is this allows the Saudis to, you know, have a whole lot more latitude to engage in these issues, but also there are questions of ultimate responsibility which are kind of left unanswered in many cases.

You know, there are two goals for these programs. The first is to prevent recidivism amongst the people who go through these programs or the people in their immediate social circle. And the second is to short-circuit the radicalization process within someone's immediate family. So your father or brother gets taken away; make sure you don't end up doing the same.

I think Fran did a great job of talking about the terminology and the language that we use for all of these. I would just add that I think the – from my perspective, a good way to look at these is probably about disengagement, right? This is something that John Horgan has spent a lot of time talking about, right? You engage with violence, some political violence and terrorism, and you also disengage.

And there's a growing body of research to show that people do leave militant groups or terrorist organizations. They don't always stop believing what they used to believe in, but they may shift how they act in organizations, may shift their role.

You know, I think the Saudi program is an important one to look at because it is the best funded program; it's the longest continually running program. It's put through the most number of people, including people who have been violent and engaged in violence. And, you know, kind of like it or not, Saudi Arabia and its program has become in some ways a de facto model for the countries who are looking to implement similar programs.

So a few words about the way this works. There are different programs for domestic offenders, versus people who participate in violence broad, versus people who have come back



from Guantanamo. Everyone is given the opportunity, is invited to participate in these programs. You don't have to. You must finish the program and successfully finish the program in order to be let out of prison. You know in advance that completing the program will not necessarily get you out of jail. There's no release for people who have been involved in violence inside Saudi Arabia. The Saudis maintain that if you've been involved in violence inside the country, they will put you on trial through some as yet to be determined system. And if you have gone before a judge – which a number of them have not – until your sentence is finished, you won't be let out of prison. And then, even if you've met all these criteria, the Saudis maintain that they still may not let you out of prison. If they have reason to believe that you're going to get in trouble when you leave custody, they won't let you – they won't let you out.

There are some very obvious concerns about this type of a program. The first is due process: Many people have never gone before a judge. It's very difficult getting information about how many people are held in prison, or how many people have been charged or convinced or released. It's believed there are about 5,000 people in custody right now in Saudi Arabia on terrorism charges. And the new prison system that they've built focused just on terrorism suspects should house about 6,000 people, and those prisons are allegedly at capacity.

Another concern, as was mentioned is metrics, right? How do you measure the effectiveness of these programs? That's very, very difficult. You know, about 3,000, 3,200 maybe, people have gone through this program, and there's a very, very low level of re-offense – probably around 5 percent. The figures look very, very good right now, because these are the easiest possible cases to deal with. There's a spectrum of offenders, just like in any case, and the people who go through this program and have been released are typically those that either unwittingly got involved in terrorism or extremism, or the people who were detained on nonviolent charges – propaganda, putting things on the Internet, you were arrested with someone at the same time. The 100-percent, hard-core committed guy who's committed violence has not been released and will not be released. This is why the figures look so good.

The rehabilitation stuff is what everybody wants to talk about. But this is really a three-part program, and rehabilitation is the middle part. There are a whole series of prevention programs, that you alluded to, that were about how do you reduce the appeal in society for violent extremism, and a whole series of after-care programs that are probably equally interesting to look at. These programs are based on the presumption of benevolence, right; that it's not about retribution, it's not about punishment, it's about: we understand how you could have been tricked or abused or misled into doing this, and we will help you come back to the right way.

This is very much a Saudi solution to a Saudi problem. It uses traditional methods of Saudi conflict resolution and conflict management. And it's all about co-optation, and persuasion and coercion to a lesser extent – so getting you to do things that are in your interest that you didn't realize were in your interest at the time. And part of this is good propaganda, to demonstrate that there is benefits to cooperating with the state; the state is not against you.

I'd add that, you know, there's a difference between the people who get involved in violence – violent extremism through religious means, who benefit from religious dialogue and discussion, versus those who get involved in it through bad social connections, drug abuse,

prison time, or those that just like hurting people, right? Different people benefit from different approaches. So I think as time goes on, the Saudis have learned more about what works and what doesn't work.

For the Guantanamo returnees, there have been 123 Saudis who've been sent back from Guantanamo, including three deceased. And of that, 26 are either wanted – in custody, killed or wanted. So it's about a 20-percent success versus failure rate; which, all things considered, is pretty good. I'd make the argument, any time you get someone to do something that they wouldn't be doing otherwise should be – that that is a success.

I've just got a few last kind of closing thoughts on this. You know, the best way, I think, to look at these programs, if it's Saudi Arabia or wherever, is about risk management, right? There is a risk every time you let someone out of the custodial situation that they will engage in behavior you don't like. That's true with drug treatment, with mental health, with civil, criminal cases, terrorism, et cetera. If you do not provide the options and the alternatives to help support people, you almost guarantee that they will return to what they were doing. So I would say – my own personal opinion – not doing programs like this is probably the worst possible thing you could do.

There are a few things that we need to watch out for, and that is, one, we need more work on risk assessments. How do we make the decisions about when to let people out of custody? There is a whole series of community impact assessments and risk assessments and likelihood to reoffend that are done for, you know, rapists and murderers and pedophiles – far from perfect, but there is a science and a system for dealing with that. Right now, it's extremely subject for when you decide to let a former terrorist out of custody. And the second is the need for very, very thorough after-care and support programs. And we've seen that. If you do not provide the support, you almost certainly guarantee that people will engage in what you don't want them to.

So with that, I will turn it over to my friend, General Stone.

MAJOR GENERAL DOUGLAS STONE: Thank you. I guess I'm going to be the edgy part of this. The –

MR. KAPPES (?): Wait a minute –

GEN. STONE: Yeah – oh, good, yeah, you're right. Steve's on my right. That'll cinch it that the edgy part's on this side. (Laughter.)

I have served in Pakistan for a few years; Iraq and Afghanistan. Mentioned was the responsibility for detention, where we took probably in excess of 42,000; at any one time, we had 29,000 in detention. And after we put our deradicalization program together, we reduced the recidivist rate from just over 16 percent to never higher than 1 ½ percent, and that's as I left the program with just about 18,000 released. So we took a good shot, a federally funded program, at trying to design something that would work in a war setting with a group that were admittedly not all al-Qaida.

Now, that being said, in those three countries I have interviewed (definitely ?) more than 600 al-Qaida members one-on-one; spent a lot of time talking to them, like Chris – and I think even with Chris; I can't remember. We met with Sheik Qadlik (ph) in Saudi Arabia, toured their programs; did the same in Singapore; and stopped with the Yemenis and others. So I've had a real opportunity to sort of look at the other programs that are outside.

And I might just mention Chris and I just came back from a U.N.-sponsored deradicalization conference in Italy, where I was impressed that more than – I think it was 17 Muslim nations came, all with their programs – all with their programs, all committed to do that. That was not the case a couple of years before. So there is sort of a nice movement there.

But I want to clarify, as Fran did, some terms. You know, I often get my hackles up on the business of fighting radical extremists. I happen to be, in my own family, a radical extremist, and it bothers me that I would be labeled such. We are genuinely fighting Salafi Islamic overlap, and it's a reasonably small number, on balance, and we could spend time if you like. They are a very small number in the Muslim ummah, and almost an infinitesimal number if you look at global populations.

The fight is as much on their part for a change in the Muslim ummah as it is against any form of countries' particular governance. That's an important point, because you have to ask the question, ultimately, rule of law, crime, motivations, et cetera. And if you don't answer that question, you actually can't get to the solution: how do you articulate a deradical or counter-radicalization program?

So their attacks have often been against leadership, including our own. And they are often historically well-rehearsed tribal mechanisms. So to attack the United States is a very effective means of attacking the enemy of my enemy – that makes him my friend – and results in – and I want to underline this point – recruiting. So I am now sort of in the last year, year and a half, on the pitch that the metric we ought to be looking at is recruiting. If anything you do as a policy is to increase recruiting, that's bad. If anything you do stops recruiting, that's good. So recruiting to me is a particularly important metric.

All terrorist campaigns – I mean, there isn't one in history that we know of don't ultimately fail; so we shouldn't get overly concerned about terrorism. Terrorism itself is an asymmetrical tactic. We employed it ourselves. It's when you don't have the right size of weaponry to go to conventional, so it's an asymmetrical tactic. But what stops it from moving to the next level is recruiting. So to the extent that more people can be recruited for a cause, the higher the probability that they'll move from the very aggressive terrorist means to something else.

The form of terrorism that is motivated by this Islamic agenda is almost always to kill innocents for marquee value; that not only to try to strike at economic base, but always to recruit – whether or not it be to threaten somebody, as in the case of about 35 percent of those that were in detention were intimidated into fighting; weren't necessarily, you know, interested in becoming, you know, radical in the first place.

There are common components in this effort. The first is that making a U.S. – making the U.S. a common enemy by the narrative that says that the U.S. government is actually at war with Islam. Of the – I could give you about 10 common denominators of 600 interviews, but that happens to be one, and they genuinely believe it. So it's important to understand any substance inside the United States has to deal with that issue: Is the U.S. against – have a war on Islam? It's believed that they do, period.

The other thing that I didn't mention at the front, but I have now toured, I guess, 25 or so prisons, some federal, state and local. I think I have been to 30-some different mosques for Friday-night prayers in 15 or so different states. And so I've been able to listen to those activities. And I build on what I saw internationally to get to some conclusions here in a second. I also want to caution people: Most of the individuals that I deal with – and I think it's a fault to think otherwise – are genuine – have genuine religious beliefs. Most of them view themselves as warriors for God, not as criminals; and that's both in their mind and, frankly, oftentimes, in the mind of the greater community that they're a part of. There is no path to effective deradicalization nor counter-radicalization that does not include direct Islamic religious discussion. Let me underline that. Because for a country that has a distinction separation of church and state, this becomes problematic; and ergo, I think I would join with the conclusions of the limited role of the federal government.

But it also, as has been mentioned, must have extensive family and community outreach and involvement. No path to deradicalization or counter-radicalization will be effective without those two, in my opinion.

The fight ultimately ends that we're currently engaged with – and, you know, you could take a guess, it's 40 or 60 years away; I don't know. But the fight ultimately ends when the moderate ummah feel empowered and effectively marginalize the violent Islamists in their midst. So it's important, I think, to understand this is as much a Muslim issue as it is anything, because they have the capacity to solve the problem once they feel empowered.

The measure of effectiveness against all these programs, as I said, should be not only looking at the growth, but the reduction in recruiting. And if they are already in prison and getting out of the detention system, then you look at recidivist rates. So we need deradicalization programs in our prisons – including Guantanamo, by the way – and some communities, and we cannot afford to ignore the threat of radicalization within our American youth, which I believe is significant. We need counter-radicalization in most parts of the country; some with direct intervention, some with mild engagement.

In Iraq and Afghanistan, we've learned that there are some key components that work in terms of these programs from a deradicalization program, and some initial, embryonic efforts of counter-radicalization. I am, I think, reasonably certain – and I would turn to Chris for his academic perspective – but I think that this is – these programs that I'm going to mention are reasonably common amongst all programs that we've seen on the globe today.

They all start with some initial fact-finding as to the extent of the challenge and complexity and motivations behind the challenge that they're dealing with. They deal with

individual and group assessments, which include things like the level of education, employment status, depth of religious knowledge and depth of religious belief. But then they jump into education programs; multidisciplinary assessments; program design; counselor assignments; religious and spiritual rehab; education and vocational rehab; social, community and family rehab; recreational rehab; cultural; and of course, just the basic care and custody. Those appear to be the common components. So as we think about what to do in the United States, one would have to assume some of those components would have to be used.

In my own – in random and American-ly insignificant findings from these prison and community visits, I've come up with the following conclusions – and by the way, an awful lot of surfing the net, reading the sites. I'm sure the FBI has me on their most wanted watchlist for touring them all. (Laughter.) Mostly, because I can read in Arabic, and I think that they're more interesting there; although as Fran pointed out, al-Awlaki's done a brilliant job in Inspire. If you want to read what it's about, go to Inspire. Like you might get on somebody's FBI list, but it's there – (laughter) – there are about 65 pages, and they're brilliant. They're absolutely brilliant. And as a business guy I'd tell you: Hire that guy for your marketing. He knows what he's doing. Think of his target market and ask yourself: What is he doing?

MR. : That'll get you on the FBI list. (Laughter.)

GEN. STONE: That will. Yeah, right. (Laughter.) Absolutely.

MS. TOWNSEND: Congratulations.

GEN. STONE: Yeah, thank you. Finally, finally, finally, I got someplace. (Laughter.)

There is a legitimate reason immediate concern that violent Islamic teachings are effectively radicalizing U.S. citizens, my own conclusion. There's equal reason to be concerned that historic patterns of terrorist tactics will be employed by U.S. radicalized citizens on targets in the United States. And in this regard, I mean metros – 496 attacks by al-Qaida on metros – likely to be the target, the number-one thing; then, flying airplanes elsewhere. So I think that that's a clear – a clear indicator. And also, I would say, as more Americans join in, innovative efforts like the forest fire scenes and all that sort of thing are going to come about.

The role of the federal government in my effort, beyond perhaps funding the effort in some ways to develop a means of engagement at the very local level – probably assistance in federal and local law enforcement; perhaps enabling funding of carefully selected or monitored community outreach groups, public-private partnerships; or perhaps sponsoring open forums for citizen discussion – beyond that, I don't see any significant role for the federal government. In fact, my own conclusion based on reaching out to the communities is that it will result in recruiting. The more we do that way, the more likely it is that it will neither be done correctly, but will result in more recruiting. Championing democracy, even self-governance concepts, should be largely decoupled from any de- or counter-radicalization effort, because of some obvious things that I'll be glad to talk about in questions.

This being said, there should be a coherent and central effort led by the president, in my opinion, himself, to ensure the citizens of America that they understand viscerally what is and is not the challenge before us as our communities begin to radicalize. There are significant historical references in history on civil rights movements, et cetera, where well-documented, well-run programs have resulted in great advancements. And I think this may well be one that could fall into that category.

I also want to say, and this will sound counterintuitive to many, but in the Muslim community groups – and there are some really radical ones, and there are some that provide really radical services – but in general, I think I can find more Muslim community groups that are working effectively in their own communities. And I believe – it's just based on this random – again, random sampling – that they have made significant and meaningful counter-radicalization efforts in their own communities. They have resulted in the reduction, if you will, of real and perceived biases and they have resulted in the reduction of likely recruiting in their own communities.

Those that are effective, all of them clarify the religious components of the Muslim religion. All of them particularly address the jihad surahs and provide a multiplicity of choices to wannabe radicals. So I think that's a very bright thing. All of them, by the way, feeling as though most of the community looks at them as something pretty bad, and so they have to overcome their own bias every day.

So the great debate about changing beliefs or changing behaviors must come down on the side of disallowing violent Islamic terrorist behavior. But at the same time, as the U.K. has recently clarified – and I think they just announced their program today – it's not OK to allow conveyor-belt groups to sponsor and facilitate behaviors in the United States that lead to the recruitment of action-oriented violent Islamists. Whether they be targeting actions, operations, within the United States, or for that matter, as we have seen, kids leaving out of our states and becoming suicide bombers in other countries: the same thing. We wouldn't want another country to do it. We've stood against that and, ergo, we should not permit the same.

There are good lessons from the changes that we made in detention during the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, but they only apply in principle, not in specific. And what we need is to develop our own home-grown community outreach response to a clear and present – (audio break) – active recruiting both in the prisons, which exist – although I'll speak later if you like about why that's less a threat than prisons outside the United States – but also, just in the communities.

So amplifying existing ideological fissures helps separating true extremists from the population by lawful and debated means; it works. Countering the messages where they may be, including on the Internet, is essential. I didn't say cutting the Internet out; I said countering them. And I try to do that.

When I read something that I think is BS, I try to go back with something written in Arabic and say, are you kidding me? That's why I'm sure I'm on somebody's list. (Laughter.) I'm actually looking to be recruited soon and then I can turn that guy in. (Laughter.)

But looking to other global communities for role models and programs that show success, I think we shouldn't be unabashed at anyone of the 15 guys that we met with on their programs and bringing them here. I think we need to work with key support countries. Principal amongst them is the Kingdom of Saudi. We have to work with them because they are a huge financier of a lot of the things that we have to work against. So it's really important and I love Sheik Qadlik (ph) and the guys that do these programs; they're wonderful. But we have to deal with it. And I believe, by the way, based on our discussions last week, they know that too.

No counter-narrative can take place without a unifying fact that the United States is not at war with Islam. And we have to build on this with the deep theological basis of knowledge that many of our Muslim citizens – ulama – have, that there is a clear process of clarification that can take place that allows for a better understanding of really charged concepts, like jihad, like sharia and others.

I would just say in passing that in World War II, we got two large fronts solved in 48 months. We did it because we had a citizen's engagement – a deep, abiding engaged citizens' involvement. And I would say the next 48 months are going to be a big test of that because they are, in my opinion, the source of the fight – or a source of the – of the settlement on the issue. So we're going to have to deal with punishment versus persecution, the rule of law; national security versus an act of war.

We are not going to be able to fight a belief structure solely using the rule of law, no matter how fair that it's applied. And I can give you examples on that if you like. You have to address the beliefs underlying principles of self-governance in order to challenge it. We should be as effective, by the way, at finding and outwitting the recruiting centers as we are in finding and eliminating the training centers.

And it's important – and I say this to the Muslim groups that I'm frequently asked to come speak to – that it is OK in this country to be a citizen of God. It is not inconsistent with being a citizen of the United States.

MR. NELSON: Thank you, Doug. Steve?

STEPHEN R. KAPPES: Thank you. Many of my comments will just echo what you've heard already. But several years ago, when I first started chatting with an old friend of mine, a foreign intelligence, about deradicalization, he looked at me; he said, Stephen, if your heart is broken easily, don't get involved with deradicalization business. It's just too painful.

And that stuck with me. And I think that what I've come to believe is that your government – our government – has become quite skilled at finding and stopping committed terrorists on the move, as demonstrated by the killing of bin Laden. Yes, it took quite a while – we found him and we'll find the others, and Zawahiri will be stopped, and Saif al-Adel will eventually be stopped and Anwar al-Awlaki will be stopped.

But the great problem here is this deradicalization, counter-radicalization program he's heard about. And this must – is my concerted opinion, must be part of the overall umbrella that we are attempting to put in place to work against this scourge of terrorism. We must put in a situation in which we undermine those who are attempting to kill us. Now, there needs to be a program that can return young men from the dark side and demonstrate that a government has the tools, the authority to show that there's a way back, that you can return to your family and avoid death and also not shame your family for all eternity.

But the problem I see is, this is not a linear effort, and therefore it becomes more of a problem for the United States. It requires a certain acceptance of the three-dimensional nature of deradicalization, meaning culture, faith and ideology, in my mind. It requires us to accept that patience is required, that possibly a great deal of money might be needed, and also, there's a potential for failure to which my old friend made reference so many years ago.

And, to echo what certainly Doug and Fran have said, I'm just not convinced that our government can do this. Now, the Fed can help fund it; they can encourage it. President, of course, can help shape it as a country plan, a U.S. plan. But this is a person-by-person program. Success will come from the bottom up, not from the top down. The critical elements of success will be, as described by Doug and Fran, the local community, the families, those people who understand what's taking place in the minds of these people.

And, frankly, these programs, in this case, cannot be bound by restrictive federal requirements that are managed by some faraway, distant Washington office. They must be given flexibility. They must be decentralized. And these programs cannot be expected to satisfy the extraordinarily voracious Washington hunger for fiscal-year metrics. That will kill programs like this. We must figure out a way that, once launched, that programs like this must be allowed to continue to a more logical conclusion, even if they span more than one administration. They can't stop simply because the ruling party has changed in Washington. And that is not usually what happens with federal programs, quite frankly.

Now, in my view, too, this type of program does not fit nicely in any of our structures. It does not fit nicely into intelligence; it does not fit nicely into law enforcement. And all of you must be aware of the fact that behavior-modification programs, as conducted by the federal government, do not have a good history. (Laughter.) And I can't think of anyone I know currently alive who would volunteer to take this on as a particular part of their federal practice. (Laughter.)

Now, they can contribute because the CIA or the FBI, other parts of the intelligence community and law enforcement have put together large amounts of data information, things like Doug talked about with his experiences, things like Chris is doing. Those will be of great assistance. But the conduct of these operations I do not think can be expected to be placed in the current structure, as we see it.

Now, certainly, there must be standards for the people conducting this program. There must be goals. But if the goals are not met and there is recidivism, how in heaven's name can we go on if we don't figure out a way to avoid what takes place now as the modern-day version of



gladiator sports, which is the commission in which we hold the people who have failed momentarily up to scorn, and therefore, people say, oh, what is the next step? As a result, these people in these programs must be encouraged if they fail. If there is recidivism, they must be encouraged to adjust, to adapt, to overcome those elements that were defeating them previously.

We're a very smart people in the United States. We can do these things without emasculating ourselves. In many ways, what I'm asking for – you can see my gray beard does indeed reflect that I'm an older man – we must return to the things we've done before in this country, which is to the community: places where things are actually done and were not simply shoved aside or dismissed by the federal government.

There used to be a time when churches, schools, offices of the mayor – things like that – actually contributed to success and made people differently when they were having problems. Those sort of the things, I believe, are important here, as we look at this sort of program.

Now, I will contradict myself slightly because I believe there is another part of the deradicalization program which also is part of defeating the threat of terrorism. That's the broader thing of changing the message, if you will – defeating bin Laden's message; defeating al-Qaida's message. And the federal government can help in this part of the deradicalization program, if we could figure out a way to do it.

What we are missing, I think, is that woven tapestry that goes all the way from presidential speeches through public diplomacy, through private diplomacy, through economic assistance to use of military soft and hard power, all the way down to the bottom – covert action as conducted by people in the CIA or other intelligence organizations, and weave that into a message that demonstrates what Doug is talking about: that the United States is not at war with Islam. These are our values; these are not our values. We are not attempting to unseat all the centuries of both religious and cultural freedom that Muslims believe that they have been denied.

If we can't do that, we will continue to deradicalize individuals. One at a time and we'll be successful; we will save lives. But we will not continue to deradicalize the effort that is – still, I believe, has sufficient energy to lead to – hopefully never metro attacks or things like that, but attacks in the United States.

In my view, if we could simply work harder at the behavioral and the ideological pieces – in other words, to get them to abandon violence, to get them to delegitimize the use of violence, no one that I know of in this room, I would think, or certainly the United States cares if people hate us, or cares that they protest our policies, or care if, indeed, they think that we're wrong about things or that our culture is misguided.

What we care is that they stop trying to kill us; if they stop trying to blow up our facilities, kill our people, both young and old. Those are things that the federal government, in combination with the individual programs of deradicalization, can assist in in an effort that would be a combined effort. But it must be built in a way that sustains political change. It must be built in a way that does not get eliminated once a Republican or a Democrat replace one another in the White House.

If we don't learn that lesson from this, we'll be having conferences like this, I think, 10 years from now and we'll be having similar stories. There'll be a lot more metrics, but we will still not have deradicalized the threat, even though we've deradicalized individuals that have come along the way. Thank you, Ozzie.

MR. NELSON: Wow, that's great. Terrific; thank you. I'm going to stand up here to moderate the questions and answers. Again, thank you all for those insightful remarks. I think you've got us pointed in the right direction. You know, as we see from the comments here, we have a – you know, a very qualified panel to discuss this. I'm going to ask the first question and can kind of go down the line here.

A few of you mentioned the issue of risk management. We talked about the issue of state and local governments, but, as you know, when you're pushing things down to state and local governments, it becomes an issue of prioritization: resource prioritization issue. And when there's campaigns, if you're – you know, in New York City, the issue of terrorism is very real and it's a higher priority. That's why they invest so much of their state and local money – local money, really – into defeating or combatting it. Other parts of the country, not so much. Regular, ordinary, everyday crime, so to speak, is a much greater priority.

But you see some of these homegrown extremists have come from places like Texas or even Denver, Colorado, or Minneapolis. So how do we – one, I would ask you, from a risk management perspective, how great do you think the threat is of homegrown extremism inside the United States? Some of you touched on it, but I want to be more specific and more exact on it.

And then, secondly, if it is an issue, how do we get the state and local governments to accept that it is a risk and to increase it on their priority list – raise it up on their priority list so they will actually begin implementing plans against it, especially as, Doug, you pointed out, it's a very complicated issue, where you're talking about a specific interpretation of Islam? It's very difficult for many folks to understand.

So Fran, I'm going to start with you on that, if that's OK.

MS. TOWNSEND: Sure. Look, I don't think there's any question that the homegrown threat is a very real one. We've heard time and again from U.S. officials testifying before Congress about their concern of it and the difficulty of thwarting it – defeating it before it becomes an actual act against Americans. So no question: It's not only a real threat, but I think we have to contend with the notion that it's a growing threat.

Anwar al-Awlaki was not – was not sated by Nidal Hasan, the Fort Hood shooter. He was also – and he's also been in contact with others that have been thwarted. And so we have to accept that it is a real and growing threat.

When you talk about state priorities – I mean, when I was in government, we worked pretty hard through both the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security to create these joint

fusion centers. Perhaps it's my prosecutor's training, but I think the facts are what persuade people. I mean, telling them we want them to make it a priority and giving them money isn't going to be enough to make it the priority. It's the facts that will persuade them. And so we created these fusion centers to try and share information so that they could see, by and large, the intelligence that was driving us to make this sort of a thing a priority.

But I would caution – I mean, back to Steve Kappes' comment. We have to learn to work outside of government structures. Telling the states to make it a priority isn't enough. Even if you can do that effectively, I don't think that's enough. You really do – like Doug, I spent a fair amount of time going to Friday prayer services at mosques, including when I was in the White House. Why? Because I had to be willing to go to mosques, talk to moderate preachers, hear from communities who felt besieged, who felt misunderstood.

I got – Doug – the speech about not to call it Salafist extremism because there are Salafis who equate themselves with fundamental Christians, who think it's a fundamental form of religion. And their reference – they would have corrected what Doug said; he said they're Takfiris. Those are people who claim to be Muslims but act in an un-Islamic way. But I use that by way of example. You've got to get out to communities who have – and to community leaders who have voices and credibility and willingness to use it and not work only in government structures.

MR. NELSON: Thanks, Fran. Chris?

MR. BOUCEK: I mean, I think I would just echo what was already said, that, you know, I think we now realize that homegrown extremism is a threat, right? For a long time, I think there was a lot of discussion that American – some communities were immune from this so this wouldn't really happen. But we know that's not – that's not the case.

I think, you know, when you look at solutions about how to deal with this, I think one of the issues that will need to be addressed is that individuals that you would want to empower to do these programs, to work in local communities, are also going to say things that you really don't like, right? And there's a tradeoff. I think this point about, you know, behavior modification versus changing beliefs and, really, at the end of the day, you want to make sure people aren't violent, right? They're not acting out violent beliefs.

I mean, I think that's key because I think this is all – this is all about ideology and a belief system. And I think, as perverse as it may sound to many people, a lot of the guys who get involved in this believe they are doing right and believe that they are doing good. So, I mean, I think you need to engage on that. And some of the people that can most powerfully engage on that and argue against that are also going to say things that we might not like. So there's a tradeoff on that.

MR. NELSON: Great. Thanks, Chris. Doug?

GEN. STONE: I want to thank Fran for the comment. I just wanted to make sure I was understood there. I'm telling you that the term "radical extremist" doesn't work. These guys are

Islamists – violent Islamists. There's a whole chunk of people in the Muslim world who are Islamist and they are nonviolent; in fact, they're actually completely nonviolent. Same holds true for the Salafists and – I could go on. But that point is correct, and they almost all are viewed as Takfiri.

Let me just say, how great is the threat? If there's two components of that, to answer it, one is the probability 1.0. It is going to happen. It has already happened. Zazi is already in prison for trying to blow up the New York – I think it was the metro –

MS. TOWNSEND: Subway.

GEN. STONE: Yeah, subway. And Major Hasan has already done what he's done and, I mean, we could go on. It's already won – I mean, it's already happening and it's still happening. I mean, when we – we've got kids leaving the Somali communities, going and becoming suicide bombers in Somalia, it's not a huge leap to think that if somebody said, why don't you blow up the local places instead of flying all the way to Somalia, then they would do it.

So it's going to happen. It is happening. We've stopped it, thank god; pray to god we'll keep doing it. But the answer to the risk-management issue is, we have to engage the Islamic community. If we don't – and I mean across the United States. I mean, it's not just in one state or one community. In some cases, it's more than less. Some states have more, some less. But if we don't engage the Muslim community writ large, we can't address it because this is not an issue of just law enforcement. This is not – they break a law when they do something. But when they do something, it's so devastating that, you know, who cares if they broke the law? They broke the law. I mean, you know, you're not going to capture one – they were a suicide bomber.

But what it is, is a religious belief structure. And it is a misguided and inappropriate one and it is deeply believed to be inappropriate by the vast majority of the Muslim faith and the ulema who teach them. So those are the individuals who can help articulate closure on this.

I mean, this is not a perfect example; we don't have a lot of perfect examples, metaphorically, in what we've done in the United States. But when we had a rash of abortion doctor killings – and you remember them; they were sort of a sporadic – they went on – the law enforcement engaged, actually, in part with Christian – deep Christian religions and said, listen, these guys appear to be coming out of this; is it right or wrong? No, it's wrong. And they engaged in it and found out – whenever anybody even looked like they were going to act like a numbnut, they got their name turned in and it stopped.

So it's a – it isn't a perfect metaphor and I don't mean to say it is. But I am trying to say that by outreach, you can do it. And that's without the president funding a federal program to go do that. That's just engaging with the community.

MR. NELSON: Thanks. Steve?

MR. KAPPES: I'd only add that in regard to the threat, two things. One: It is very, very clear from people like Khalid Sheikh Mohammed that this thing is not over. Jihad continues in

detention. Jihad continues in any form or fashion that they can put it together. And there's also the – if you will, the joke that, with the Taliban – in which the Taliban have said, you Americans, you have the watches, but we have the time.

And the point there is quite obvious: It's that there is a different cycle taking place here. I mean, for example, most Afghans don't even know what their birthday is, so why should they worry about how much time it takes them if they're on a terrorist mission to attack an enemy?

At the same time, I would like to just offer some additional comment on the question of the local community. There used to be a time – and I realize I sound like a – I'm not usually nostalgic about much, but – (laughter) – there was a time in which young men would particularly get in trouble in communities and the police had to flexibility, if you will, to call the father, call the parents, call the pastor, the community, whatever, and say, listen: This is one of your children. Your child is in trouble.

We've sort of gotten away from that. Now everything becomes the old, it's a federal matter, so to speak. I mean, this is an area, like Doug has quite correctly pointed out, that involvement with that community – in this case, the Muslim community – can pay huge dividends, if indeed the federal government does not come leaning in with all the things that the federal government always brings. So, as a result, we have the capabilities if we don't confuse it in trying to use it.

GEN. STONE: Could I offer one more comment?

MR. NELSON: Absolutely. Absolutely.

GEN. STONE: I want to make sure that we also clarify something as it relates to prisons. Prisons in the United States are different than prisons outside the United States, in my opinion. I mean, I've been to a lot of outside prisons. You can be thrown in a prison for a religious belief, right? That is how the Muslim Brotherhood started, with Sayyid Qutb, out of the Egyptian prison. That's one example; there are many, many examples.

So we don't do that. We don't actually throw people in prison for their religious belief. We're not going to do it here, I would – God bless, I would hope. But they're going to have to do something wrong. So it's a very different problem.

Comma, the prisons that I have seen recently have more Qurans than they have Bibles. So there is a movement – that might be a very appropriate religious movement, but there is a movement deep inside that movement that has a subset of recruiting. Now, my own belief is that the prisoners that come out of U.S. prison systems are less likely to be as radicalized as outside because they don't have that hard-bent religious belief persecution structure thing going. But they are real.

Now, this is an area where I think the federal – at the federal penitentiary level, but the state, in other words, could begin to look at it and say, what kind of teachings are we going to allow? What kinds of religious teachings should be allowed? And what could go on there? I

mean, I have, of course, created those programs for detention and monitored them and hired 150-some imams – and fired 10 percent of them every month for some pretty radical perspectives. But, at the end of the day, you know, we got through it.

So it is possible – and I'm not saying it is; I'm just saying it's possible – that the federal penitentiary, the state penitentiary and the counties, where it's really a problem, ought to be able to look at that. And maybe that's an area where money could be spent. I just posit that as a thought.

MR. NELSON: OK, we're going to go into your questions. We have microphones so we're asking you, please state your name and your affiliation, if you have one, a question, not in the form of a statement – in the form of a question. And, most of our folks out there on the other side of the room and you can't see the panelists, I apologize for that, but we'll kind of try to work both sides of the room.

So let's go right here, with the gentleman with the red tie.

Q: Thank you very much for your comments. My name is Mathew O'Sullivan from the Washington Report on Middle East Affairs. I'm just curious whether, for the panel overall, whether in your work or in your research, whether radicalization seems to stem amongst youth around specific issues – the question of Palestine; U.S. presence in the Middle East – or whether it stems from a general feeling of isolation.

MR. NELSON: Thank you. Whoever wants to – not all panelists have to answer. If anyone feels particularly inclined?

MR. KAPPES: I'll offer initial thought on it. It's been my experience that much of this comes from a sense of feeling disenfranchised, in many cases. If you consider – there's a piece – and most men will not admit this and I would never speak for women, but most men will not admit this. (Laughter.) All young men go through a period in which they are spending a few moments of time blaming other people for their own problems, whether it be they haven't completed their education properly; they haven't – feel as if they're getting the jobs they deserve; they're not being treated with appropriate respect – whatever it is. But that adds to a sense of isolation or disenfranchisement in which some of the great al-Qaida recruiters are experts at taking advantage of that.

So I think it's like most things: It's a combination of all those factors, so you can't isolate it. Once again, the American tendency is, well, we have a problem here? Let's find a solution and we'll be able to move the next thing. That's this three-dimensional nature of it, which is so human. I don't think – it's difficult to put – it's impossible to put it in a category.

GEN. STONE: If I could comment. Outside the United States and for those citizens that come from Muslim nations into the country recently, it's unquestionably the Palestine issue and, you know, those kinds of policies. In fact, you know, of the eight – or, depending on how you want to count them, five major claims from bin Laden, al-Qaida, they actually sort of echo those.

I mean, they really do believe that those are the motivators and therefore, they ought to engage. And that's what you see outside.

The youth that I have talked to – and again, I want to be clear. It may be in the thousands, but it's a pretty small number overall. They tend to believe that the United States is picking on their religion and they want to go prove a point. And so that's a pretty personal thing. They don't really get the geopolitical issues; they don't really respect them. They'll listen to others, but on Friday night prayers, you can hear both of those come together, if the combination is wrong.

And that's where the sense of my group – and it's – and I don't want to correlate this to gang; the guys who do gang analysis against this I think are generally wrong. I mean, some behavioral things are right, but, generally speaking, they're wrong. But if you were to look at it that way and you say, I aggregate with my own and we are now fighting against them, then that you do see and it is not built on any particular issues other than sometimes, frankly, how they're treated on the bus or how their parents are treated on the bus or how their sister or mother is treated when they walk into a – you know, a shop.

MR. NELSON: OK, great. Next question: over here, in the gray. Move her way across the room here. Behind you.

Q: Hello. Thank you for the fascinating panel; it's been great. My name is Celia Bray; I'm from Omni Consulting in Australia. And I'm really interested – because it seems to me that the threat is very real. I can really get that in the U.S., and in Australia, there has also been some conflict around this issue. But it seems to me that it's a secondary threat that stems from the federal – the war on terror in the Middle East.

So I'm wondering about – the question I wrote down is, do you think the current war is working, from a long-term perspective on resolving that issue? And do you think, if that issue isn't resolved effectively, that you're actually going to be genuinely effective in resolving the threat within the country itself? Of, you know, the Islamic community within itself, being mobilized to do the terrorist attacks. Is that clear?

MR. NELSON: I think it is. Fran, you want to take a whack at that one?

MS. TOWNSEND: I think these are all a piece of a whole, right? I think that, look, we've been incredibly effective at – Steve can correct me – I think the number-three has – the number three in al-Qaida – (laughter) – has the guaranteed shortest lifespan. The minute he got promoted, he was as good as dead because we were very effective at targeting him.

So we've been – we know how to find them – you know, find and finish targets in the terrorism world. We're really good at that. But it's what I said earlier: You've got to figure out a way to drain the swamp, and so the counter-radicalization is really important. You've got to be able to do all of it. And we've not been horribly effective on the counter-radicalization piece.

I sort of cringe at this: I find, in my own experience, the use of Palestine is an excuse; it is not a real issue. I do think that there are concerns that this is a war against Islam, but those are all things they cling to once they've decided to join something that's bigger than themselves, that they can feel a part of. These are young men looking for a sense of belonging and this is – I'm not sure that if the cause was saving turtles, they wouldn't have joined that.

I mean, this has got nothing to do – religion and these political excuses are just that: They're excuses. This is young men alienated looking for purpose and a sense of belonging. And they get it – there are people who take advantage of that sense of alienation, give them a sense of belonging by belonging to these groups.

MR. NELSON: Chris, based on your experience in Saudi, do you want to test that at all?

MR. BOUCEK: What I'd say is that there's not one pathway towards radicalization or violence or extremism, right? There are lots of different ways people get into this. If it's through religion, it's through Palestine, through a single issue, people that like hurting people, doing bad stuff and blowing things up. I mean, I think if you look at how someone got into this, it tells you a lot about how you can move them away from it, right? So I think we need to understand that.

But there is not one big huge catch-all. There's not an answer that we just have to find. It's not from lack of looking because there is so much money and research spent on radicalization. I mean, I think the point about who you know is really important, right? I mean, understanding the social connections about how you get involved in violence or in any other organization is really important. I don't think we've quite moved too far on understanding that.

MR. NELSON: Thanks. OK, next question? In the pink tie. Sorry – salmon tie.  
(Laughter.)

Q: Nolan Hart (ph), Crumpton Group. My question –

MR. NELSON: Sorry, can you say your name again?

Q: Nolan Hart (ph), Crumpton Group. Applies to the whole panel. You know, we've talked a lot about the effectiveness of the message of jihadism globally and what we can do to counter that. Seems to me that in the context of what's going on with the Arab spring right now, we've seen an absence of jihadist ideology. You know, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt has not really picked up steam in the political discourse; in Tunisia and other places.

Do we have a real opportunity here to push more of a secular agenda in the Arab world, in this circumstance? And can we use that to really accelerate the U.S.'s counter-jihadist message globally?

MR. NELSON: Yeah, I'm going to add to that question because I think it's a really good question. And it is it also – and it was touched on by the panelists – is political Islam acceptable, if it's nonviolent as well, others, as a non-jihadist-type philosophy? Do you want to –



MS. TOWNSEND: Yeah, I'll start. I mean, I think that this whole democratic movement throughout the Arab world is the antithesis of al-Qaida, which explains why you had not heard a message from bin Laden. It's clear now after the raid. We understand they were grappling with how to deal with this because this whole democratic movement belied a problem for them and it was the antithesis of what they were preaching.

And so we do – it is an opportunity in the region. I would suggest to you the best thing we can do is keep our mouths shut and stay out of it because the minute we – this is like hugging the baby to death, right? You've got a baby; this is an infant; it's struggling to survive right now; it's struggling to identify what it is and what it wants to be.

I think we've got to be prepared to embrace, if you will, lightly, political Islam. They're going to say things, they're going to do things we don't agree with, that are inconsistent with our values, that we don't like. That's fine, as long as they're not trying to kill us. We ought to be willing to accept that whatever becomes of the Arab spring will not look like an American democracy, but it will be better than extremists trying to kill us or dictatorship.

MR. NELSON: Go, Chris.

MR. BOUCEK: I would just add, I think we are so early into all of this. It's only three or four or five months, right? And there is so much we don't know. I think early on, there was a lot of optimism about this being the end of al-Qaida and stuff like that. I'm not quite as ready to say that, right, because I think there will inevitably be a period of disappointment and disillusionment because, you know, five years and Egyptians don't have jobs – how is the military government going to handle that then?

And all of the governments that al-Qaida has wanted to get rid of – Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Yemen – are either gone or going, right? So, I mean, this has been a victory in some senses. So, I mean, I think we still – there's a lot we don't know and we still have to figure it out.

MS. TOWNSEND: It can certainly get worse. I think that's right.

MR. NELSON: Stephen, Doug, do you want – that's a good question; you guys want to comment on this, either of you two?

GEN. STONE: Well, I'll just say, based on – really on talking to the leadership that we've met from the other countries, that in these countries, regime change doesn't happen in a nonviolent method. It just doesn't. It never has and you can go back as long as you want in history.

They are connected now by the Internet in a way that they've never been connected before. So whole populations know what's happening in another country. So the fact that they can throw their guy out, I can throw my guy out is an interesting evolution in the Arabic world.

But it doesn't necessarily imply an opportunity, in my opinion. It implies change and a changed method of what is already going on.

I think Chris is spot-on: Nobody knows where this is going. And the deep, heartfelt Muslims that I've talked to will give you a very interesting explanation about the role of Iran; they'll give you an explanation about all kinds of things in this, that if you listen to it, you go, you've got to be kidding me! You believe that? No, I believe that.

So you don't know where this is going to end up. Is it an opportunity? It's an opportunity to do what Fran said: Stay up – stay away from it right now and not try to put your head into that meat cleaver because it isn't going to get any better.

MR. NELSON: Steve, did you want to comment?

MR. KAPPES: I would only add that this is, once again, something difficult for all of us in America, is that we need to be patient here. (Laughter.) One of the similarities between Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Yemen is that the leadership there has not, over the last three decades, developed institutions; they have not trained and developed people to head those institutions. So what you have here is a real free-for-all in many cases.

And I'm afraid what we will also have to be patient through is the inevitable historical piece, which is, the rebels take over for a day or two and then they realize they can't run anything and then they spend the classical part of time just settling scores before the next group comes in, which is then supposed to, hopefully, run the government. The problem is, that next group coming in doesn't have any training. They're all wandering around, wondering what to do. They want to do the right thing.

So this is going to require some significant patience on the part of the United States because I don't think, in many of those places, we will have – unless we show up with, you know, massive numbers of U.S. forces, which is obviously not going to happen, we won't have any influence, frankly. We're sort of kidding ourselves that we think that we're going to be able to influence these events in a meaningful way and shape it in a fashion that would fit better with our concept of what it should be.

GEN. STONE: Steve just reminded me of something I wanted to comment on. You know, having been a guy that has given military spending money – FMS dollars – to Pakistan and it was, sort of, my job, it always bothered me, right, that, you know – we always felt bin Laden was in Pakistan. I mean, we were running around saying that, oh, no, no, no, no, he's not here; he's in Hollywood or someplace, but he's not here. (Laughter.) And, by the same token, you look at what Hamas have done. They've used democracy to now establish a democratic state. I mean, they're elected, right? They're elected.

So we do have some serious Department of State issues and Department of Defense issues. I mean, what are you going to do with the money you were giving to Egypt before? Do you still give it to them? What are you doing with the money that you're giving to Pakistan? Do you still give it to them? Do you give it for the same reason?

I think those are the things that we have to examine and change. We have to at least look at that. And those are probably not long-term – they're like this spending year. So those are probably very real issues for the government to have to deal with and the Fed.

MR. NELSON: Yeah. Go ahead.

Q: Hi. My name is Hedieh Mirahmadi. I'm president of WORDE. We're a community-based organization and we published a report – actually, we're grateful CSIS launched our report on a community-based approach to countering radicalization, really, a discussion – I don't even know where to start. But – (chuckles; laughter) – there's, like, so many questions.

MR. NELSON: One question. (Laughter.)

Q: I'm going to going to piece together a couple themes that I heard and then ask you all a question. I think we mentioned – Mr. Stone mentioned the U.K. Prevent strategy. They recently announced a revamping of their strategy, saying that they were going to put a benchmark of shared values for partners – basically saying that we are not going to just give to any Muslim group; we require them to respect our laws, respect religious freedom, announcing a set of shared values, which I think is extremely helpful. And we talked about what the federal government can do and what it cannot do.

What do you think is the role of our federal government in announcing who our friends are? Are we going to get to a point in this battle where we are going to say who our friends are? Announce a set of shared values and say, the apolitical, radical Salafists are not our partners; they're not the solution; we want to look towards community groups that are helping to announce an Islamic message that is compatible with American values? Or are we just going to stay away from the discussion?

MR. KAPPES: I think that already happens in the United States and other places. I mean, there are people that have had their federal funding jerked because they've not been in keeping with federal guidelines and regulations. So there's precedent for that sort of thing after the United States.

GEN. STONE: You know, I – great point. Spot on, in my opinion. And, you know, I applaud a lot of the programs that are out there that are dealing with this. And we don't have time to go through them, but the concept of shared values is very simple: at least everybody in the military and a bunch of others took an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. Very straight forward, all right? And the FBI has often come down on terrorist groups that don't support that. There are hundreds and hundreds of them outside of the one that we're singularly talking about now.

So you're absolutely right. I mean, the government, to the extent they want to get and engage with funding of public-private partnerships, or, I might add, the selection of which imams even go into federal prisons – I mean, there has to be a question mark asked: You know, what is – are you credentialed? Are you even – where are you from? And if you saw the system and

then you watched the people coming in, you would just come unhinged, I would hope, at what's going on.

So I think your point is that if we're going to more and we're going to engage in this, do we have to get some standard set? I would hope so. I mean, I'm not in the government, but I sure as heck hope so. And I know that the local communities want it. They desperately want some level of support for the right answer, in their own view. They know when they cross that line and somebody is going to go to radicalism – they know it. And they know it viscerally.

And that's why so many of these – you know, even the underwear bomber, we got advance notice. I mean, somebody is telling you about something. So the fact of the matter is that we ought to support these communities with exactly that kind of thing and tell them, we're going to put our shoulders behind it because you're supporting the Constitution, period. That's a good thing.

MS. TOWNSEND: There are standards for, as Steve Kappes mentioned, there are standards for receiving federal funding. But this is a place where presidential leadership makes a difference. For the president of the United States to make a speech, to go the mosque here in Washington or to sit out – stand out in the Rose Garden and to talk about shared values with Muslim community leaders would make a tremendous difference.

It's a hard thing for him to do; it's politically dangerous. But that's real presidential leadership that can make a difference. I think you got to be careful about this saying who our friends are – it's the hugging-the-baby-to-death problem. And many in the moderate Muslim community don't want to be identified as being helpful. We can debate why that is. But I think we have to respect that. And yet a presidential statement on shared values and partnership with the community I think would be very useful.

MR. NELSON: Let's go on this side of the room. Any questions here? OK, the gentleman right here – blue suit.

Q: Joe Bosco with CSIS. Excuse me. I worked on these so-called “war of ideas” issues when I was with the Defense Department. And I think the role of the American Muslim community is really critical in all of this. You mentioned several times the perception of a war against Islam. Sorry about the allergy.

There are two points, it seems to me, that need to be made on that. We put together a documentary film when I was at DOD showing the number of times the U.S. had intervened on behalf of Muslims around the world. And the issue kind of fell flat with the American Muslim community. There was no real response to that.

The second is, your point about Takfiri: They dismiss – many American Muslims dismiss the extremists as not really being Muslims. And yet when we go after them in the war against terrorism, it becomes converted to a war against Islam. How can that be? It's logically inconsistent. If these are not really Muslims – Osama, for example – why is it a war against Islam to go after them?

MR. NELSON: Thank you for that question.

MS. TOWNSEND: You know what, only the most recent example of the irony of saying, this doesn't represent Islam is to – we killed bin Laden and then we observed the Muslim burial ritual. I literally am shaking my head. Why are we legitimizing this, when we – our policy is, this doesn't represent true Islam? And so I'm with you: This inconsistency to the approach is maddening.

And Steve Kappes, when he made his remarks, made the right point. Those things happen because from the presidential speeches down to covert action, there is no one who makes sure of the consistency across language and approach – policy approach – at all those different layers, and it's desperately needed. And we wonder why our effort is misunderstood. Well, it's because we send multiple, conflicting messages.

MR. KAPPES: There's another piece of that I've always worried about, is that as a country, we've never been able to maximize our strengths in this area. For example, there is no country in the history of the world that can bring support to crisis situations like the United States.

I've spent a lot of time in and around Pakistan and the Pakistani earthquake, for example: There are Pakistanis out there who have named their children after U.S. helicopter pilots or people involved in saving lives and things. The tsunamis, the great floods: The United States does things that are unbelievable in terms of helping save people's lives, get them back on their feet, food, water, all the basics of life.

And we've never maximized that as a message that says, listen: You can disagree with, you know, the invasion of Iraq, whatever, but this is who we are as well; this is what we do; this is what we can do. And, my goodness gracious, more and more Americans donate all the time to other countries who are in desperate straits as well as, of course, to our own citizens. But it's a tool, if you will, that has never been properly utilized by the United States government or, frankly, just by the United States in general to demonstrate, wait a minute, wait a minute, hold on – we don't have a war on Islam; we just flew 800 million tons of supplies to these desperate souls – and they were desperate – in Pakistan.

And I wish we could figure out a way to do a better – I mean, we can sell the heck out of toothpaste – (laughter) – and we can sell cars until we're blue in the face, but we can't sell our values in a fashion that's believable to a society that, in many cases, would like to believe it. We ought to do something

MR. BOUCEK: I think all of the – I think those are great examples. All of the positive things the United States does can get erased by every Abu Ghraib or every Guantanamo – how this is perceived abroad. And the one thing none of us have been talking about is foreign policy, right, and how American policy is perceived in the region as a source of grievance. I mean, it's not just religion; it's not just Palestine. It's, people are upset about how the United States acts.

MR. KAPPES: I would offer that – I spent 30 years in the CIA and I can't think of a year in which U.S. policy in the Middle East wasn't being criticized, condemned and brutalized. (Laughter.) So I don't know how we get around the idea of attempting to come up policies that are somehow embraced.

MR. NELSON: Let's go with the gentleman right here in the purple tie. Microphone is behind you.

Q: Thank you. My name is Kristopher Kraus; I'm from the National Environmental Education Foundation. Kind of going off on that theme of perception and – well, here's – that the U.S. can do many good things, but that a few embarrassing incidents can potentially erase some of that goodwill. Just a little background: I don't watch that much TV so actually, when I turn on the TV, I'm often shocked in the best of circumstances.

Following Osama bin Laden's death, I happened to be visiting my father in Oregon so I was watching an unusually large amount of TV. And whether it was a whole bunch of drunken George Washington students dancing in front of the White House or Jon Stewart or Heraldo or even Drew Carey on "The Price is Right" the next day, I was quite disappointed with the – I found the reaction overly celebratory and even vulgar.

So this leads to sort of a broader question of how the U.S. media on television is – basically, how do – the portrayal of American culture. I didn't like how – I didn't like American culture after – following Osama bin Laden.

MR. NELSON: Do you have your question?

Q: Yes. What did that do to perceptions in the Muslim world, in terms of –

MR. NELSON: So it's what did the celebrations on TV after the death of Osama bin Laden do to perceptions in the Muslim world? Is that the question?

Q: Yes.

MR. NELSON: OK.

Q: Just based on your prior experience of other, similar events.

MR. NELSON: Right. Thank you so much.

MR. BOUCEK: I was in Saudi Arabia the day that that was announced and so I don't know what the media coverage was like here. But in Saudi Arabia, this was pretty big news for like a day or two. It was the cover of the newspapers and stuff. But after that, it wasn't very much news. I think there's a lot of, kind of, so what? Or, really, now what? I mean, there are a lot of other problems, I think, going on.

And I think there's – I think in Saudi Arabia and I think throughout – not just Saudi Arabia, I think throughout the region, there was some conflicted beliefs about – you can admire someone and also disagree with what they do, right? And I think there was some feelings in the region about, here's a guy that gave up a life of luxury, stuck by what he believed in, stuck it to the United States, no matter what he did, what he felt was right and still disagree with the violence he inspired and the violence he caused. And I think there's that – I mean, it's not black and white. There's a whole lot of nuance, right? But I think the portrayals in the region – I think it was not, probably, what it was like here.

MR. NELSON: Anyone else? No? We have time for one more question. Let's go with the lady in the back, please.

Q: Thank you very much. My name is Jacinta (ph); I'm from Kenya. And I'm really happy to hear about all these efforts that are happening in other countries. But I'm just wondering if there is any work that has been done in this area with regard to Somalia because Kenya and Somalia – we are now the next grounds where recruitment is really happening. And I really wanted to get some signposting on who else I can talk to out there. Thank you.

MR. KAPPES: (Chuckles.) The Kenyan government is working very hard at attempting to manage that porous border with Somalia. It's a very difficult matter. It requires a lot of attention, trained people and money. I'm afraid that they haven't got it solved yet. I think that the difficulties inside the Kenyan government in terms of domestic stability and questions of governing, the question of sufficient resources, questions of vast amounts of money that are available in Somalia, both through the pirates as well as some of the well-funded terrorist groups, and, quite frankly, it hasn't helped with American citizens – ethnic Somalians, American citizens who have left and returned to Somalia. That isn't helpful.

I think it's a more difficult issue in East Africa than has probably shown its head here for some time. But I, frankly, worry that given the upheaval in Sudan as well at the moment, between the North and the South, that you'll continue to build an environment out there which is more hospitable for the type of groups that are currently operating in Somalia. So I still think that East African problem is a difficult one that no one really has a handle on. And I don't know that United States policy is going to come to grips with it anytime soon.

MR. NELSON: Anyone else on the panel?

GEN. STONE: Can I answer the last question?

MR. NELSON: Absolutely. (Chuckles.)

GEN. STONE: OK. I wanted to give you an example of something, and I think it's important. I try – personally, I try to read the Arab press every day, across the country. I find them to be, on balance, pretty even – evenhanded. In fact, quite interestingly, they're far more graphic, by the way, in the pictures they put up than anything we do.

When Abu Ghraib took place, it was the number-one reason for recruiting against almost all standards – no question. When General Petraeus allowed me to make the changes we did, after we made them, we brought in, with his permission, Arab press. They were so impressed that they said, nobody is going to believe me when I go back! So then the general let me fly back and give presentations in – I forgot how many different countries – to the Arab press.

It was front page: what we've – the changes. Front page. After that happened, it never became a recruiting issue again.

Now, why do I make that point? Because I think they're pretty fair and balanced. I think they place things in perspective. I think they understand their religion and how their religion fits in their government a whole lot better than we understand it and really are a lot more – I don't even want to use the word "tolerant" because it sounds like it's – orthogonal here, but they are far more tolerant about things.

So when bin Laden gets killed, they're saying, yeah, he's going to get killed. That doesn't mean they don't believe in some of his beliefs and things he does. But they're just not going to come unhinged about it. They believe in a god and that things are going to go on and move on. It's not reason to become an Abu Ghraib. Killing him was a stated goal. We said we're going to do it, we are hunting him. And we hunted him for 10 years and we got him – check; got it. So that's how the Arabs see it and that's how they report it. And I think that's, frankly, very refreshing.

Q: You don't think – my question was specifically about the way in which – (inaudible) – following his death –

GEN. STONE: They never picked up on it. I mean, at least I never saw it. I would defer to others; there are some here in the press. I was specifically looking for that. I mean, look – I think Americans were more offended by it, you know, from what I saw. But not so in the Arab culture. You know, that's just me. I mean, they expected it to happen; they expect us to hoot and holler like we do at a football game. They try to understand our culture and we – I think, frankly, they understand our culture better than we understand theirs.

MR. KAPPES: The other side of it: There are many of us who won't forget the cheers of joy and glee after 9/11 when the aircraft hit came out in Palestinian territories. I mean, there's a problem about this sort of behavior on both sides of this – both sides of this equation. The fact that [99:20] is calling bin Laden a great martyr for the faith – I mean, come on.

So my point – it's just a product, in many ways, of the current high-speed, fast-paced – and I defer to other men and women in the audience who understand the press better than I – of reporting. So I don't think that – hopefully, we've matured to the point where no one is putting too much stock in those immediate sound bites that come roaring out after these huge events.

GEN. STONE: I mean, the press in the United States is entertainment in many ways, funded by entertainment. The press outside is not – for good, bad or ugly, it's not.



MS. TOWNSEND: And while I understand your comment about being uncomfortable at seeing some of the celebration, I think we need to kind of – pardon the expression – but we need to grow up a little bit. You know what? Three thousand Americans were killed. There was a sense of national pride in that moment. It wasn't a political statement; it hadn't – it wasn't a Republican or a Democratic statement. There was a sense of national pride and satisfaction in the retribution that the Navy SEALs exacted on bin Laden.

And that they were – that they demonstrated it in a way that made you uncomfortable: Roger, I understand what you're saying. But I must tell you that it was a cathartic moment for the country and the country needed that. And frankly, I'm unwilling to apologize for that to the world or to anyone. The country deserved that moment. There were celebrations in terms of the satisfaction of that moment, and it's over. And we're on to the next thing. There's others on that target list that –

MR. NELSON: OK, OK, OK.

MR. KAPPES: Feel comfortable with this – feel comfortable with this: It's that the professionals who were involved in the hunt and the finish were not running around jumping and screaming. They were just glad it was over.

MS. TOWNSEND: No, that's right.

MR. NELSON: OK. I have to be – I'll get fired from CSIS if I don't end this on time and I need my paycheck. So I will take responsibility for ending this very healthy discussion. Blame it on me. But first, let's thank the panelists and thank you all for coming. (Applause.)

(END)