

Center for American Progress



A PANEL DISCUSSION ON:

“SUICIDE TERRORISM: HOW SHOULD THE UNITED STATES COMBAT THIS GROWING THREAT?”

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DR. LAWRENCE KORB: Good afternoon. My name is Larry Korb and on behalf of my colleagues here at the Center for American Progress, I'd like to welcome you to this panel on a very critical subject, the subject of suicide terrorism and how the United States should combat this growing threat.

Every day we read about suicide bombings in Iraq, but they're not just confined to Iraq. They're actually all over the world. In a new book on suicide terrorism by Bob Pape from the University of Chicago, he talks about the fact that over the last 25 years there have been more than 300 suicide bombings and that he also talks about how many have been tied specifically to al Qaeda, but they're not the only ones that have resorted to this tactic.

And we've got three terrific people, I think, here today to give us some insight into why people would do this, what motivates them, and what can we do about it. All of our panelists are all Ph.D.s, they're all widely published, and they all have both practical, as well as research backgrounds.

Our first speaker today will be Dr. Mia Bloom, who currently is assistant professor of political science at the University of Cincinnati and also consults to the New Jersey Office of Counterterrorism, as well as many other federal agencies. In addition, besides being at Cincinnati, she's taught at Princeton, Cornell, Harvard, and McGill. She has a doctorate from Columbia University, and among other things she speaks nine languages. And her latest book, *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror*, has been just published by Columbia University Press.

Our second panelist, Dr. Mohammed Hafez, is visiting professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Missouri, Kansas City. His Ph.D. is from the London School of Economics. He has been a United States Information Agency fellow. He has authored *Why Muslims Rebel: Repression and Resistance in the Islamic World* and *Manufacturing Human Bombs: The Making of Palestinian Suicide Bombers*.

Our third panelist, Dr. Bruce Hoffman, is currently the corporate chair in counterterrorism and counterinsurgency at the RAND Corporation, and is also director of RAND's Washington, D.C., office. He's held a number of positions at RAND. He was a senior advisor on counterterrorism to the Office of National Security Affairs at the Coalition Provision Authority in Baghdad. He's been the founding director of the Center for Study of Terrorism and Political Violence at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. He's received a number of awards including the Director of Central Intelligence Award, the United States Intelligence Community Seal Medallion, which is the highest level of commendation that can be given to a nongovernment employee.

So with that background, let me begin by asking the panelists at first to comment on the question of who are these people, what motivates them, why would – is this an increasing phenomena, what's leading to it? And let me begin by asking Dr. Bloom to begin addressing that subject.

DR. MIA BLOOM: It's interesting that you bring up the question in part because the issue of motivation is somewhat complex. What I did in the book *Dying to Kill* was I tried to compare the different kinds of suicide bombers, both the ones that were inspired by secular nationalism, as well as the ones that are inspired by religious motivation. And what's interesting, although they're coming from two different streams, they tend to often be motivated by the same kinds of things. This idea of an occupation as contributing to a general feeling of outrage, a feeling of personal loss very often on the part of the bombers themselves, and a feeling that this is the only way that they can express their outrage to the enemy side, but as well as the fact that the organizations themselves are fairly rationally calculating, and they're using suicide bombing to accomplish certain goals. Some of these goals include mobilizing their own population.

Nasra Hassan in her seminal piece in November of 2001 talked about for every bomber that's lost in a suicide bombing attack, 12 more can be recruited. We see this as actually the case on the ground. And so the organizations themselves can use suicide bombing to recruit additional bombers as well as to show to their larger constituency that they're being very proactive.

We're also able to observe in a number of these instances where you have more than one organization using suicide bombing, and so we've begun to notice a certain amount of competition among the groups so that on a number of the Palestinian cases, largely beginning in 2002, sometimes you would have a suicide bombing attack where no fewer than four different organizations tried to claim responsibility and credit. And so one of the things the organizations did was they imprinted each bombing event. They branded it so that, for instance, the bomber before the attack would make a statement, would make this last will and testament. And on the one hand this ensures that the bomber isn't going to change their mind – I mean, they're now sort of the walking dead – but at the same time behind the bomber would be a very large logo of the organization to make sure that everyone knew which organization ultimately was responsible for this attack. And so the motivations at the organizational level and the motivations at the individual level varied, but by and large, we were not seeing people who were crazy or had any kind of mental defect.

The other thing that I was also able to observe is over time the organization ceased to conform to any kind of stereotype or profile, so that if at least in the first phase most of the Palestinian bombers were young men between the ages of 18 and 25 with beards and some religious background, one of the things that the Palestinian organizations did was they changed that. We began to see women participating, older people, people who are married, married with children. And, in fact, the organizations used preexisting stereotypes or profiles against us. So it was one of the things that I tried to emphasize, for instance, the introduction of women bombers, or women who are

pretending to be pregnant, or at least in one case in Iraq actually were pregnant. These are things that we're not expecting, so we have to be as innovative in our thinking as the terrorist organizations are in terms of carrying it out.

DR. KORB: Okay. Mohammed, now, do these people belong to particular groups or is it something that's not confined to one area, one background of people?

DR. MOHAMMED HAFEZ: First of all, let me thank the Center for American Progress for the opportunity to be part of this distinguished panel and for addressing a distinguished audience.

The trend historically has been a mix of both religious and secular groups carrying out this – these kind of attacks, so as Mia points out in her book, the Tamil Tigers have been the forerunners in terms of applying this tactic until recent years. But the trend of late has been towards Islamic fundamentalist suicide terrorism. Initially, we've seen this among the Palestinians, but recently even the trend is among what's called the Jihadi-Salafist trend.

The question is, why is this trend toward – taking place or why do we see this trend in the Muslim world? What I argue in my writings is that we have to look at broader cultural and structural factors that sort of create or generate a cadre that are willing to become suicide bombers. So the question is, why are so many Muslims becoming suicide bombers?

Part of the answer, I argue, is – or really, it's kind of a convergence of three factors, three conditions. The first one has to deal with the culture of fundamentalism or the cultural shift that took place since the 1970s, and I argue that that facilitated a culture of martyrdom.

Secondly is the lack of political opportunity for moderate Islamists to compete in the political processes in their own countries. And thirdly, it has to do with what Mia points out so eloquently in her book about the strategic logic of suicide terrorism, the fact that this is an effective tactic. So if we try to look at just one factor, I think we will fail to try to understand the complexity of this, but rather we have to look at the three conditions.

So how has the culture of fundamentalism contributed to a culture of martyrdom? From the very beginning when Islamic fundamentalism begins to take place or began to emerge in the Muslim world, there was a strand among both moderates and radicals within this fundamentalist movement to brand the struggle or what's taking place in their society as being a response to a conspiracy by what they would call a Western Zionist or a crusader Zionist conspiracy against Islam, and so there's a sort of paranoia about Western intervention, Western inclination to support certain leaderships in those countries.

So this strand, combined with the fact that any moderate Islamist's attempt to participate in the political process is shunned and basically the door is shut. So if you are an Islamist in the Muslim world, the choice is not between moderate Islamism and radical Islamism. The choice is between radical Islamism or no Islamism.

Now, can one draw a direct line between this culture and this structural condition and suicide terrorism? I argue no. But what ended up happening is it really created the groundwork for radicalism to emerge. And once radicalism emerged, there were groups that came forward and stepped forward and said, "Look, here's the option that we have. Suicide terrorism is an effective tactic. This is something that could strike fear in the enemy's hearts." They often say, "We show them with this tactic that we love death as much as they love life." And that to them is the source of their strength when confronted in a situation of asymmetrical power; asymmetrical power here in terms of facing enemies like the Israelis and the Americans, but also internally very strong authoritarian states. So this method is really – as they're saying, "This is our only way to fight back."

DR. KORB: Thank you.

Bruce, you've been writing about this subject for well before people paid attention to it in your book, *Inside Terrorism*, which was published, I guess, back in '98 and it's going to be updated this year and then, of course, your article, "The Logic of Suicide Terrorism," which was in the *Atlantic Monthly*. Is this something that's going to continue to grow? Is it something that you foresaw when you first looked at this or what are the trends? Where are we going with this?

DR. BRUCE HOFFMAN: Well, I don't think I could claim any credit for any prescience that – I think like many people had thought that the upsurge in suicide terrorism we saw in the 1980s and in the 1990s was going to remain just one of the many arrows in the terrorist quiver. I think what's been remarkable since 9/11 is really the unmitigated growth in popularity of suicide terrorism as a tactic and strategy for terrorist groups. According to the data base that we've maintained at RAND since 1968, 81 percent of all the suicide terrorist attacks that have taken place over the past 30-plus years or so have occurred since 9/11, so indisputably this is becoming much more of a tactic and a trend.

And we see also its almost unprecedented spread and growth throughout the world. When suicide terrorism first surfaced in the 1980s, it was largely confined to a handful, perhaps three, four countries, and was committed or perpetrated by no fewer than a half-dozen groups, whereas today we find that suicide terrorism is spread to some 25 countries throughout the world. Virtually every continent, except perhaps Antarctica, has experienced if not a suicide attack, then a highly-credible threat.

Some 35 groups today, six times the number of 20 years ago, are perpetrating suicide terrorist attacks. I think as Mohammed was saying – and he's absolutely right that religion has become the overwhelmingly compelling motive sustaining suicide terrorism today. Thirty-one of the 35 identifiable terrorist groups active right now are

religious in content and one has to say unfortunately Muslim. And I'm excluding the Chechen groups. I'm excluding Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, because there's some debate whether they're religious or not. I'm excluding the Popular Front Palestinian groups, so it's really those terrorist movements that specifically justify and legitimize the use of violence, and particularly justify and legitimize the employment of suicide tactics with either liturgy or who have clerics supporting them.

So in this sense, we see that suicide terrorism has gone from something that was an aberration, an isolated fear that occurred, for instance, in Lebanon or in Sri Lanka until the turn of the century, and that really in the past four years has had an enormous and unprecedented spread, which is, I think, extremely alarming.

DR. KORB: Okay. Thank you all. And I want to also commend the panelists, not only for great remarks, but keeping them short and – so we could have as much discussion as possible.

All right. Well, we have some understanding of it now. We know something about the trends. And I guess the next question is, okay, what should we do about it? What should the U.S. policy be to deal with this? And why don't we start again with Mia?

DR. BLOOM: Well, one of the things that's come up quite a bit in part because of the almost daily attacks in Iraq is this idea that if there's no occupation, there's no suicide attacks; that it's only about occupation. And I think that the role of occupation is something that we need to understand in terms of the way in which it affects the internal dynamics of the community being occupied, but it's something more than that and I'll give you an example from Iraq.

As much as 90 percent of the suicide bombing attacks in Iraq are not being perpetrated by Iraqis. Overwhelmingly, depending on which sources you look at, between 75 to 85 percent of those suicide attackers in Iraq are actually Saudis. And so in terms of policy prescription, one of the issues that I have with the current administration is that we're not really putting enough pressure on Saudi Arabia to stop exporting this problem to Iraq or elsewhere.

In other words, there seems to have been a split that emerged within the Saudi Jihad movement as far as whether to continue to try to attack at home against the monarchy or to export this tactic, either to keep funding Jihadis in Europe or to send the people individually to Iraq. And what we've seen time and time again is that it's very easy for the monarchy to just export this problem to Iraq and put it on the doorstep either of the United States or the UK or of the Iraqi people.

And, of course, part of the purpose of these suicide bombings is not just to make a statement about the American and British occupation of Iraq, but also to attack as many Shi'a civilians as possible, because from that Salafi/Wahhabi perspective, the Shiism and the growth of Shiism and the possibility of sort of a Shiist revolution and contagion is as

worrisome to them as their sort of age-old hatreds against the crusader, Zionist, imperialist West. So that was one of the stop-gap measures that I would advocate.

The other thing is this idea that we need to approach counterterrorism in a twofold manner. Time and time again I was able to discuss in the book how increasing pressure in counterterrorism against the terrorist groups didn't necessarily yield the kind of results you would hope for. In other words, no matter how much pressure the British put in Malabar and Aceh, that didn't stop the suicide Jihadists there. It doesn't necessarily stop suicide terrorism to increase the pressure, to increase arrests, use of torture. In fact, these are the kinds of things that feed directly into the propaganda and help mobilize increasing numbers of support.

And so what I try to advocate is a two-pronged approach. One that is traditional counterterrorism in terms of ensuring that it doesn't happen again in the United States, but also to keep in mind that not just addressing the efficacy of attacks to prevent the attacks from happening, but also to prevent the motivation from joining organizations that engage in these kind of attacks.

The example, for instance, in Israel although the barrier or the wall or the fence or the gate or whatever you want to call it has certainly stopped the number of successful attacks in Israel, the number of attempts has remained largely the same, and there have been periods of time where the number of attempts have increased. So what I read from this is that certainly the Israelis are very effective at successfully stemming an attack, but they really haven't been very successful at preventing the motivation for joining the organizations that engage in suicide terrorism.

So from my perspective, I did want to urge for public diplomacy, a hearts-and-mind approach, something that Joe Nye calls a sort of "smart power," the combination of soft power with intelligent policing and infrastructural control.

DR. KORB: Okay. Mohammed?

DR. HAFEZ: Sure. Let me preface my remarks by saying that given that this is a complex problem, we can't really just come up with one solution for it. My approach to this problem is really to view the tactic or to view suicide terrorism not as a tactic, but as a dynamic. And what that means is, let's break it down into its component parts.

The first part is the decision: the decision of individuals to agree to become suicide bombers, and also the decision calculus of organizations to use this tactic. Secondly, it's the process. Once individuals and organizations have decided we're going to do this, they undergo a process of recruitment, indoctrination, training, selecting targets, gathering finances, et cetera.

And the third part of this, and we often don't focus enough on that, is the impact. The reason these people do this kind of a thing – because they intend to or they want to solicit an impact; an impact on their own constituency as Mia points out, an impact on us

when we are attacked, and an impact on our allies. And so when we look at these three categories, we need to develop strategies for each one. How do we change the calculus of individuals and organizations? How do we interrupt the process? And this is more tactical, than strategic. And thirdly, how do we become more resilient at home or maybe make – increase resiliency abroad so that we could absorb the impact of this without having to impact us.

Now, more specifically I think there are things that we can do to begin to contain this problem, not completely eliminate it. The first one is that we should not respond to the strategic demands of suicide terrorists after our campaign of violence. So right now, there's talk about pulling out of Iraq because we've just taken too many hits and it's just not worth it. I think we're flirting with disaster if this happens. You're going to get the bleed-out effect in the same way that happened in Afghanistan when all these Jihadists felt that they had a tremendous victory against the Soviets, and went back home and began to organize their own radical groups.

If we show that this strategy does not pay and, as the Israelis have shown, that you do not respond to the strategic demands of the groups attacking you, then it becomes futile, and that changes the calculus of organizations.

Secondly, we need to exploit the excesses of the suicide attacks of late. The fact is that many of these suicide attacks have killed many Muslims, but we haven't really taken advantage of that. And there are three things here that we can exploit. Suicide attacks, particularly by Islamic extremists, as we've – as Bruce pointed out, this is the trend right now, tends to fly in the face of three clear principles in Islam. First one is against suicide, second one is against targeting civilians, and the third one is against killing Muslims. But if you look at suicide attacks today, that's what they're doing. They're people blowing themselves up, they are killing civilians, and they are increasingly killing Muslims.

And the final thing, as I've kind of hinted at earlier, is really we need to focus on the impact. This is the area where we have a great deal of leeway. We need to increase public education at home to show people what the strategy of the suicide terrorists – what their strategy is, and that way we become more resilient in the same with the British have become resilient against IRA attacks and the Israelis have become resilient against Hamas and Islamic Jihad attacks, so I'll stop.

DR. KORB: Thank you.

Bruce?

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, there's not much left actually for me to stay in the strategy and policy realms.

DR. KORB: Give us a preview of your new – what the updated version of the book.

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, what I was going to do is shift from policy and strategy down to tactics, if that's okay.

DR. KORB: Okay. Sure.

DR. HOFFMAN: And work at it at a lower level, because I'm in complete agreement with, I think, both of those very cogent statements. And I think that now and during this interregnum before suicide terrorism materializes in this country and potentially becomes a threat is the time to prepare for it. I mean, certainly in the course of a RAND project that we undertook and spoke to a number of law enforcement and other officials throughout the world, particularly in Sri Lanka and Israel among other places, the point that was constantly emphasized to us is that before it actually occurs is when you have to invest the time and effort in planning. And here, I think, some of the lessons from these other countries are enormously helpful; that we don't have to reinvent the wheel. And some of them, in fact, that have been proven to be effective are somewhat counterintuitive.

One of the most important lessons, for example, is not to rely exclusively on highly-trained, elite special weapons and tactics teams, but that rather effective law enforcement in responding to the threat of suicide terrorism is often predicated on the ordinary cop on the beat or the ordinary traffic control officer who happens to see something amiss, who knows the community very well in which they operate, and can detect any anomalies or indeed any potential threats.

And in this respect too, it's very important to train all levels of the police force in on how to respond because at the end of the day I don't think any country anywhere in the world pays a law enforcement officer enough money to give up their lives to stop suicide terrorism. And for them to act effectively, they have to be trained and prepared ahead of this. And this involves, I think, not just an awareness of the tactic itself, of it's many different permutations of terrorist behavior, of body language, and upper – past modus operandi and operational patterns, but also then how to react, not just to tell a police officer to move away and radio for assistance, but to have in place procedures that enables the police officer to gather more information, and also to alert colleagues or superiors, and perhaps prepare to interdict the suicide bomber more effectively.

I think defensive measures, too, that introduce – that firstly identify and prioritize likely targets of suicide terrorism, and then also undertake some form of counter-surveillance. All the terrorists are always very happy and very content to portray this as the acts of desperate, angry, frustrated individuals, and indeed many of the recruits may have those character traits. What we have to bear in mind is that this is an instrument of warfare. This is something that is planned, premeditated, deliberate, that often is the product of surveillance and intelligence gathering. That, in fact, is much bigger than the lone outlaw, for example, who may be the suicide bomber; that there's an enormously large logistics tail as well. So certainly interdiction has to begin far in advance of the actual attack being implemented to identify a terrorist infrastructure, the quartermasters,

the bomb-makers, and indeed especially the handlers who are charged with firstly conducting the surveillance and reconnaissance and then effecting the movement of the bomber to the specific target.

And then, of course, the training extends beyond just law enforcement officers to emergency service personnel because I think here is one of the greatest threats: that in many countries there'll be an initial explosion – suicide attack – and then they're waiting in the wings for highly-trained, highly-valued emergency service personnel from police, fire or ambulance services to come on the scene to launch a second attack that then is even more devastating, because not only are an additional wave or waft of casualties inflicted, but highly-trained personnel are removed from the scene, and potentially there's a demoralizing effect on these response personnel.

So part of this involves training law enforcement and emergency services, not as we saw courageously at the World Trade Center at the site of the attacks on 9/11 when everyone converged on the scene wanting to help, but rather to respond in a much more orchestrated and systematic means where you have one group of law enforcement officers that's going to the wounded and tending to them while another group immediately scans through the crowd looking for either follow-on bombers or for secondary devices that might have been hidden there.

You then have yet another team of law enforcement officers that's identifying witnesses and removing them from the scene very quickly before they fall deeper into shock so that they can be questioned – Was anybody seen with the bomber? Did anybody drop the bomber off? – hopefully to get information. The bomber now is dead. That part of the operation is over, but the handler who brought that bomber there is the operative who one really has to look for. And then, of course, it's allowing the emergency services personnel in to remove those who are injured and may be on the verge of dying.

I think interestingly we see why suicide terrorism is so enormously attractive to terrorists, that at least in the Israeli experience doctors there have told me 90 percent of all the persons who are killed in a suicide attack died immediately, not all of them by shrapnel either. It's often the force of the blast and the effects on body organs. This is why terrorists pursue hermetically-sealed buses, for example, in the summers because of air conditioning or even subway cars. But at the same time, of those 10 percent who survive, almost all of them can survive provided they receive prompt medical care and are moved to the hospital and that's why this entire process of training, preparation and synchronization is so enormously important.

DR. KORB: Let me ask a couple of questions here to follow-up on the comments on that have been made. Mohammed, you said if we withdrew – I guess you mean precipitously – from Iraq it would send the wrong signal. Our staying in Iraq, does that increase or increase the chances of some London-type of thing happening here in the United States?

DR. HAFEZ: Well, the strategy of al Qaeda in Iraq and the remnant organization, to the extent that one could call it an organization, has been to attack the allies of America, largely because they want to split America from its allies in Iraq, increase the burden on the U.S. in maintaining the occupation there. And so it's kind of a divide-and-conquer strategy: very sensible. And so the attack in Spain really sent a message, and what happened afterwards – the fact that the Spanish withdrew their forces from Iraq – really sent the message, hey, if we hit London, and I suspect now Italy and Australia and other countries, then that will send a message there again that, hey, if you keep along with American policy, you're going to suffer the consequences.

Right now there's enough targets in Iraq that I think al Qaeda does not necessarily see a major attack in America as necessary. It would be a tremendous victory for it if it could humiliate America, force it to withdraw, turn Iraq into another Afghanistan in the way that happened after the Soviets left because, remember, their ultimate goal is not necessarily America, but to undermined the government in those regions. If you have a strong base in Iraq that borders on Iran, that borders on Jordan, that borders on Kuwait, that borders on Saudi Arabia, that would be tremendously helpful for them, and so attacking America is not necessarily the goal.

DR. KORB: Okay. Mia, let me follow-up on that. At some point, the United States will withdraw or leave Iraq. When that happens, do you think that in Iraq that the Iraqi people will give aid and comfort to these suicide bombers or the Iraqis will take action against them to keep them out?

DR. BLOOM: No, I think increasingly in part because this foreign terrorist element that is largely coming from the Gulf into Iraq has targeted Iraqi civilians in excess of American military targets. And when we look at the targeting over a period of time – and we just finished a paper on this subject – the number of American targets are actually quite small. There were a number – a handful of American targets in May and June, but overwhelmingly, we're looking at people standing in line either at the post office or picking up their checks or at checkpoints where it's clearly Iraqi targets. And what we've been able to measure then is that there's been a shift, an antagonism within the larger Iraqi population, and they don't like this foreign terrorist element.

And, in fact, in the larger Arab world, the position of suicide bombing is somewhat on the decline. A recent Pew Poll indicated that suicide bombing was far less popular, except in a handful of places, and again, except against Americans. But by and large the attacks in London spurred even more divisions within the sort of radical Islamic philosophical tradition looking at suicide bombing. Some of these radical – former radical Jihadi clerics coming out against the London bombings, others supporting the London bombings.

It's important, however, just in terms of the Europe aspect that Mohammed was talking about – I just wanted to add something – that as far as attacking allies in Europe, the difference between us and Europe is also the existence of a very large social underclass in Europe of Muslim populations overwhelmingly that were brought in the

aftermath of World War II, but were not given the same kinds of rights and were not as properly, say, assimilated as American Muslims. And one of the things that I – when I wear my other hat as a counterterrorism person, we get a lot of information from within the Muslim community. Very often within some of these radical mosques in New Jersey, for instance, people will call the authorities and say, “There’s a rabble rouser here. We don’t want them here. Please come pick them up.” And so because we generally incapable of fully infiltrating a terrorist organization, to be able to get the kind of actionable information to then behave accordingly, we rely very heavily on information coming from within that community.

That kind of information is not as forthcoming in Europe in part because of European policies of the last 40 years with regard to their Islamic populations. And so anecdotally, Pakistanis in this country become IT professionals and dentists. They don’t go on Jihad in Kashmir. That’s a really big difference from the south Asian Muslim population in England or the poor Muslims of the Banier (ph) or those who are sort of surrounding in Marseilles. We really don’t see that kind of antagonism and that social division of Muslims in this country, and I hope that that remains the case.

In part what I worry about is the divisive nature of policies and the backlash effect on the American Muslim community. So as far as the Jihadis in Iraq are concerned, I would say that they’re not going to be welcomed and treated as a member of the family. I think many Iraqis would like to see them gone. And from what I’ve heard – some of the reports I’ve heard, which I don’t know if Bruce can corroborate those, there have been several discussions about how to kill Zarqawi and get rid of him.

DR. KORB: Bruce, you gave us, I think, a terrific analysis of how we might deal with this. If you were brought in by Mike Chertoff, are there things we should be doing, money we – places we should be putting money or whatnot to deal with this that we’re not?

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, I think interestingly, this phenomenon almost turns on its head a lot of our inclinations in counter-terrorism in the U.S. which, you know, the cry in recent years has been disseminating information downwards from federal authorities to state and local. And here I think what’s the most important direction is further aid and empowerment of local and state authorities; that suicide terrorists don’t materialize from nowhere. They need an infrastructure from which to operate. They need a supportive community of one sort or another either to hide in or else to furnish recruits or logistics personnel. And all this makes countering suicide terrorism first and foremost a local law enforcement activity.

And it only, I think, can be truly effective when local law enforcement have not just the tactical training and response capabilities that I was describing previously, but also the knowledge management where part of their standard curriculum has to be to respond to terrorism, as well as to the myriad of other ordinary street crimes that police academies normally train them. Generally, responding to terrorism is more at the elite

level or more the advanced level, but I think the experience that we've seen means that it has to be really spread throughout the entire force.

DR. KORB: Well, let me follow up on that, and I don't want you to give away any classified information or anything. The big concern, are there sleeper cells in the United States like you had in London that we need to be worried about?

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, I don't think we know for sure certainly. That's one of the problems. But I think actually it's something of an apples-and-oranges comparison. You may remember on July 10th, about three days after the initial attacks, the Commissioner of Metropolitan Police, Sir Ian Blair, had said that the British authorities knew that there was some 3,000 Muslims that over the past decade had been trained by al Qaeda overseas, predominately in Afghanistan, Sudan, and Yemen, and had come back to the United Kingdom.

I mean, I'd been told virtually the same thing in the 1990s when I lived in the United Kingdom, so they already knew that there was a very profound, deep pool of not just sympathizers and supporters but, in fact, al Qaeda-trained terrorists that could provide – if they themselves were not the fighters, but could provide training and guidance and the skill set. We also know that since 9/11, some 53 British Muslims have left the United Kingdom to carry out attacks, many of them suicide attacks elsewhere, so we know that there was already this proclivity, so we shouldn't have been surprised it would turn around and come to the United Kingdom.

And then lastly, we've had in the United Kingdom institutions, such as the Finsberry Mosque, rather renowned, fiery clerics like Omar Bakri Mohammed and Abu Hamza who were active over the years, certainly, in recruiting people and in generating this kind of support.

Now, we can't, I think, wrap ourselves in this fatally false blanket of security and say this can't happen in the United States because indeed that's one of the lessons. Many other countries have said, "Suicide terrorism can't possibly materialize here," and it has. But at the same time you can see we're a very different situation. I don't think that any law enforcement or intelligence agency in this country has identified thousands of Americans trained – I mean, as we know. So to date it's been a handful of people: Jose Padilla and John Walker Lindh, and even John Walker Lindh was not trained as a terrorist.

We certainly haven't had many Americans leaving the United States, a handful, one or two people we've heard in the news, to go off and fight elsewhere. I mean, the Lackawanna Six, for example, was a case where residents in upstate New York did go overseas to engage in training but, of course, as we saw, they were not hardcore. They weren't as indoctrinated as their British counterparts are. They came back to the U.S. and, in essence, got cold feet.

What I see, though, as the threat here isn't so much the sleeper cells, but it's groups, for example, like Lashkar-e-Taiba, a Pakistani-Kashmiri group, that in the past pursued an entirely local parochial agenda, which was in essence the liberation of Kashmir, but over the years, and particularly since 9/11, it seems has become much more inculcated with al Qaeda's global Jihadist perspective and indeed have sought to establish cells and operations outside of South Asia, including the United States. That was the case of the individuals engaged in paintball training in Northern Virginia and were convicted some months ago. There was a case of a father and son arrested in California in June. Similar types of incidents in the United Kingdom and France and Australia, and you see a group like Lashkar-e-Taiba that does have ties to al Qaeda now assuming not just being an al Qaeda stalking horse, but buying into this global perspective and attempting perhaps to expand their ambit of terrorist operations elsewhere.

So in other words, where they may have established a nascent infrastructure or some base of operations in the past, such as potentially Northern Virginia in this country, it could in fact be the genesis of future terrorism. And I think that's one – that's become a much – I think a serious pattern that al Qaeda succeeded in co-opting many local groups to assume this globalist agenda and, therefore, the threat could be really anywhere they're based.

DR. KORB: Well, on that happy note, let me turn it over to the audience. I'd asked two things. When you're recognized, please identify yourself and your organization, if you so choose. And I'd like to ask – if there are any media that have questions, I'd like to give them the first shot, so if anybody is a member of the media.

Yes, sir? Well, wait for the mike, if you would.

Q: (Off mike) – freelance, but I've been a terrorism analyst with *Jane's of London* and other publications, and I'm a Muslim, too – Muslim-American. What I would like to ask is politically incorrect. As Bruce Hoffman or Mr. Mohammed there – my name is Mohammed Alselcon (ph), so – can you or have you ever done a study since the creation of Israel how has terrorism grown in the region and are politics of having (client ?) regimes in the oil rich Middle East – how it has contributed in terrorism? Because all the time I find out you want to cure the disease, but not the symptoms and the cause of the disease. Thank you.

DR. KORB: Bruce, you want to start?

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, I think clearly there's any number of terrorist groups active today that draw their motivation from an inspiration from the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in what they see is the maltreatment of Palestinians on the West Bank and perhaps in Gaza. So I think for many groups that has become – and especially in the process of the second Intifada since 2000 it's clearly been a fulminant, so of course it goes without saying that the resolution or settlement to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict would be an enormously productive and significant step forward, I think, in removing one source of – as I said, a fulminant of one source of contention.

At the same time, though, I don't think we should be under any illusion that resolving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is going to stop worldwide terrorism or even stop terrorism in the Middle East. We just have to remember that in 1998 at the height of the Oslo Accords when Palestinian-Israeli relations were, in fact, at their zenith, and the hopes of peace in the Middle East burned brightest was exactly the moment that bin Laden was blowing up our embassies in Tanzania and Kenya.

And, indeed, I just recently returned from several weeks research in Southeast Asia and was bluntly told by several people that – militants, that is, in a number of countries that resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is no solution; that it's the destruction of Israel that is the solution. And they've said – many of them repeated to me that this is one of the problems is that many people who look for a resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict see it purely or only as a local conflict but, in fact, it's a global one that cannot be resolved until Israel is destroyed. So that's not to say that there wouldn't be enormous significance and progress in achieving some peace, but we shouldn't be under an illusion that all of a sudden that part of the world will necessarily become entirely pacific.

DR. KORB: Okay. Any – Mohammed or Mia, do you want to comment?

MR. HAFEZ: I mean, just to follow-up on Bruce's remarks that I completely agree with. You know, portraying this as an Arab-Israeli conflict is too simplistic. The fact is, oftentimes when the peace process is progressing you have groups using suicide terrorism precisely to derail the peace process. But the history of radicalism in general – forget Islamic radicalism, but radicalism in the Middle East dates back to the rise of modernity and the decline of Islamic civilization and so to point it at the year 1948 when Israel was created I think, again, is simplifying matters.

What is problematic, though, is the fact that we have been silent or have taken our friendships with governments in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Egypt and others that have shown strong authoritarianism, no willingness to incorporate moderate Islamism into the political process. That has contributed to them attacking us. Is it a root cause? Again, not in a direct linear cause/effect relationship, but it does lay the foundations for a critique of America and hence attacking America.

DR. KORB: Mia, do you have comment on that at all?

DR. BLOOM: No, I think it's interesting. I think rhetorically, the lingering conflict is something that helps as a rallying cry for Muslims across the world, whether they have any direct contact with the Palestinian-Israel conflict or not. In other words, it's a rallying cry in Indonesia, and we see people burning the Israeli flag in effigy or putting on fake Palestinian bombs and kafias in order to show their sympathy, so I think that it's an effective tool.

But at the same time I've often wondered, in the same way that Saddam Hussein once alleged that the 1990 Gulf War was for the Palestinians, to what extent this is merely rhetoric and a rallying cry. And actually, when push comes to shove, most of these countries have shown time and time again a willingness to sacrifice Palestinian self-determination or any progress on the Palestinian-Israeli issue for their own more local issues.

DR. KORB: Okay. Eleanor, do you have a question? Eleanor? Wait for the mike if you're –

Q: I want to say that Saudi Arabia –

DR. KORB: That's Eleanor Clift. Yes.

Q: Eleanor Clift, *Newsweek*. When you say that Saudi Arabia is exporting terrorism to Iraq can you be more specific about exactly how they go about doing that?

DR. BLOOM: In general, although initially we didn't have a great deal of biographical information about the suicide bombers in Iraq, for instance, many of them didn't make the kind of videotape that I described among Palestinians where the organizational logo was clearly behind them and they would make a statement about what had motivated them personally. And very often, it's a script with a few additional biographical pieces of information.

Reuven Paz, who is running a project called PRISM on Islamic radicalism, went through all the Jihadi web sites, and through these Jihadi web sites was able to cull hundreds of names, which happen to be Saudi nationals who had gone to Iraq. And as I mentioned, although we don't have a great deal of the biographical information, the web sites printed some of this information and, in fact, even occasionally would include the phone number for the family that you could call and congratulate them because they weren't having the same kinds of funerals in which hundreds or thousands of people were in attendance.

The numbers that Reuven collected – I think the last report was just March or April – was something in the range of 75 to 85 percent are Saudi names, and fewer than 10 percent of the names of the people who have perpetrated these suicide attacks in Iraq are actually Iraqi.

DR. HAFEZ: If I may comment on that. Yeah.

DR. KORB: Sure, please. Anytime that you want to comment on any of the questions, please feel free.

DR. HAFEZ: In a way, expressing somewhat of a disagreement with Mia. I mean, in fairness to Saudi Arabia, I think the Saudis are most interested in stopping this phenomenon of al Qaeda and the last thing that they want to do is willingly send people

into Saudi Arabia. In some of the reports I read, actually the reason there might be a lot of Saudi Arabians going – or appear to be going to – or actually they are going to Iraq, but the reason they are making it into Iraq is there is a certain selection bias among the people who bring them in. The Saudis tend to be richer than, say, the Yemenis, the Jordanians, the Syrians, so they bring in with them money. In one instance, there was a guy that came in with about \$37,000 – equivalent of \$37,000. So you have people coming in and the recruiters prefer to have the Saudi.

Part of it is because of that Wahhabi tradition that is more willing to attack Shiites because they see them as infidels and apostates, but more – I think more importantly, and this is speculative, has to deal with the fact that they tend to be richer, so they bring in resources to the struggle, not just simply their bodies.

DR. KORB: Well, do either of you think that the government could or should be doing more?

DR. BLOOM: I think it makes – from my perspective, it makes perfectly good sense. If you have a constituency within your country that is right now choosing between attacking the monarchy or going on Jihad abroad to attack Americans, you would not put too many obstacles in their way to allow them to leave. I wouldn't go so far as to say that they're exporting it in a direct fashion, but they're not hindering them at the borders. It's very clear they either go to Syria or they go to Turkey, and then they sneak in from there. And a lot of the recruitment is done over the Internet and is done through sort of – it's set in place before they even leave.

There have been questions. And again, this is somewhat speculative to what extent their trips are being funded. They're not getting the big check, the \$10,000 or \$20,000 that suicide bombers have gotten in the past. However, someone is paying for their journey. And if it is more wealthy individuals who are going, then it could be that they themselves can fund their journey, or they might be getting donations from people in the extended royal family.

I mean, it's very important that I also emphasize that when we're talking about the royal family, there can be as many as 30,000 – 35,000 people in the extended royal family, so not everyone is directly connected to the king or the princes, but the extended families very often have in the past continued to contribute to terrorist financing, even in the aftermath of 9/11.

DR. KORB: Bruce, do you want to comment on that at all?

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, I mean, I would just make what perhaps is the obvious point is that wherever they're coming from, it's an enormous problem, because it was one thing, I think, during the first two years perhaps of the conflict in Iraq when most of the people going – most of the foreign fighters go in there went to Iraq with the express purpose of being martyrs, and then they gave their lives and died.

What we've seen over the past year or so is as much – I wouldn't say as much of an exfiltration, but the beginnings certainly of a very robust exfiltration program where individuals who were blooded in battle in Iraq, who received additional training and indeed have the cachet of having fought in Iraq, and not only that, having survived against the world's superpower and very sophisticated coalition military forces, then either return to their own countries or go elsewhere and act as nascent recruiters and begin to recruit other people to come to Iraq and elsewhere to engage in training for this violence. And this unfortunately is a process that has gathered increasing momentum in recent months and is becoming more pervasive, and it's something that we will see the repercussions of in years to come, even after Iraq is resolved.

DR. BLOOM: I think I've also heard that there's increasing numbers of Europeans who are also going to Iraq.

DR. HOFFMAN: Absolutely.

DR. BLOOM: So in terms of this exfiltration, what concerns me more is they go back to Europe and continue to perpetrate acts like 7/7 or like Madrid, but also because of the kinds of restrictions we have on immigration, Europeans very often fall underneath the radar screen. European passports are not going to be checked with the same amount of diligence as a passport coming directly from Saudi Arabia or South Asia or the Middle East or one of these countries that are on the list.

DR. KORB: Yes, right up here in the front and then next to –

Q: Thank you. My name is Rich Heller (sp) with the United States Bill of Rights Foundation, and I'm a citizen here in Washington and very concerned about terrorism that might occur in our city and throughout the country. So my question is to Mr. Hoffman, where you said things are very different in this country than they are from Europe where a lot of terrorism has occurred.

About two years ago the FBI just out of the blue came on television and said, well, we predict that there's probably about 5,000 hardcore terrorists that have arrived in our country. And with the porous border we have in Mexico with tabloid or news media going down to the border and filming things and interviewing the residents that own border property who are saying that the border is so porous and the terrorists are so unconcerned with security that they wear their Arab costumes across the border and then shortly afterwards the –

DR. KORB: Okay. So your point is that we – that a lot of them are coming in and you're concerned. Okay.

MR. HELLER: Well, one more point.

DR. KORB: Okay.

Q: And that's where the FBI said that, well, there's probably closer to 50,000 terrorists in this country. So, Mr. Hoffman, could you explain the incongruity (sic) between what I've heard on television and your statement, please?

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, firstly I haven't seen those FBI reports that talk of whether it's 5,000 or 50,000, but if there are that number of terrorists here, they've been awfully quiet, and they haven't been active. I mean, even for al Qaeda, a two-year gestation period is awfully long.

I think your point, though, is very well taken that just as we were discussing with Iraq, the porous borders there are one of the important sources of terrorism in the United States as we know that geographically we can't hope to isolate ourselves from the rest of the world and that our borders are certainly – not just the borders in international airports or at seaports, but our land borders, of course, are enormously vulnerable to terrorists attempting to simply walk across.

DR. BLOOM: Lawrence, if I may.

DR. KORB: Sure, please.

DR. BLOOM: Most of the terrorists actually haven't come in from Mexico. I have actually heard about these reports. They're more anecdotal. Two things: most of any kind of infiltration we've had into the United States has actually come from the northern border, and as a Canadian I say this – that the Canadian border is problematic. But also, the Mexicans in general tend to be – it's a very devoutly Catholic country and they're very unlikely to cooperate or aid and abet al Qaeda, Islamic fundamentalist terrorists.

In other words, I don't think that the concern – the concern for Muslim – for Mexicans coming into this country tend to be for socioeconomic reasons. I really don't see Mexican population aiding and abetting al Qaeda to help them infiltrate from our southern borders. And I think that in general we have to be careful about the degree to which the Cassandra-like warnings have been used over the last few years for various reasons and pay attention to sort of reports that are not denied the next day or that there are some sort of substantive data to go with these reports because, to be honest, a lot of the intelligence organizations just really don't know.

DR. KORB: Okay. Gentleman next to him and then over there.

Q: Al Millikan, Washington Independent Writers. From a public relations point of view, particularly thinking about the impact on the Muslim world, how do you view the way the U.S. government has dealt with detained terrorists or enemy combatants on the war on terror? Is it wise to deal with suicide bombing prisoners the United States do hold in custody as devout, sincere Muslims and then make a point of communicating this to the rest of the world? This also seems to contradict and confuse statements that Islam is a religion of peace, particularly to an American audience. I'm not aware of kamikaze

Japanese suicide bombers during World War II, for example, being given such similar religious consideration.

DR. KORB: Anybody want to comment on that?

DR. HAFEZ: I could comment.

DR. KORB: Sure.

DR. HAFEZ: You know, I watch Al-Jazeera. I have it at home – part of the satellite Dish Network. I don't know if I'm allowed to say that, but when the Abu Ghraib or the Guantanamo – various controversies arose, the radicals there, and I'm not talking about just the religious radicals, secular radicals or even moderates saw this as American hypocrisy. How could you say you're here to bring democracy to Iraq and then carry out these sorts of actions? So they have been a disaster.

But the bigger disaster has been our inability to spin also the fact that, look, these things came out in the open and these things have been criticized, and that we talk about our torture problems, and we talk about our – the mistakes that have arisen. Do your governments do that? Do the fact that a lot of the Islamists, that they've killed Muslims – have done terrible things. It's one thing to shackle people and mistreat them, another to kill them and to brand Shiites as apostates.

We haven't been able to draw a comparison between our sins and their sins, and I think that needs to be done, but it has been a disaster and unquestionably you've seen some of the groups like Zarqawi and others. They dress up the prisoners before they execute – or their hostages before they execute them in orange to draw this connection that, hey, look, we're taking revenge on what's taking place in Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo, et cetera.

DR. KORB: Okay. Gentleman in the blue shirt here.

Q: Clay Swisher with the Middle East Institute. I have a two-part question for Dr. Hafez and Dr. Bloom. Dr. Hafez, you're – you commented on Arab paranoia of the way the West is intending to accomplish its goals in the Middle East, and I wonder, is it paranoia when after 9/11 when bin Laden complained all along of Western occupation of the Holy Land and we send and invade Iraq and occupy another Arab country. If we are – if that is paranoia or if that's confirmation to them that we intend on keeping our presence there, especially when we strong-arm our Arab allies into cooperating with this war.

Is it also paranoia when we have Republican lawmakers, Congressman Tancredo saying that an acceptable option is to nuke Mecca in the event of another terrorist attack here in U.S.? Is it paranoia when they turn on – and I'm sure you'd agree – when they see Abu Ghraib and the tactics that we use that – no surprise – go back to the Pentagon's

policy that the best way to humiliate and potentially get information from these Arabs is to use dogs on them and to strip them naked. So is this – is paranoia the proper word?

DR. HOFFMAN: Okay. Let me – one question, okay?

Q: Sure.

DR. KORB: I think that's quite enough. We've got to let other people in.

DR. HAFEZ: Look, obviously there are sins that we have committed against some countries in the Middle East and the Muslim world. The question is, is this part of a grand crusade or a Zionist conspiracy against Islam to divide the Muslim world to keep them weak? Actually, there are roots to this grand conspiratorial narrative that animates many people both on the left – secular left and on the religious right in the Muslim world, and that is the Sykes Peko Agreement, the various divisions that took place in the Middle East after World War One, the Balfour Declaration – all that.

Groups, governments have used those historical injustices, which by the way were done by the French and the British, not us, to tie the current events – Abu Ghraib, the invasion of Iraq – in this grand conspiracy to divide up the Muslim world and to dominate it, to make sure that it is always subordinated.

I just think this analysis is wrong, and to lump the West all into one to dehumanize westerners by saying that they are all part of a crusader Zionist alliance is the wrong analysis; that it has not advanced Muslim causes. I mean, al Qaeda is not doing anything to advance the causes of the Muslim world towards democracy, towards development, towards human rights, women's rights, et cetera. As a matter of fact, if they have a choice, they would apply what has taken place in Afghanistan – a Taliban regime that is very repressive, so we have to choose our evils here.

I mean, certainly I'm not going to defend every action that the U.S. has taken, but to say that that's part of a justifiable – or it justifies the paranoia of the people in the Muslim world I think is inappropriate.

DR. BLOOM: I would just – one thing for Mohammed. I think that I somewhat disagree on one or two points. I think that when in the John Miller interview in 1996 when Osama said that the United States is only interested in the Middle East because of oil, that it intends to occupy an oil-rich Arab country that is emasculating Israel, that the war in Iraq does something of showing Osama to be prescient in some way, and it sort of resonates within an Arab mindset that is already predisposed in a negative way. So I would say that we can't divorce completely the foreign policy mistakes. Things like Abu Ghraib have become very much rallying cries in the same way that Mohammed Dura, which was a young Palestinian who was killed in the crossfire.

Now, of course, allegedly by the Israelis, but the *Atlantic Monthly* and a number of other investigations have shown that Mohammed Dura might not have been killed by

the Israelis at all, but accidentally by Palestinians. At this point, it no longer matters. The image of Mohammed Dura is a postage stamp in the Middle East, and that image is a rallying cry for all fundamentalists or the people who are disaffected and angry. And so these images of Abu Ghraib, Bagram, the idea of Koran abuse at Guantanamo, these are all things that hurt. I think what we need to do is understand that there is going to be ramifications to certain policy mistakes.

DR. HAFEZ: If I may, just one quick thing on that.

DR. KORB: Sure.

DR. HAFEZ: Look. Even the positive things that we do are seen within that master narrative that we're trying to undermine the Muslim world. Our attempt to try to salvage things in Somalia to bring aid to people is an invasion. When we criticize a human rights violation of Saad Eddin Ibrahim in Egypt, it's seen as American intervention in Egypt. When we try to protect Bosnia and Muslims in Kosovo and other places, there's no mention of that. The fact that the Sunni regime of Saddam Hussein massacred other Sunni, the Kurds – no one raises a Jihad to go and protect those people. So again, there's tremendous hypocrisy. I mean, there's hypocrisy on our part – I'll say it – but there's also hypocrisy on the part of many of these Islamic radicals in not criticizing internally what is taking place.

DR. KORB: Bruce? Okay. Bruce, do you have a comment on that?

DR. HOFFMAN: No, I do not.

DR. KORB: All right. Right behind the – there we go. Right behind the camera. Right –

Q: Stanley Kober with the Cato Institute. We have had experience with suicide bombers before: the kamikazes who were just mentioned. Emperor Hirohito told them to stop. They obeyed. They stopped. Who is the current equivalent of Hirohito? Who could order them to stop and be obeyed? And if there is no such person, how do you get them to stop?

DR. BLOOM: Amongst some of the cases that I studied and I did field research for the book, we have instances, whether it was the Kurdish Workers Party in Turkey, which was firmly under the control of Abdullah Ocalan or the LTT, which is the Liberation Tigers of Tama Eelam, which is firmly under the control of Prabokharan, their leader. When Prabakharan says stop, they stop. If Ocalan had said stop, stop.

What I was able to deduce, and again the anecdotes are from a small number of cases and thankfully there are not that many countries engaged in suicide bombings, campaigns that have very long histories. By and large if we arrest the leader and put them in jail that has tended to be a little bit more effective than a targeted assassination. I personally felt – and I know that Bruce and I disagree on this – I personally feel that a

targeted assassination has a short-term panacea effect, but in the long term you create other kinds of offshoot organizations that are named after the fallen martyr, and that if you put them in jail and you make them renounce terrorism, that is particularly a powerful statement. Whether it was the Real IRA or whether it was the PKK or the shining path that this tends to be something that I would aim for.

I don't think we are ever going to get to the point where we can get someone like Zarqawi or Osama to renounce the use of suicide bombing that would have that effect, but at the same time, I would say since the war in Afghanistan there are so many individual groups that are only tangentially or loosely connected to al Qaeda. Many of these groups have very local concerns. Their concerns are with the Philippine government or their concerns are with the Saudi government, and they are loosely connected to al Qaeda, so in general in order to convince them to stop engaging in violence, you would need to address some of their underlying grievances at the local level.

DR. KORB: Yeah, Bruce, if you'd like to go ahead. I think –

DR. HOFFMAN: Oh, yeah. I mean, I don't think we necessarily disagree over targeted assassination. I think my disagreement would be more over decapitation strategy – that you take the head off of an organization that it necessarily dies, but we would agree there because often it produces an even more bloody-minded successor.

I think where I would – or successors. What I would disagree with you slightly is, I don't think killing and capturing bin Laden necessarily would result in an end to suicide terrorism. I think as both of you actually very eloquently described, I mean, this has become as much a social phenomena and one that uses theological justification as something that's a political weapon.

We would have to, I think, firstly reverse the cult of martyrdom. And what one finds that – I mean, I'm often actually a bit befuddled by the debate whether the July 7th suicide bombers – I'm revealing my hand – whether the July 7th bombers were, in fact, suicide bombers or not. I mean, certainly the fourth member waited 52 minutes before deliberately detonating the bomb, presumably having known that his three colleagues had perished.

At least in my study of many people that have become suicide terrorists, and I wouldn't say that this is systematic, that it's been a huge pool so it hasn't been broad, but it has been deep, whether it's been having access to their family members or even to their own computers. What one finds is that the desire to be a martyr is enormously important and then there's this whole social support structure that's been in place to facilitate that. In part as we discussed perpetuated and eagerly peddled by clerics with obviously heinous and abstruse interpretations of religious law to justify this, but there's also this inverted sense of normality that's created in a community that sees this firstly the surrendering of one's life as a good and sees this as a benefit and it's – we often go to the 72 virgins that supposedly male suicide bomber – suicide terrorists experience, but in

point in fact, what one finds in recent years in a lot of cases is the supposed ability to bring 70 relatives to heaven. That becomes an important incentive for an individual that feels that they can provide for their family in this manner. Even in some instances, it's an important incentive for family members who no matter how licentious or no matter how bad they had been before can wipe the slate clean. So you have to, I think, not just move the leader, but work on firstly the theological justifications and the perversions that are used to sustain this campaign and against, I think, the societal roots that it's put down. And those – all those things will take a long time to achieve, but it makes it no less important.

DR. KORB: Let me ask Bruce on thing and I'll get to you. Well, do you agree that nobody's really in charge of what we now call al Qaeda; that it has metastasized so much that it's pretty much on its own? They might call themselves al Qaeda, but they're going to do their own thing.

DR. HOFFMAN: No, not completely but you're partially right. I don't think al Qaeda's ever been an either/or organization or movement that where it was only something that was monolithic that had a very clear center of gravity and command and control structure where that was also altogether completely amorphous or diffuse. It's both. I mean, there still is and we have evidence of this remnant of an al Qaeda command structure that still is planning (spectacles ?) – obviously tremendously weakened from its status in 9/11. But at the same time, we also know that one of al Qaeda's strengths is becoming a facilitating ideology inspiring, motivating, and animating not just other terrorist groups as I described earlier with Lashkar-e-Taiba, but even individuals who carry out operations without any prior training or contact with al Qaeda, not even following direct orders, but nonetheless are I think quite consciously by this movement inspired to commit those acts, so we really have both kinds of problems.

DR. KORB: Okay. Mohammed?

DR. HAFEZ: It's an excellent question. And I think part of the problem is that these radicals run in very tight circles whereby they're really motivated by self-made preachers, self-made radical theologians. So for instance, if you look at Hamas, other than Sheik Ahmed Yassin, who was assassinated, all the other leaderships have been engineers who have immersed themselves in Islamic history and theology to be able to justify those sort of actions.

The people that – the Jihadi Salafis, which are increasingly carrying out these kind of things – I was recently reading a Zarqawi letter, a response to one of the radical preachers criticizing suicide attacks, and he cites all these religious figures that have supported his actions. I've never heard of any of these people and, you know, I read pretty well on this kind of topic. So the fact that you want to get a person like Yusuf al-Qaradawi or the Imam of Al-Azhar or Sentawi (ph), the Mufti of Egypt, to come out and say that you should stop, and many of them have already done that, they're not listened to.

Now, what we know from the history of terrorism, or at least one of the insights or observations is that terrorists often undermine themselves by the actions that they take. So for instance, two cases that I've studied very well, Algeria and Egypt, is that the excessive violence of the Islamists in both countries, particularly the attacks on civilians that are seen as wanton and senseless actually undermine support for them. And if we take the assumption that Mia and others have put forward that these are rational actors that even though they carry out these things, they're still paying attention to what the public is saying, I suspect that that's where you begin to get the tipping point.

But also the history of terrorism is a history of schisms, that is, it's not like one leader says stop and everyone says, "Oh, okay," but rather one leader says, "Stop," you get splits. The splinters end up carrying out some of these attacks, so it's not a clear stop-and-go process.

DR. KORB: Okay. Question in the back. This gentleman there with the beard. Right there.

Q: Warren Marik from Information for Democracy. And I just got back from Iraq last spring, and I stayed with some Shi'a politicians whom I had known from my previous job as a case officer with the CIA and I was their houseguest for about three months. And their position is that the Americans really should go in a nice, orderly kind of way. And they say that, yes, we really kind of need the support, but overall it's bad. It legitimizes all these terrorist operations. As long as there are Americans in the country, these terrorists can use suicide bombings as an excuse for Americans. If Muslims die, then Muslims were killed in the process of going after Americans.

DR. KORB: Even if they target just Muslims like Mia was talking about at a postal –

Q: Well, that's all very confusing. They say the message doesn't get across. And the second thing they say is a little more strategic. They say that the Americans have made Iraq an international thing, whereas in reality it's a national and even local problem. And once the Americans leave, the Arabs will be able to handle this whole thing in their own sort of way, and it will be much less – it'll be less newsworthy.

So I wonder if you'd like to – also, I'd like to say, I'm a Vietnam veteran, and this whole thing starts to smack of the testosterone business that we had in Vietnam, so I'd just like your comments on that.

DR. HOFFMAN: Okay. Particularly Mohammed, because you said that would send a wrong signal in terms of the whole question of suicide bombing.

DR. HAFEZ: The sense I get is that people in Iraq in general, not just the Shiites want the Americans to sort of be there and not be there. That is, be there, but be out of the way or be, you know, hidden so that they're not seen. I am – to be honest, I don't know the information that you have received, but the fact is you have a semblance of a

government there. It could say outwardly that we want the Americans to go, but they haven't said that precisely because the foreign insurgents, the Sunni insurgents, the former Ba'athists and others have really mounted a strong challenge, and I can't imagine without an Iraq police force there or a security service established and set up to be able to fight back is going to be able to secure the country and roll back the insurgents.

So, I mean, I don't know what information you've received, but from what I'm seeing is that it would be a critical mistake to withdraw without having an established security force that could fight the insurgents, that could also allow the political process to go forward. The fact is the insurgents have – particularly the foreign fighters and the Salafis have been targeting more Shiites, have been targeting more of the political establishments among the Shiites and the Sunnis that are willing to cooperate with them than they have been targeting Americans, so it's kind of puzzling to me why would – how would the withdrawal of Americans allow these people to stop?

As a matter of fact, what Zarqawi has said in a letter that he sent to, I believe, to Osama bin Laden, but I'm not sure who it was addressed to, the main goal is not necessarily to take the Americans out because the Americans will eventually leave. The main goal is not to allow Shiite ascendancy in the country. The main goal is to create a fertile soil. Whether this is what's called – (foreign phrase) – that is, you're not just fighting to harm someone, but you're fighting. (Foreign phrase) – means to kind of solidify a base, so you create Iraq into a base for foreign Jihadists, because their struggle is not just against Iraq.

Even if the Americans leave, these people live – if they feel that they've gotten a victory out of driving the Americans out, you'll get the same effect that you had in Afghanistan. It's the bleed-out effect, and I think Bruce has already mentioned that, so –

DR. KORB: Bruce, did you want to comment?

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, I – even if the U.S. moved out, what guarantee would there be that no other local or regional power would want to step in? I don't – obviously, I don't know who you were talking to, but from a Shi'a perspective they might welcome Iran stepping and playing an increasingly larger role in Iraq, which obviously would have repercussions around the surrounding area, particularly in the Gulf.

Also, not to repeat what Mohammed said, but in addition, I would worry that we would be creating a situation very much akin to Lebanon in the 1980s where the international community did leave and then plunged that country into more than a decade of internecine violence of the worst kind, but also violence that radiated outwards on an international scale and actually did become a launching pad for terrorism elsewhere. So I'm skeptical that arguments that the U.S. should just go and that somehow this will resolve itself and that it'll be worked out just makes – leaves me very skeptical and even more concerned.

DR. BLOOM: I was going to say, though, it depends on how you're weighting your national policy preferences. I mean, absolutely it's true that there would be a concern about either Afghanistan and Lebanon and the question then becomes whether it's worth the lives of all of the very brave American soldiers in Iraq to prevent internecine conflict in areas which have long had internecine conflicts, and whether stepping out – eventually Lebanon did fix itself; you know, last man standing.

The reports that I've had from Iraq have been that as many as 75 percent of Iraqis – and the American military there has polled Baghdad residents, for instance, every month for the last year and a half – that even among the people we consider to be friendly to the United States, they want the Americans to go, but they only want the Americans to go once law and order is restored, once it's safe for the women to walk through the streets, once there is reliable electricity, clean water. And, in fact, if you look at a map of Baghdad, in the green zone versus other areas, in the areas where there is clean water and there is reliable electricity, we're not seeing pockets of insurgency. We see the pockets of insurgency when there's raw sewage running in the streets, so there are things that can be done in the interim, but I would say that certainly empowering the Iraqis so that when the Americans do leave it's not going to be all out civil war between the sectarian groups.

I do, however, worry that the long-term effects of the war – and I guess I differ with my friends on the panel here. The long-term effects of the war go beyond the bleed-out effect in Iraq and create incentives to bring the war home. And the example I would give you is that initially in Algeria, the Algerian terrorists went after the French in Algeria, but eventually brought it to Paris.

The Chechens originally started attacking Russians in the Chechens' areas; eventually brought it to Moscow. Same thing is true: that eventually the conflict goes to the heartland of the country perceived as the occupier. I would like as best as possible to prevent that from ever happening here and if it means that the Iraqis have to figure out their political scene themselves in terms of possibly a last man standing, I'm more willing to sacrifice that than I would be to sacrifice any American lives here or any further American lives there.

DR. KORB: Let me – I don't want to get involved in the whole withdrawal from Iraq, but in terms of what we're focusing on today, assuming that as our questioner put it, the Arabs in Iraq take care of this and get it under control, and leaving aside the other U.S. strategic interests, what about these people who are coming into Iraq as suicide bombers? Would they then say, let's go someplace else or would they feel mission accomplished, or what would they do? I mean, are these people who are attracted to the cause?

DR. HAFEZ: And if I may, in many instances we know from the case of Afghanistan, for instance, when a lot of people came back, they were arrested. In Egypt there were trials known as trials of people coming back from – or the Arab Afghans or the Albanian Afghans, so there may not feel welcome there.

Also from the history of terrorism, we know that once people have gone into that, they develop sort of underground careers, so just as we develop a professional career, they develop an underground career, and they might want to exploit those opportunities, too, for their own prestige, for their own – I mean, it just – or for ideological or religious beliefs. Now, whether that means that all 100 percent of them that return are going to follow that path, that's not necessary. All you need is a few dedicated people with tremendous skills to be able to wreak a lot of havoc.

DR. KORB: Anybody else want to comment here?

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, I think they would – if it was a permissive environment, obviously they would stay and take advantage of it to further harness their training, to develop – as al Qaeda had – a state within a state, and to export violence. That's less likely. I think what will happen is that when the time comes that Iraq is stabilized and indeed the Iraqis put their own house in order in terms of security and can stand on their own feet, the foreign fighters are going to leave. I mean, for them the road doesn't end in Baghdad. Iraq is just a means to an end in their view. I think for someone like Abu Musab Zarqawi, Iraq has been enormously useful in burnishing his credentials and impelling his momentum, which – and I think his end game is not the conquest of Baghdad, but doubtless of Amman and Tel Aviv and perhaps Riyadh and further afield.

So as the shoe pinches too hard, they're going to leave and they will attempt to find new fertile fields to engage in violence. And unfortunately, because of the environment in Iraq, they will probably be very well trained in doing so.

DR. KORB: Okay. Gentlemen, there on the end, and in the back next. Okay. No, here and then we'll go in the back. Okay. Right here and then we'll go in the back there. Go ahead. Yes? Yes, sir? Take that microphone, please, if you would.

Q: Caitlin Harrington, *Congressional Quarterly*. Sorry if you've addressed this before I got here. I saw a wire report –

DR. KORB: Well, if we have, I'll let you know.

Q: I'm sure you will. I saw a wire report before I came that a Jordanian suicide bomber was intercepted in 2003 trying to get here into the United States. I'm wondering if any of you knew of any other cases of interceptions of suicide bombers. And also, does it make sense from a tactical point of view – al Qaeda point of view to carry out small-scale – really small-scale suicide bombings, such as walking into a restaurant with a grenade in mid-Manhattan, for example?

DR. BLOOM: One of the hallmarks of al Qaeda operations is either simultaneous attacks, sort of chronologically at the same time in order to demonstrate that it has a high level of organization, command and control information. So this is in order to – as all terrorist incidents are supposed to do, not just kill the immediate victims, but have psychological reverberations across the spectrum so that people feel that they can be

targeted at any time anywhere, and the psychological aspect is particularly important. And so the idea of a small one-off attack would have only limited efficacy and benefit to an organization.

Generally, one of the things that we've bandied about is whether or not al Qaeda has attacked the United States again because it hasn't been able to perpetrate as large scale an attack as something as devastating as a 9/11, that they might be trying and waiting until they can either get nuclear or biological or bacteriological, something that would have as shocking a value, maybe not generating as many casualties – 3,000 or more casualties, but certainly something that would shake our foundations.

But we have regular criminal activities all the time of people going in with an AK47 and postal workers going into the post office or someone going into a McDonald's. And I don't think unless you could time multiple attacks, so sort of have four attacks against Wal-Marts all over the United States, that would pretty much disrupt anybody from ever wanting to go to Wal-Mart and go shopping. Then there you have something.

So think both because you would need to have sufficient infrastructure that Bruce talks about, these quartermasters and these minders, sufficient amount of information, being able to time these attacks. Generally what we have found is when you need to have this kind of infrastructure to support the individual bomber, we've been able to either penetrate it or disrupt it financially.

There have been a handful of incidents that we don't talk about that we've been able to prevent, and largely those have come about because of the leads given from the communities themselves calling up and saying, "Come get this person." They get them. They interview them in various ways. They find out with whom they're connected. There was one incident, for instance, that was supposed to go off in Harold Square in time for the Republican National Convention that an agent was able to penetrate the organization and prevent this from happening. So we've been fairly good in terms of being able to prevent a lot of things from happening, but also at the same time I worry about the future and I think that a lot of the recommendations that Bruce makes and also in his book are incredibly helpful.

DR. KORB: Okay. Any comment on that? Yes, sir? Oh, did you want to say something?

DR. HOFFMAN: Oh, I would just – I just very, very briefly because I think it's a very good question. I mean, firstly, it's just as Mia described, I don't think al Qaeda is adverse to opportunistic attacks against soft, accessible targets, but I think that they're not – just not axiomatic that they only think of spectaculars, but if they are going to attack these more low-level targets, it has to be on a sustained basis. And exactly as Mia was describing, it's not just even the infrastructure and the quartermasters, but it's the cannon fodder. You have to have a sufficient pool of suicide terrorists to be able to sustain this over a period of time, and frankly there are few places that have been able to do this. Unfortunately, Palestine and Sri Lanka have been the two key ones.

The question, though, you raise, which is actually a very interesting one, is do we know of suicide terrorists other than this Jordanian fellow that you mentioned who have been deliberately infiltrated by al Qaeda into this country. And at least off the top of my head with the exception of Richard Reid, who was the shoe bomber in December 2001, Ali Mauri (ph), Iam Menfaris (ph), Jose Padilla, the Lackawanna Six, even Ramzi Ahmed Yousef going back to the first World Trade Center bombing, none of the people we can clearly identify – at least that we know of openly – with al Qaeda have interestingly been suicide bombers.

DR. KORB: Okay. Yes, sir?

Q: My name is Joe (inaudible) Corporation, which does training for Army, Air Force, DOD generally. I have a question. From what I read, Iraq and Iran have concluded a military training agreement. Also, from what I read the Iraqi constitution is now based on Islamic law and any civil provisions will be limited by Islamic law, so we have a situation where U.S. troops are fighting to establish an Islamic Republic, which is quite amusing, actually.

And as far as U.S. not being attacked as much as civilians, well, the U.S. troops there are not soft targets generally. Okay. So I mean, let's put this in a realistic perspective. And finally, a lot of the talk seems to be similar to the domino theory refurbished, and this is scary to me.

DR. KORB: Okay. Anyone want to comment on that? And I guess what the question was, if I see it, is from what some of the answers have been, we're there because we're there. We have to stay because leaving would make it even worse. And I guess the question was that it might make it better – that some of the things that you're talking about may not come true.

DR. HOFFMAN: But aren't we getting off the subject? I mean, it's not Iraq. It's suicide terrorism, and I think we should focus on suicide terrorism.

DR. HOFFMAN: Yeah. Okay. Yes, you've got on suicide terrorism?

Q: I'm David Belt from National Defense University and great talk today. Thank you all. One of your colleagues came to – also an author and well-known speaker on terrorism, came to one of my classes and said kind of exasperated, "How do we defeat bad ideas? How do you defeat bad ideas?" And a member of the Bush administration – a senior member – came to National Defense University and said we're going to do it by amplifying the moderate voice in countering the extremist voice. And then I don't know if Dave is here or not. Dave Kaplan, *U.S. News and World Report*, had a piece on "Hearts, Minds and Dollars." Did you all see that?

Just wondered if you could comment on the idea of how do you defeat bad ideas and looking at just open-source things that maybe Dave Kaplan, *U.S. News and World*

Report, was able to find out, are we going about it the right way? Is there something we should be doing that we're not? Is there something that we're doing that was outlined in that article that is going to have to kind of blowback that we don't want?

DR. BLOOM: We have a dear –

DR. KORB: Let me – we're going to make that the last question, so you get to answer it and say anything else that you want to about the whole subject of suicide bombings. So, Mia, we'll start with you and go down the line again.

DR. BLOOM: If you're asking me in terms of public diplomacy if we're winning the war on terror as far as being able to precisely do this, to amplify the moderates and quiet the extremists, I would say that in fact we're not doing very well at all. We're doing well at home, but we're doing very poorly internationally, in part precisely because of the senior Bush administration policies that have been enacted and a general feeling in the rest of the world that the current administration really doesn't care about world opinion and doesn't really – it doesn't really matter. It doesn't stack up next to other things.

Examples would be, for instance, there are – Iraq had the largest number of engineers anywhere in the Arab world. And by the way, under Saddam, the largest number of female engineers anywhere in the world, and I'm certainly not going to compliment the Saddam Hussein regime, but the fact that women's rights seem to be going backwards in Iraq is something that certainly should concern us because the recent World Bank report that came out talking about what's going on in the Muslim world specifically pointed to the problem of women and that 50 percent of the population as not being able to make the kind of contribution to bring the Middle East and the rest of the Islamic World to sort of second tier or first world levels. But that as – be it as may, when we have American companies or companies that are only permitted to go in and rebuild as part of the reconstruction of Iraq connected to the administration, whether or not there's any kind of collusion, it looks bad. When we have instances of Bagram and Abu Ghraib and Koran abuse, it looks bad. So we're really not working our strengths.

What would be something that we could do, and we have a dear friend who talks about this, sort of exploiting the fact that many of these Sharia rulings or these fatwas are not Islamic. This is not what Islam is meant to be. And the gentleman in front said Islam is supposed to be a religion of peace, and in fact many Muslims would argue that this is precisely the case. These fatwas, these radical sheiks are not representing the mainstream – the majority of Muslims. And I think that we're doing a very poor job of talking about that. We're doing a poor job, for instance, of exploiting the fact that so many children are being killed.

There was one attack in Iraq where over 40 children were killed, as well as the Beslan attack September of 2004. This is completely un-Islamic. Children are sacrosanct in Islam, and I think that we could do more along the lines of what Asaf

Moghaddam (ph) talks about and what Mohammed talks about of showing the internal hypocrisies.

DR. KORB: Okay. Mohammed?

DR. HAFEZ: I mean, your question is really asking, how do we alter the culture of martyrdom, which Bruce mentioned and various others, and I think we can't. This is not our job. We can't do it. We don't have credibility to do it, just like asking me to win the Tour de France. Maybe with enough steroids maybe, but – and what we can do is set the conditions where the cult of martyrdom or perhaps that there is an internal Islamic debate about the cult of martyrdom. And what that means is first we have to defeat the strategy; that is, do not succumb to the strategic demands of people who attack you using suicide terrorism or terrorism in general.

Open a dialogue: say we are willing to negotiate over certain things, but as long as they continue the violence, as long as they continue the suicide attacks, we are not going to be able to deal with you. So defeat the strategy so it's futile. In the same way, I would ask people to look back: how did Arab nationalism get defeated in the 1950s and the 1960s? It's not because we made cogent arguments against it, but because Arab nationalism failed, and people turned to an alternative ideology.

What we could also do is promote democracy and promote it consistently and this time really be serious about promoting it, and that means allowing Islamic governments to come to power. That means, if the people want Islam and moderate Islamic parties to come to power then let them be, and we need to promote that.

And I think that creates the conditions for internal Islamic debates about this strategy, but for us to say, go revise the curriculums or go to revise in the madrassas – and I just think it reinforces that master narrative of a conspiracy against Islam, trying to stifle an Islamic awakening. We can't do it. We don't have the credibility.

DR. KORB: Okay. Bruce, you –

DR. HOFFMAN: Well –

DR. KORB: Any final thoughts?

DR. HOFFMAN: I think one of the problems of being a terrorism specialist is that one is an eternal pessimist because indeed things always seem to get worse rather than better, so at least I can finally seize on an opportunity to be somewhat optimistic, which is actually quite rare for me.

And I would have thought that the transition that we're seeing now in how the U.S. is conceptualizing this struggle from a war on terrorism to a struggle against violent extremism is the manifestation that by relying exclusively on a strategy of attrition and an emphasis on just the kill/capture has thus far succeeded at least in weakening our

adversary and hopefully preventing a recrudescence or the reappearance of another 9/11 type of spectacular, which I think to date has been the case.

But I think it also reflects an understanding that we have to move beyond that and not just to address the immediate threat before us – the existing terrorists – but ensure that – I mean, just as me and Mohammed have described that our policies, that the way those policies are conveyed, that our behavior with detainees, and so on is done in such a way that we're not creating an endless cycle of replenishment and recruitment that our adversaries are very effective in exploiting and taking advantage of. I think that's the big problem today. So the recognition that this is the challenge and we have to change is to me enormously important. We'll have to see how that plays out.

I would just conclude by saying with this whole question of suicide terrorism and even countering terrorism in general – and this is a personal view; it's not something based on empirical research – but the more militants and radicals that I talk to, the more I see is that we're almost behind the curve in communications. The problem isn't, as some may see, Al-Jazeera and 24/7 satellite news channels. It's way beyond that. It's really what people – where people now get their news, which is from the internet. And the problem is what we thought a decade ago would be this enormous engine of enlightenment and education has turned out as perhaps the most effective communicator in history of the most base and heinous conspiracy theories that unfortunately now are taking root and more and more people believe.

And when you think that today al Qaeda has a presence on at least 400 web sites compared to 9/11 when they probably had a presence on two or three at the most, we see the enormity of this problem. And part of it isn't just better public diplomacy and better communications, but it's figuring out how we're going to use this massive information source and communication source, and it was a vacuum that's been filled by the radicals and we've got to wrest that back. That, I think, is the biggest challenge and I'm not sure we quite recognize the enormity of it yet.

DR. KORB: Okay. On that note, let me formally bring this to a close. I want to thank the panelists very, very much for providing, I think, terrific insights and analysis of this critical subject. I want to thank a number of people who made this possible first. Caroline Wadhams, who was the guiding light behind getting this panel together; Antoine Morris, Carter Campbell, and Aaron Roesch, who provided the logistic support. And I want to thank all of you for coming out on this late August day to deal with this critical subject. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

(END)