

**CENTER FOR
STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (CSIS)**

**2010 GLOBAL SECURITY FORUM:
HOW TO STOP A FRAGMENTED AL-QAIDA?**

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JUAN ZARATE: Good afternoon, everybody. Please feel free to keep eating. A great advantage of being here at the Four Seasons is it's probably one of the best box lunches ever, so keep eating.

My name is Juan Zarate. I'm a senior advisor here at CSIS. I'm also a senior national security analyst for CBS News. It's a real honor and pleasure for me to be hosting this panel, "How to Stop a Fragmented Al-Qaida."

We have an incredibly deep and experienced panel to take us through what I think is not only a timely but a complicated discussion, one that is made ever more important by the events that we've seen over the past 15 months – events that I think demonstrate, to a certain extent, a fragmentation of the threat from al-Qaida and the global Sunni extremist movement.

In some ways we are facing an environment in which we are still dealing with an al-Qaida core that is a purported driver of this global movement, but also dealing with al-Qaida affiliates and like-minded groups around the world, many of whom, as we saw from Yemen as well as perhaps now the Pakistan Taliban, have a Westward focus, trying to hit, as they call it, the far enemy in the United States, but also seen the ideology and the narrative gaining strength in some quarters, drawing adherents, including among American citizens.

And so what does this all mean, and what does this all mean in the context of an al-Qaida core that in some ways is in decline while the threat seems to be more and more pervasive? What does this mean in the context of physical safe havens that still serve as training grounds and a witch's brew of terrorist groups like the Fatah, but at the same time you have the virtual space, the Internet serving as a virtual caliphate to draw adherents and recruits.

And so I'm extremely pleased to be moderating this panel with three of the foremost experts on the issue of al-Qaida and violent extremism. What I would like to do is allow the panelists to give introductory remarks. Then what we would like to do is I will probably take the moderator's prerogative and ask a few core questions. And then we'll open it up to the crowd. We have online viewers as well and folks who will be submitting questions via the Internet, so we'll try to take as many of those as we can. And, again, I will serve as a bit of filter.

Just to preview a bit, I think there are some fundamental questions that we need to talk about and ask. First, what is al-Qaida today? How should we think about it as an organization and the broader terrorist threat that we face and also perceive? Is al-Qaida even the right prism through which to view the threat or is this now an outdated, old framework or old orthodoxy?

Is a fragmented Sunni extremist terrorist movement coming from all sorts of quarters or corners of the world more or less dangerous than an al-Qaida-centric or driven threat? And how does the changing face and threat impact U.S. government policies in how we talk about the

issues – the issues of lexicon? And, finally, the major question of this panel, how do we stop this? How do we deal with it?

And so, again, we are privileged to have three of the foremost authorities on these issues with us today. You have their bios in front of you so I will not repeat the long list of accolades for each, but I do want to introduce them not only for our online audience but for those of you who have never had a chance to see them in person.

First we have Arnaud de Borchgrave, who is a legendary journalist, prolific writer and respected commentator on issues related to transnational threats, al-Qaida and terrorism. He is now the director of the Transnational Threats Project at CSIS, a longtime editor-at-large for the Washington Times and UPI, where he also served as president and CEO.

He had a long and distinguished career starting at the very early age for Newsweek – 30 years working for Newsweek abroad, and one of the foremost experts on foreign policy and issues of transnational threat.

Arnaud continues to write prolifically and issue seminal reports, and I would just commend to you one, which is relevant to all of the discussions happening publicly and here today – one entitled “FATA – a Most Dangerous Place: Meeting the Challenge of Militancy and Terror in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan,” published in January of 2009.

Next to Arnaud is Dr. Walid Phares. Walid is one of the foremost experts and commentators on violent extremism and al-Qaida’s ideology. He has been a media analyst for many years, serving in that capacity for NBC and now for Fox News. He is often one of the foremost authorities on Arab media channels as well.

He is now a senior fellow and the director of the Future Terrorism Project at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, and he is a visiting scholar at the European Foundation for Democracy. If you haven’t seen Walid’s publications, I commend them to you. He is the author of several books focusing on the war of ideas – in fact three of them which I think are the foremost texts on this issue.

Finally, next to him, we are honored to have Bob Grenier, one of the premier intelligence experts on al-Qaida and violent extremism, distinguished 27-year career at CIA where he served as the director of the Counterterrorism Center, station chief in Islamabad before and after 9/11, was the CIA-Iraq mission manager during the height of the Iraq invasion and war, and has had significant field experience.

Bob is now the chairman of ERG Partners. He had also served three years as managing director for Kroll. And he is one of, as I said, the foremost experts as to what is happening in the field and in particular in South Asia and the Middle East.

And so with that, let me turn it over to the experts. Again, we will hear from them and then I will open it up for questions. Arnaud?

ARNAUD BORCHGRAVE: Thank you. A gaffe in Washington is when somebody inadvertently blurts out the truth, so this is gaffe time. As Nicholas Kristof wrote in this morning's New York Times, for those of you who didn't have a chance to read it, he says, "If we want Times Square to be safer from terrorists, we need to start by helping make Pakistan safer as well."

I was in Pakistan when 9/11 happened and I've been in and out many times since then. I am afraid that the British intelligence service, MI5, is right when it says most terrorist trails lead back to Pakistan. I think one has to try to understand why. It is an amazing country. My mother was born there. I think I know it fairly well but obviously not as well as Bob Grenier, who was the CIA East Asian chief there.

But it's quite extraordinary to see the amount of educated people who will tell you that 9/11 was a CIA-Mossad plot. This is believed by even very sophisticated people and books of course have been written in Europe that have sold over a million copies saying precisely the same thing, trying to prove that this was a conspiracy.

The anti-Americanism in Pakistan is kind of rather easy to understand, given the fact that we were very close allies when we were fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan, and then at the end of that particular episode, we turned our guns against Pakistan, sanctions of all kind. They were not even allowed to take delivery of the F-16s they'd already paid for. That's because they were working on a secret program to build a nuclear weapon and President Zia at the time kept denying it. He even gave me his word of honor that they were working on no such thing.

And of course that led to a rather bitter period in Pakistani-American relations. If you were a lieutenant or a captain in those days in the Pakistani army, today you would be a one-, two- or three-star general. So that anti-Americanism is very deep.

Also, terrorist organizations in Pakistan were never banned until after 9/11, and even then your shingle on one side of the street was taken down and you went up on the other side of the street with a different name. Dozens of these organizations now put together something called Taliban Afghanistan and Taliban Pakistan. Today you have roughly 10,000 young boys coming out of the madrasah schools, the Quranic schools, that are ready to become jihadis and even suicide volunteers.

So this is, I think, the crux of the problem. We can go into greater detail if you wish but what I see – in my little crystal ball, what I see is that al-Qaida has become a global movement pretty much the way communism was a global movement, and I think it will go on for many years to come, given the fact today we have most of the world living on 2 (dollars) to \$3 a day and water shortages on the horizon, even water wars on the horizons of some people who work in think tanks.

We have, in other words, an awful lot of travel coming down over the horizon and this is bound to lead to more terrorism. And terrorism, incidentally, did not stop with 9/11, but since memories are so very short, let me remind you that we did have the World Trade Center bombing in 1993. I even wrote a novel that destroyed the World Trade Center in 1983, and in

those days there was no security and it was quite easy to walk into the World Trade Center with a suitcase full of explosives, under the supervision, incidentally, of the New York police force.

But all of this is not new. Unfortunately, memories are very short in Washington, and I would be glad to try to amplify this in questions.

MR. ZARATE: Thank you, Arnaud. Walid?

WALID PHARES: Thank you. I would like to thank very much Dr. Zarate with CSIS for this opportunity. I'm really sitting with a number of prominent people who have the information, had the information for many, many years. So I will just visit the questions addressed by Juan from a very high altitude, and during the Q&A session I would be more than happy to be more specific. I still have seven minutes to deal with 10 questions. I'll do it as fast as I can.

The first point is what is al-Qaida? How do we think about al-Qaida? How do we think about defining al-Qaida? I would suggest three components we have to look at, so it is multidimensional. One is the ideology. We've seen across the board that not one single cell, not one single imata (ph), not one single unit of al-Qaida and their allies had a different ideology. They had fragments of the ideology but there is a source, a central hub for it.

Two, the movement. As Arnaud mentioned, we're dealing with probably the tip of the iceberg. The iceberg is the movement. The tip is al-Qaida, and then maybe other fragmented icebergs, you know, flowing away from that major one.

Third, and that's the trickiest part, is the evolution of al-Qaida. We cannot look at al-Qaida as one thing forever since ever. There has been the al-Qaida during the Cold War. There is whole series of research of what they were trying to do. What was Afghanistan for them? The collapse of the Soviet Union caused a change of direction in al-Qaida. That put it in al-Qaida of the '90s. Al-Qaida of the '90s had real estate and were working against us while we were not working against them.

And then you have the third al-Qaida, which is after 9/11. That is, they lost their real estate. That's Afghanistan, the Taliban. They gained in other places in the FATA area, but also are dispersing and trying to mutate in very many places around the world that Juan mentioned in his introduction.

Should we think of al-Qaida as a ripe prism? Well, basically we are fighting al-Qaida – there is a consensus in Washington and even in Brussels – talking about the Europeans – that we are fighting al-Qaida, but there is no consensus on what we are confronting beyond al-Qaida, and that's where the problem is.

This global threat that I coin as a global jihadist threat has al-Qaida – has the movement which is creating radicalization. And there is a third stream which is not part of our discussion, the Khomeinist jihadist threat, which is different and has its own priorities.

Three, how do we call that threat? And obviously we have the whole debate about the lexicon. That is a problem because, in terms of comparison of World War II and other classical war, by '45 the enemy has been identified already in '40, '41 and the war was won. We are in the ninth year of the war. Academics and scholars and media are still debating what is that threat?

Now, historians in the future are going to have fun with the way we are dealing with this issue. At the ninth year of a war, which could fit two World War IIs in terms of land, we are still unsure. Even if you compare it with the Cold War, by 1955, '56 we, I think, had enough scholarship as to define what is the threat. What was not defined is the strategy to win that Cold War at the time.

The lexicon, I'll keep my remarks to the Q&A session, but I would just say one word here. It's not as uni-dimensional as one would think. There is no, what we call in French, I guess, *abracadabra*. You say one word and then it will have the effect. That is over simplified. You have what we should educate our public with.

Our public, in a democracy, in a liberal democracy, needs to be informed, needs to be educated about the threat, and therefore would or would not end its support to policies of one or the other administration. And then you have how you're going to deal with the other publics around the world, including in the Arab and Muslim world.

Is a fragmented Sunni extremist terrorist movement – is it more dangerous, less dangerous than al-Qaida? Well, in a very summarized way I would say that al-Qaida and the jihadist network, they do two things. They manage the battlefields. They open a battlefield – let's say Somalia – soon to be, you know, in the Sahel area of Africa and other places – either they react to the battlefield that we open in Iraq or in Afghanistan or they open ones on their own. It's almost as simple as that.

But at the same time, what I call the international war room of al-Qaida has a vision that we need to detect better; that is to weaken U.S. national security. So the waves that we have been seeing, most of which have been homegrown, are in fact under a guideline of al-Qaida. We need to be very attentive to that narrative.

The last three points quickly – physical safe haven. How can we counter? Well, the most important thing that we need to focus on, I'd say, would be what political forces in civil society, in the areas where Taliban, al-Qaida or Shabaab al-Jihad (sp) in Somalia, or in any other spots, are we organizing with. The military force can do one thing. It can secure a space for a time.

What we do during that time when we've secured a space is everything because at the end of the day we're going to withdraw, or the Pakistani army cannot be deployed forever with that intensity or a multinational force in Somalia cannot be deployed forever. So military force offers us time and space. What is it that we're going to do with civil society will be the issue.

And I would say here that the threat face is changing, but we have to be very attentive. U.S. policies with regard to that threat have that one problem. The initiative is with al-Qaida or with the hub that al-Qaida leads, meaning they have the one edge initiative because they are the terrorists. They are the ones who do not worry about governments, institutions and borders, or what have you, and then that is something that we will always carry out in a confrontation with the terrorists. Thank you.

MR. ZARATE: Walid, thank you very much. Bob?

ROBERT GRENIER: I'm going to try very hard to adhere to the admonition that Juan gave us in the beginning that we should restrict our remarks to eight minutes, and in fact that works very much to my benefit. If we were given a longer period of time to speak I might have to say something that was both complete and coherent, and completeness and coherence here are really not my strong suits.

And so, instead, what I would like to do is spend the next eight minutes or so just outlining a number of ideas that then hopefully we can work together to flesh out in a subsequent conversation. And I want to start, reasonably enough, with the topic that we've been given: "How to Stop a Fragmented Al-Qaida." And I want to focus on two words: stop and al-Qaida.

I'll start with al-Qaida. What do we mean when we say "al-Qaida"? To me al-Qaida means at least four things. It's an organization. It's an international brand. It is an international resource of extremists. And, fourth, it's an idea. It's an organization, a brand, a resource and an idea.

When we talk about al-Qaida as an organization, to me we're talking about what is commonly referred to as al-Qaida central; what remains of the organization that was responsible for the attacks on the United States at 9/11, which is centered in the badlands straddling both sides of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. That's where al-Qaida central is. It remains for us, in the al-Qaida context, the chief enemy.

I don't think that it is correct to think of the others who describe themselves as al-Qaida, who call themselves as al-Qaida, a coherent organization. In fact, they are not. There are links, but when we talk about al-Qaida as an organization, we're talking about al-Qaida central in Afghanistan-Pakistan.

Which leads to the second point, which is that al-Qaida is an international brand. Al-Qaida has sold itself very, very effectively. It's part of the reason why organizations which really have no clear operational links certainly don't get coherent guidance from al-Qaida, don't coordinate their activities with al-Qaida, still, in many cases – a growing number of cases, want to refer to themselves as al-Qaida.

But we shouldn't be fooled by that rhetoric. There are different reasons on the part of different organizations why they want to refer to themselves as al-Qaida, the most potent of which, particularly on the part of organizations that have started out as national movements – national revolutionary movements, if you will – is that when they have not succeeded, when they

have faced overwhelming obstacles in their goals – and I think perhaps the best example is the armed Islamic group in Algeria that was involved in a very vicious civil war during the '90s.

It went badly for them in the end and so they had to rethink themselves, not just as a national movement but as part of the international jihad, a global international movement. In that context it made sense for them to refer to themselves not as the armed Islamic group of Algeria but rather as the principled part of al-Qaida in the Arab Maghreb.

Third, it's an international resource. Al-Qaida, because of its international links, many of which are primarily personal forged over time because of links that individuals have formed either in Iraq, in Afghanistan or elsewhere, it has become a resource and a means of transmission for terrorist capabilities and for terrorist ideology.

It is not an accident that IED-making, the use of suicide bombers, which became – which was perfected, if you will, in Iraq, was then later transmitted to the Pakistan-Afghanistan context. I can tell you, as someone who has spent a lot of time in South Asia, that just a very few years ago, the use of IEDs, and particularly the use of suicide bombers, was completely unknown. It was a huge shock when we began to see suicide bombers in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The reason for that, I believe, is primarily these international links of al-Qaida, and the same I think can be true – can be said of the propaganda war. Al-Qaida has perfected the use of extremist propaganda through al-Sahhaf, and I think that they've been a tremendous impetus and inspiration to others.

Fourthly, al-Qaida is an idea. The central idea – this idea of Islamic radicalism. Back in the late '80s, early '90s we didn't talk about violent extremism. We were talking about political Islam in those days, and it certainly didn't begin with al-Qaida.

I was the CIA station chief of Algeria in the late '80s, early '90s, and shortly after my departure – I'm not saying there was a causal link there, but surely after my departure there was a vicious civil war that was led, in large part, by Islamic extremists who got their start in the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan.

They were engaged in a vicious civil war which I thought for a time was actually going to topple the government there, long before al-Qaida was known outside of a very few people who were surrounding Osama bin Laden himself.

The central idea behind al-Qaida, what has made al-Qaida what it is, is this idea – not a new one but one that they very successfully promulgated – that the U.S. is the main enemy. And the reason that was brilliant is because the idea of the U.S. as the main enemy is one of the few things on which a vast majority of Muslims will actually agree. It's an organization, it's a brand, it's a resource and it's an idea.

Secondly, I want to talk about the word “stop” – how to stop a fragmented al-Qaida. Well, when we start talking about stopping al-Qaida, immediately we start thinking about, well, whose responsibility is it? Well, not surprisingly, I think that the United States does have

significant responsibilities in this area. We are a global power. We have assumed global responsibilities in the aftermath of the Second World War.

We are one of probably only two countries in the world that really thinks of its national interest in very broad terms – you might say imperialist terms in the best sense of that word. And I think it's particularly important that we assume a heavy responsibility in this struggle because it is an intelligence-led struggle and the U.S. has unique intelligence capabilities that are not duplicated anywhere else in the world.

We have unique relationships. We are able to act as a catalyst for others in a way that no one else can do. So yes, we have global responsibilities, but I want to stress – and I can't stress this enough – this is not our war; this is not our struggle.

Now, make no mistake; we have a huge national interest in the outcome of this struggle, but fundamentally, when we think about it, it is very dangerous for us to present it or to think about it ourselves as our struggle. I talk about this all the time before Muslim audiences. They'll ask me questions and they'll say, why is America losing the war on terror? I'll say, well, look, two things. Number one, we're not losing, and number two, it's not our struggle; it's yours.

At the end of the day, this is a struggle within the Islamic world that will determine the future of the Islamic world, and it can only be settled by Muslims, which means that in order to succeed – for us to succeed, we have to succeed through others, and there are a number of reasons why that is important. We'll get into that in just a minute.

So what does all this mean for U.S. policy? Let's divide it up. Let's take a look at short and medium-term U.S. policy and longer-term U.S. policy.

In the short term, as we look at the vast number of current and potential enemies out there, this fragmentation of this movement that we often refer to as al-Qaida, first I would say we need to focus on those who are focusing on us. Charity begins at home. Those who are primarily focused on attacking us need to be addressed by us as a matter of priority.

Secondly, as we just mentioned, we need to work through others. We can't win this war on our own. We can only win this war by empowering others to win what, at the end of the day, is their struggle. We need to focus on capacity building and intelligence sharing, empowering our allies in this struggle, in part because we want to avoid creating what David Kilcullen refers to as the "accidental guerilla."

Where the United States is taking the lead, we actually create more enemies for ourselves. Where we are taking the lead in national struggles, we tend to induce those extremists to focus not on their native governments but on the United States – yet another reason why we need to be working through others.

Finally, the issue of safe havens. With the fragmentation of this movement with the number and the proliferation of safe havens around the world, whether we're talking about Afghanistan or Pakistan or Yemen or Somalia, the United States is simply not capable of

denying – completely denying these safe havens to all of these different groups and movements all of the time and doing it all at once.

We need to focus instead, I think, on making uncontested safe havens into contested safe havens. And that's probably the best that we can do as this war plays out, which leads us to the final bit, which is the long-term issues for U.S. policy. Whether we refer to it as the "long war," as the "war of ideas," there is a very important thing for us to remember, and that is that the terrorists are destined to lose.

The reason I say that is because anywhere and everywhere that they have been able to gain real power on the ground, the people have turned against them. Muslims do not want to live under the rule of these extremists, and ultimately it is going to mean that they will fail.

Now, we can take some comfort in that but I would quickly add that it is cold comfort because while they are destined to fail, they can make a lot of trouble for us in the meantime, both for us and for our allies.

Secondly, I think it's very important for us to remember that terrorism is the tool of the weak. Extremists turn to terrorism when other methods are not availing to them. And the reason that that is important is because even those who are hell-bent on the use of violence to further their means can only succeed if they are able to swim in a sea of tolerance. They are only able to do that if they can convince those among whom they live not of the legitimacy of their means but the legitimacy of their ends.

Terrorism is the tool of the weak, and therefore, the third point – and this may seem counterintuitive – a key to success – long-term success is to politically empower – and I stress politically empower – our enemies.

And, fourthly, we need to understand that this was not all a misunderstanding. Americans often think that if only the extremists, if only the populations in which they hide better understood us, that they realized that the altruism of our intent, they wouldn't hate us, they would not oppose us and they would not tolerate the extremists, as many of them have in recent years and decades. I don't think that's true.

Yes, we are misunderstood, but that's not the core of our problem. The core of our problem, quite frankly, is U.S. policy. At the end of the day, the vast majority of Muslims believe that U.S. policy is not helping them to redress the grievances that they think are legitimate, whether it is in Palestine, whether it is in Kashmir, whether it's in Chechnya. We could go down – we could go down the list.

Now, solving these long-term issues is not going to solve the problem completely. I would say that it is a necessary but insufficient part of the overall solution. I'll leave it there.

MR. ZARATE: Fantastic. You can see why I was very excited to have these three gentlemen up here with me. Let me again take the moderator's prerogative. I'm like a kid in a

candy store here so let me ask some questions to set the table, then, for you all to ask good and provocative questions.

First, let me ask about December 25th and the Times Square incident because, you know, one could argue that those are game-changing events from the perspective of having al-Qaida or fragmented groups that are tied to al-Qaida actually trying to operate in the homeland and trying to hit.

On the other hand, you can see them as great failures on the part of the movement to actually launch successful, compelling attacks. Arnaud, how should we be looking at what has happened over the last couple of months and in particular those two events, in the context of this fragmented movement? And should we be worried, or how should we interpret those events?

MR. BORCHGRAVE: Well, I was very reassured by the 53 hours that it took to nail this guy. I think the DHS and the FBI did a fabulous job. So I'm reassured by this. It's certainly not the first time that they have tried to do things in the United States, but they seem to be in the hands of people who don't know how to make bombs.

One point I want to do, if you don't mind –

MR. ZARATE: No, no, please.

MR. BORCHGRAVE: – that I forgot – and we're talking about this constantly in terms of the communist movement that prevailed for 70 years.

I've spent an awful lot of time in madrasahs and talking to the political, religious extremists in Pakistan, and one thing that they bring up all the time is that we have become a society where the Ten Commandments are now multiple choice – that came up many, many times – and that we have porn stars now who feature publicly at their own Oscar awards night, the result of a \$14 billion porn industry – titillating for some but, on the other hand, the lower circles of Dante's inferno for these religious zealots.

So there are so many different factors that come into this and that make it this global movement, and I can't stress enough the importance of the Internet. John Negroponte, who is an old friend from Vietnam days back in the mid-'60s asked me, shortly after he took over as DNI, director of National Intelligence, if I knew what a petabyte was. I had no idea. I said, no, but megabytes and gigabytes.

And he said, well, imagine the entire Library of Congress with its 40 million volumes and 250 million manuscripts and 530 miles of shelf space. All of that represents 0.02 petabytes, but moving through cyberspace every day is thousands of times that.

And more recently we heard from a Pentagon expert that moving now through the Internet is the equivalent of 90 Libraries of Congress every minute, trying to find what the bad guys are up to, and that global mess is virtually mission impossible.

But, I mean, obviously we have different definitions of what this is all about, and I think that we come at it from three different angles. It seems to me that Iraq was a huge distraction from the problem at hand. It had absolutely nothing to do with al-Qaida. But what was extraordinary is to hear that over 60 percent of the American people at one time believed that Saddam Hussein was behind 9/11, and of course he was not.

But it seems to me that this is a very, very long process that may take, who knows, 50 or 60 years. We do have the problem of this growing mass of poor people around the world, and that doesn't seem to be shrinking, so they've got ammunition for a long time to come.

MR. ZARATE: Thank you, Arnaud.

Walid, the three of you have now talked about al-Qaida as an ideology, an idea. Arnaud has talked about it akin to the communist movement. And Bob talked about the war within Islam. Where is the ideological counterweight? And in that regard, how should the U.S. be thinking about that counterweight ideologically, and in the context of what Arnaud just said, dealing with it in the context of the Internet as well?

MR. PHARES: Before we get to designing and identifying the counter efforts, we need to be able to identify the threat. As I said in my remarks, we have a problem, a systemic problem to find the threat. If I may link it to your first question, because that's crucial, what has been happening over the past year in terms of so-called homegrown and/or international attempts to attack us, and then I'll link it to the ideological one.

Look at how we reacted as a government and sometimes as a media to the last three or four attempted attacks – well, and attacks – Fort Hood act of terror; Abdulmutallab, Nigerian Christmas Day bomber; and the last one in Times Square.

The first reaction for the first few hours was we need not to jump to conclusions, but actually we did because the following 12 hours or 24 hours it was about saying this is an isolated extremist. How do we know it was an isolated extremist? Second, well, we mutated to this is a long wolf. And, third, we mutated to, well, this is a lone wolf that exchanges e-mails. That's not the lone wolf anymore once you exchange e-mails with an auluk (ph) in Yemen.

And then there has been travel, and then al-Qaida claimed responsibility. So there is a systemic problem in understanding, are we under attack by – I don't want to call it an organized – by a system or not?

I mean, one thing is to have a lone wolf who figured out an ideology on his own or her own, and then is striking, you know, on his own timing, or they are deployed, incited, trained, quasi-trained and deployed as a lone wolf so that we see them as lone wolves, so that we don't detect the ideology, and if you don't detect the ideology you cannot detect the next wave.

Every time in the media we are asked, what's after Abdulmutallab? Well, guess what – another Abdulmutallab. And as long as al-Qaida or the other jihadists have not organized themselves in a reform movement and said, we're stopping, we do need to expect more of these.

Now, coming to the ideological component, I think that is where we have failed systemically. If we were not able to determine it – and I know that we have done extremes. On the one hand, we went all the way to a theological debate – not necessarily – and then or we went to the other extreme, which is basically there is no ideology; it's just people frustrated with issues.

Well, between the issues they're frustrated about – let's say what my colleague mentioned – Palestine is an issue, a serious one, Kashmir, et cetera – there is the conveyor that makes the issue into a terrorist problem. Not every single person who has a grievance on one of the single international crises is automatically a jihadist Salafist who is going to blow up himself into the enemy.

So what I would recommend here is a new debate, new discussion in the American Congress and the public about the ideology. We need to be able to define it. And when we define it, we should not be afraid that this is religion. No. Al-Qaida was able to frame some references as an ideology and we need to detect it.

And guess where is the best place to get the references from? And here I answer your lexicon issue quickly. The Arab debate. I am almost every day in one or other Arab media. What do they call them? They call them Salafi jihadi. So why do we issue a memo in this country, in Washington last year saying, oh, don't touch these words? They are the same words used in the Arab debate. If the Arab debates use these words, who are we offending at the end of the time?

So we need to be very precise. We need to follow the debate in the Arab world. The Saudis, the Maghrebis, the Jordanians have found a way to define it, and let's have an internationalization of the struggle against al-Qaida. We don't need to see America leading the effort against – battle against al-Qaida alone.

I agree with my colleague that we need to internationalize it. We give the effort that others cannot give, and then the others would engage with us in a war of ideas. That would be my summary.

MR. ZARATE: Thank you, Walid.

Bob, feel free to address any of these issues, but I've got a very particular question. People often forget about the al-Qaida leadership in Iran. And there was an AP report today, the headline being "Iran Eases Grip on al-Qaida." Can you talk a little bit about sort of, you know, the relationship there and the presence physically of al-Qaida leadership in Iran?

MR. GRENIER: Well, I can confess that I didn't know a lot about it when I was in government and I certainly know less about it now. The reason that we had this situation where a significant number of, if you will, former leaders of al-Qaida being held under some form of house arrest in Iran, it was an outgrowth of the success of the initial U.S. campaign in Afghanistan in 2001.

We had a significant number of al-Qaida simple fighters and also leadership cadres who fled through Pakistan. Most of them were convinced that Pakistan was not a safe place for them. Their effort was not to hide initially in Pakistan but to travel through Pakistan into Iran, not to find safe haven in Iran necessarily but to use that as a path to get back to their home countries or some other place where they could regroup and feel safe.

There were some elements in Iran, particularly in the Revolutionary Guard, who, I'm convinced, in many cases, operating on their own account, not necessarily as a matter of national policy, provided aid and comfort to some of these individuals who were traveling through.

At a certain point, though, fairly early on, the Iranian government, for reasons that we can only speculate about – but I think we can subject them to informed speculation because at the end of the day these Sunni extremists are no friend of the Shiites of Iran, and they've shown that in their interactions with Shiites in any number of different places in the world. At a certain point these individuals were picked up, including one of bin Laden's sons and significant al-Qaida leaders, and they were held there in Iran. Not all, but most of them, as far as we know, are still held there.

Again, I can only speculate. My suspicion is that the Iranians, believing that these fellows would not be doing anything that would be a credit to them, in the meantime were very happy to hang on to them, and I think that they see them as a potential negotiating card to be employed at some point when it would appear to them to be a greater benefit than harm.

MR. BORCHGRAVE: Yeah, well, it seems to me on Iran we have to be very, very careful because the same people who pushed us into this war in Iraq are trying to do the same thing on Iran. It seems to me that whether you have democrats in power or generals or mullahs in Tehran, they have legitimate security concerns.

And I've heard three now-former CENTCOM commanders – Gen. Zinni, Gen. Abizaid – Arabic speaker – and Adm. Fallon, all three have said that we should learn to live with an Iranian bomb much the way we learned to live with Stalin's bomb, with Mao's bomb. We all faced an existential crisis, especially at the time of the Cuban missile crisis, and I think it's high time we sat down and talked Turkey with our Iranian opponents rather than the game of sanctions that is not going to work. We know that draconian sanctions, which some people in Congress would like to impose, will never be agreed to by the other parties concerned.

MR. ZARATE: Very good. Well, I injected a little bit of Iran into that, which isn't the topic of the panel but incredibly important.

Let's now open it up to the crowd. And I ask that when you ask your question you keep the commentary wind-up to a minimum and actually ask a question. Do we have microphones? This gentleman here, please. And if you could identify yourself.

Q: Thank you. Leonard Oberlander (sp), independent consultant. Recalling 34 years ago, more or less, when the Iranian Ayatollah Khomeini took the diplomats of our embassy

hostage and referred repeatedly to the U.S. as the Great Satan, I remember being convinced at the time that that was to unite a very fractionated Iran.

Mr. Grenier's comments earlier about how al-Qaida is trying to unite the world against the United States, our national security, what lessons might we be able to deduce or infer from the successful experience of Ayatollah Khomeini in achieving what he wanted to in uniting Iran with regard to al-Qaida's efforts today?

MR. ZARATE: Why don't we open it up to all three of you if you like? Walid, why don't you take a first crack, and then Arnaud and then Bob?

MR. PHARES: Okay, that will basically give me the opportunity to make a little comment about the recent comments; that's Iran.

To understand Iran's policy on anything, including al-Qaida – which is a policy, I agree. This is not ideology. Salafism and Khomeinism will fight against each other to death, guess what, after us, so I'm not worried about when the Iranians and al-Qaida are going to be fighting. It's going to be after they defeat the purpose of liberal democracies in the region.

But unlike the other view, which says that Iran is a country which really is concerned about its own national security, feels that it is threatened, and therefore it will just have the bomb to defend itself in case it's attacked by the Taliban or whomever, or Karzai or the 120 political parties in Iraq, or the kings and the princes of the Gulf.

I don't see who is going to attack Iran that could have nukes. They say Israel. Well, basically they are basically bringing Hezbollah to the borders with a weapon system of 40,000. They have an alliance with Hamas.

So I think Iran is a geopolitical player with other geopolitical players, with one difference. It's that – and I have studied Iran for the last 30 years, published my first book in Arabic about 1987, and I have seen the changes in their strategy to adapt long-term – long-range strategy. They were operating under the Cold War during the '90s and post-9/11 in a systematic way that is horizontal and vertical.

Horizontal basically is to expand. First alliance with Syria in 1980 was – (unintelligible) – 12 agreements of strategic consideration. Then they move into Lebanon, putting Hezbollah as an organization. Then, of course, them and the Syrians were looking at Iraq at the moment that Iraq will become an important zone for them, and it was given after 2003, meaning the Shiite areas of Iraq are what the Iranians would like to infiltrate so that they could link with Syria.

My bottom line is that if you look at the Iranian regime behavior on a span of 30 years, then you will realize that at the end of the day, they have an agenda. Now, what is our response to the agenda? We have what the United States will have to – sorry, we have what the United States will have to do, what is our perception of threat, and then we have allies in the region.

Don't we know that the Iranians are behind the rebellion in Northern Yemen? Don't we know that they are threatening the Emirates in the region? Don't we know that now they have facilities in Eritrea? I mean, we are missing this in our debate. Don't we know that there is an emergent strategic alliance between the Iranian regime and Omar al-Bashir?

I have information, which shouldn't be secret, that they are even funding organizations as far as Morocco. I spoke with Moroccan officials and they told me that they were establishing cells.

So we're not just dealing with a country that would have its own kind of balance with the United States; we're dealing with an expansion regime and the choice is really in Washington, and the choice – that I agree – could be realist. Either we quit the confrontation, we go into a Yalta mode, we let them have the bomb and then see the consequences, or we have an international coalition.

And I agree that sanctions alone, as is right now, without other actions, including working with civil society in Iran, will not lead to a point. So the choice has to be strategic/political, but misreading what the Iranians are doing would not be very helpful in shaping that policy.

MR. ZARATE: Arnaud, if you'd like.

MR. BORCHGRAVE: Well, just very quickly, it seems to me that if you look at the world from Tehran's standpoint, looking at the map from Tehran rather than from Washington, they have four of the world's eight nuclear powers in their vicinity – Russia to the north, Israel to the west, India and Pakistan to the east, and they have the U.S. fleet at their south, which also has tactical nuclear weapons, so of course they have legitimate security concerns.

And who would I be to be arguing with three former CENTCOM commanders who know the area extremely well and have had access to all kinds of intelligence during their commands?

MR. ZARATE: Bob, lessons from the Iranian experience to look at al-Qaida?

MR. GRENIER: Yeah, I think it's a very interesting question. And we take a look at what happened in Iran back in 1979. The hostages were not seized by Ayatollah Khomeini; they were seized by a group of so-called students. There were students – professional students, if you will – who called themselves the Student Followers of the Line of the Imam.

They were the ones who seized the hostages and it was a tremendously popular thing within Iran. They were not ordered or organized by Khomeini, but he saw an opportunity when it appeared, and in those days his political position was not – was nowhere near as strong as it was later to become. And so he found himself in the position of many leaders of revolutionary movements. He was fighting, to some degree, to stay ahead of the crowd.

The lesson there is one – rather than thinking about what is the lesson that we should learn, I think there is a very important lesson that al-Qaida should learn, and let's hope that they

don't. They certainly haven't to date. And that is that they ought to listen to the will of the people.

Yes, as you have just said, they have been able to harness a well of discontent – conspiracy theorizing about the United States, concern about the role of the United States in oppressing Muslims, the role of the United States in supporting the governments who in turn repress them.

But where al-Qaida has been able to seize real tactical control on the ground, whether it's in al-Qaida or affiliated groups, whether it's in Anbar Province in Western Iraq or most recently in the Swat Valley in Pakistan, they have managed to turn the people against them.

I don't mean to filibuster here but there was a very interesting exchange between Ayman al-Zawahiri and Pakistan and Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who is the head of – at one time of al-Qaida in Iraq shortly before he was killed.

Abu Musab was trying to foment sectarian warfare in Iraq because he thought that it would play to al-Qaida's political benefit. Ayman al-Zawahiri told him that he was making a mistake, not on doctrinal terms – he wasn't saying it's bad for there to be war between Sunnis and Shia. In fact, at the end of the day he would encourage that.

What he was saying was that politically, tactically, this is a mistake, because at the end of the day he felt that it would politically undermine al-Qaida in Iraq, and in fact he was correct.

MR. ZARATE: Thank you. This young lady here.

Q: My name is Janet McElligott.

MR. ZARATE: Janet, microphone, please.

Q: Thank you. My name is Janet McElligott, and I am wanting to jump to the Horn of Africa. We have got the ICC doing investigations right now in Kenya, and then we have an election in eight months' time, which many people think could result, if the ICC continues, in a civil war, and the first one in Kenya.

Then we've got, in a year's time, Southern Sudan being able to vote for independence. And they've already, unfortunately, embezzled 90 percent of the money that they have been given and only about 10 percent has made it out to the states with the governors. And the U.S. is behind, saying, vote for independence; vote for independence.

You have Somalia, Mombassa, Southern Sudan, Congo and then you're up to Algeria. Couldn't that create a series of potential failed states where al-Qaida could take root? And if that's possible, can you see al-Qaida jumping from an ideological – or jumping to an ideological state as to simply Muslim-based and being more of a dialogue about being an anti-American thing?

Because right now I think it's more about the war on terror equals the war on Islam, and that's the dialogue that's playing in these young jihadists' minds – could that jump to the U.S., having the Horn of Africa in great dilemma.

MR. BORCHGRAVE: Ma'am, I had the privilege of traveling with Gen. Jones when he was the supreme commander of NATO. He took me to a number of Muslim countries in black Africa. And we heard from the heads of state, heads of intelligence, chiefs of staff, everywhere, complaints about little jihadi groups popping up right, left and center, complaining that they didn't have the proper equipment for night vision and stuff like that.

But it was an eye-opener for me to see to what extent there are these little copycat groups that call themselves jihadi locally, even though they have no connection with jihadi headquarters, if that headquarters still exists.

MR. ZARATE: Anybody else want to address –

MR. PHARES: Yeah, I'll talk one minute about the issue of perception. I'll leave the geopolitics to my colleague for the Horn of Africa. The perception that there is a one-Muslim world, 1.5 (billion), 1.4 billion people –

MR. : One-point-four.

MR. PHARES: Yeah – monolithic jumping whenever Al Jazeera says jump or when – that is not reality. There are 52 countries. Each country has opposition and regime and are fragmented and you have the jihadist movement, Salafi around the world.

So whenever the propaganda machine of what I call the Salafi jihadists all combine – al-Qaida being one component of that – says that the war on terror is the war on Islam. That's their view. It doesn't mean that we're going to buy it, that this is the view of the Muslim world. Otherwise, look at all the reformists in the Arab and Muslim world – what they say, what's their narrative.

Look at the 1.5 million demonstrators in the streets of Tehran, 1.5 million demonstrators in the streets of Beirut, the – (unintelligible) – reformers, Darfur, meaning we have to learn, I think, to look at the Arab and Muslim world, including, of course, the Horn of Africa, as a mosaic where you have hard core Islamists, or jihadists, to be more precise, who are claiming to represent everything, and then we ignore the other side, the other side meaning the democracy forces or the counter-jihadi forces.

With regard to Africa, it is true – I agree with you – that al-Qaida is doing a major thrust, and the thrust –

Q: We're ignoring it.

MR. PHARES: Yeah, we have –

Q: In this country we're totally ignoring it.

MR. PHARES: We are focusing on the two battlefields that are already big. Now, al-Qaida – and that has been confirmed by my colleagues – are thrusting through Darfur into – they had the raid last year, reaching Jalayna (ph) – all the way to the six countries, who, by the way, met last week, two weeks ago under Algerian leadership at the time – Mali all the way to Senegal – because they know that they cannot stop the Salifization of this area.

So I agree with you. The Sunni triangle is going to be peanuts, a joke compared to the Sahel, which is the mid-west –

MR. BORCHGRAVE: If I could quickly add to that before Bob takes the microphone. I've asked moderate heads of states in the Muslim world all the way from King Mohammed VI in Morocco to King Abdullah in Jordan to King Abdullah in Riyadh – all these moderates usually tell me that the extremists in their midst are no more than 1 percent.

And then you ask them about how many fundamentalists they have who perhaps sympathize with the extremists. They say about 10 percent. And you put that on a global scale; that gives you 14 million extremists and 140 million fundamentalists.

Q: And, Bob – it's big. And, Bob, could you also address, then, if they can control these parts of Africa – let's look at the oil; the Bonny Light. We'd go looking at the Nile Blend. We'd go look at Dar Blend. We'd go in the gold, we'd go – you know, the blood diamonds were nothing.

MR. GRENIER: Well, I guess – I'm no expert on Africa but I guess I don't see things in quite such dire terms. With regard to the aspect of your question, could al-Qaida or jihadi groups somehow achieve their aims by making an appeal based not just on Islam but on anti-Americanism more broadly? And it's hard for me to conceive of them using that tactic, simply because of their own mental architecture, if you will. It's hard for me to conceive of them succeeding outside of the Muslim world.

That said, we need to be very alive to the issue of ungoverned space, particularly in Muslim areas. Somalia is very problematic. It will continue to be very problematic. There is no prospect that I can see, or probably anyone else, for responsible rule in Somalia for quite some time to come. There are issues elsewhere in some of the contiguous regions, but somehow, you know, sort of a jihadi-led master plan that's going to allow them to seize control, positive control of countries, I think that, yes, there is a problem.

Again, the reason that we have problems in Southern Algeria, in Mali and in Mauritania is because the vast desert spaces in those countries are simply beyond their effective control – the effective control of the governments concerned.

MR. ZARATE: Let me take a question from the Internet, which actually is a good piggyback off of this last discussion, and I will read this. “Which threats besides al-Qaida are

being neglected? Is our counterterrorism strategy too myopic in this sense?" And I would also add, too reactive.

Arnaud, do you want to take a first crack at that?

MR. BORCHGRAVE: Well, it seems to me that besides al-Qaida, there are huge problems in the world of underdevelopment. We have huge problems in the developed world about what's been happening to our democratic capitalist system that nobody pays much attention to. I've seen since the end of the Cold War democratic capitalism gradually morph itself into crony capitalism and then casino capitalism, and more recently bandito capitalism.

MR. ZARATE: Does anyone else want to address this?

MR. PHARES: Yeah, quickly. I think there are two areas that are black holes in our counterstrategy against al-Qaida and the other allies. One is the most important thing in al-Qaida, the thing that created al-Qaida. Remember, al-Qaida did not create an ideology; an ideology actually created al-Qaida. And that is not, anywhere in Washington or in Brussels, on any map how to deal with it.

Second, we're ignoring the anti-al-Qaida, the civil forces in civil society, the counter-jihadists that are against al-Qaida – NGOs, women's' movements, students' movements, artists, cab drivers around the planet. We take them for granted.

Well, these are the forces that brought down the bad guys when extremists took over. Who is bringing down? Not military force. So we have, I think, a lot of work to do in terms of civil society – engaging with civil society.

MR. ZARATE: Bob, do you want to take a crack at this?

MR. GRENIER: Yeah, I think that we do need to be focused on this phenomenon of Islamic extremism, jihadism in very broad terms. I think, again, we have to be very, very careful not to, in speaking about these struggles, whether it's in Morocco or all the way out to Southern Thailand, in terms of – in U.S.-centric terms.

These are issues which affect the local people, and to the extent to which we play into the – if you will, the extremist narrative, which says this is all about U.S. support for those who are oppressing us, we make it that much easier for those extremists to attract adherents to their cause.

One aspect of this that we really haven't talked very much about is – we've talked about the movements out of which these violent extremist cells grow. We've talked about, you know, Salafism. Well, 27 years in the CIA I've been accused of a lot of things. Scholarship is not one of them, but those who are scholars tell me that the Salafi population, if you will, within the Muslim world is probably somewhere around 3 percent.

That is not to suggest for a moment that all Salafis are terrorists. A vastly disproportionate number of the terrorists – that is, those who use violence to further their ends –

are in fact Salafis. Now, the vast majority of the people to whom they are making some form of appeal don't want to live under Salafism.

And as we look at the forces within those societies that can counter this embrace of violence as a means of redressing perceived oppression, perceived grievances, we ought not to overlook those anti-American elements who are susceptible of participation in a political movement. And I think Walid is going to disagree with me here but I think that the Muslim Brothers, in whatever form that they take in Egypt, could be a very important part of that.

Now, do these fellows – by and large do they like us? No, they don't, but I think it serves our long-term national interest if they are engaged in a political process. At the end of the day, if we place all of our chits on Mubarak and his son and the small clique of powerful people around them for the future of stability in Egypt, I think we will suffer bitterly as a result.

MR. BORCHGRAVE: Bob, if I could add very quickly to that. I was covering the Black Saturday event in Cairo on January 26th, 1952 when the Muslim Brotherhood burned down 300 buildings in Cairo, including the hotel where I was staying. So I would be very careful about predicting that Muslim Brotherhood are nice, peaceful guys who want to enter the democratic process.

MR. ZARATE: Let me take the moderator's prerogative to answer this question as well because I do think one of the questions with respect to al-Qaida and the fragmented movement that we're facing is what comes beyond al-Qaida? Assuming an al-Qaida decline and a core is ultimately diminished and vanquished, what then drives this global movement and ideology? What comes into that gap?

And I think we often – we're so caught in the rhetoric and the orthodoxy of the al-Qaida prism that we don't look to other alternative models of a global movement. That is to say, does a Lashkar-e-Taiba suddenly become a vanguard of this global ideology, with some data points suggesting that that may be an evolution underway already. Do we see some of these soft affiliates start to interact and coordinate with each other, like an al-Shabaab and al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula?

And so I think we are – we tend to be myopic in the sense of relying on the same orthodoxy and paradigm that has defined the threat to date instead of projecting the near horizon as to what may be beyond al-Qaida.

Next question? Yes, Mr. Trulio?

Q: Hi. David Trulio, Raytheon Company. I'm also a senior fellow at the Homeland Security Policy Institute. Robert, I just want to follow up on what you just said about the Muslim Brotherhood.

You also made the very provocative comment that the key to long-term success is to politically employ our enemies. I was hoping you could elaborate on that, and also in terms of

how we – the U.S. government, U.S. society approach that and how our friends and allies might have some reluctance to that. So I'm hoping you can elaborate on that. Thank you.

MR. GRENIER: Yeah, I was trying to be provocative and apparently I succeeded to some degree. But I believe that, again, starting from where I did in my remarks, that terrorism is the tool of the weak, and that if, in the long term, we are to defeat the violent extremists; if we are to see them defeated by those who are their natural enemies, that we have to give the populations to whom they are making an appeal other legitimate means of redressing their grievances.

There is a tremendous degree of political repression, as we know, throughout the Arab and the Muslim worlds. I don't think that those societies will be stable. I don't think that they will be reliably self-regulating unless and until they become democratic. I'm a great small "d" democrat.

I was bitterly disappointed – I was tremendously elated by the second inaugural address that George W. Bush delivered where it was this tremendous appeal to international democracy. Unfortunately it never went anywhere. And when he delivered that address, I was the director of counterterrorism at CIA and I saw this as being a tremendous tool that we could employ as part of this larger effort.

As a practical matter, however, in many places that is going to mean – if in fact we are to follow through and encourage democratic development, that will mean, as a practical matter, empowering people who don't like us very well. I would argue, though, that there is no better way of moderating a political movement than to make it subject to the will of the people.

I believe that we missed a huge opportunity in 2006 when Hamas won the election in the Palestinian Territories. They were elected not because the vast majority of Palestinians supported their political program with regard to their opposition to a two-state solution. They were elected because the vast majority of Palestinians were sick to death of living under the corruption of Fatah and the Palestinian Authority.

Forced to deal with the public, in an attempt to maintain their political power over time, Hamas would have had to adapt its policies in light of overwhelming public opinion. And we were seeing it happen at the time. The members of Hamas with the greatest political credibility at that time were those who were in Israeli jails.

At the time that they won that election, those individuals had put together a white paper that was supportive of a two-state solution. Instead, we, the Europeans and the Israelis, collaborated together to repress the Palestinians in virtue of the exercise of their free political will, and I think it was a huge mistake. We further radicalized them and I think it was largely responsible for the situation, the bifurcated situation that we see now where you have an isolated Hamas ruling, you know, this hopeless enclave in Gaza.

MR. ZARATE: Walid, did you want to address that? We've got other questions.

MR. PHARES: Yeah, a couple of points. I know the time is –

MR. ZARATE: Yeah.

MR. PHARES: Let me give my view on this from another end. I don't think terrorism is only the weapon of the weak. I think it's a very powerful weapon used by those who seek to change the balance of power. An overwhelming majority of weak people – that would be 99 percent of Bangladesh and Pakistan and Indonesia and Nigeria – do not use terrorism. It's 1 percent of the representatives of the weak, who want to become stronger and want to become the regime that uses terrorism.

So I would read from a very realistic perspective not from the way the actual jihadists use it or the supporters of the jihadists around the world are saying, we are not – you know, we use terrorism because we don't have nukes. But what is it that you're going to seek to do? Get nukes. So basically this is – terrorism is a stage for ideological forces to reach a level to obtain as much nukes and weapons as their enemies.

Now, with regard to Hamas and Hezbollah, I take this opportunity to score my point here. It is not absolutely an expression of reality that Hamas and Gaza and Hezbollah and Lebanon won simply because they were running, as in Scandinavia or New Zealand or elsewhere. We have to keep in mind that they had the control of the gun.

If you are a militia – I mean, give me a militia of 18 million people in America controlling a number of states. The government cannot go there. And if they receive 60 billion by way of proportion, of course they're going to win any election. I mean, Hezbollah and Southern Lebanon can defeat any other Shia liberal, can defeat any imam there because they have the absolute control over militias.

Now, the challenge is – of course they have supporters. The challenge is how do we know that Hezbollah and Hamas, or other Islamists in the region, basically have the actual representation of the people? Well, it's very simple. If they're disarmed; if they join the peace process or if they join the political process, then we will see if they are going to be representative of a majority of their societies or they will keep the 10, 11 percent, which is normal.

I mean, the Front National in France will be always there, whether 9 percent, 11 percent, but for Front National to jump to 90 percent, you know, the sole representative of the French people, it means there is something wrong here.

So the approach in the West should be not for the political elimination of the role of Hezbollah and Hamas, but precisely for a political non-military participation of – meaning you cannot engage in referenda and elections while you have the gun. And that's why the role of the United Nations and that's why the role of NGOs should be extremely supported.

With regard to Muslim Brotherhood, there is no doubt that we need to engage in dialogue with the Muslim Brotherhood. Sometimes there is a confusion in the West that dialogue means

partnership. No. Partnership means you go and see the weaker. The weaker force in Egypt is not the Muslim Brotherhood. They are strong. They are strong to get 70.

You're going to go and see what are the women's movements doing, what are the liberal democratic doing, the underdog – the Saad Ibrahim, the Nawal Saadawis. We don't have a policy for – those are the Lech Walesa of the Middle East. Those are the Václav Havel of the Middle East. Where are the labor unions that we need to deal with, you know, from a left perspective or right perspective?

I think what is missing here is that we need to partner with the weak. We need to dialogue with every single force that exists in the Middle East. And I don't think we need exclusively to talk to the regimes. Talk to the regime; dialogue with the radicals; partner with the weak, the underdogs.

MR. BORCHGRAVE: Can I just quickly add that I think more powerful than terrorism is what's happening on the Internet. The French interior minister was Sarkozy at the time, now president – in 2003, 2004 did use his intelligence service to check on what was happening in about 1,000 mosques in France, and they discovered that 45 percent of the imams had no religious education whatsoever and had been receiving the Friday sermons via the Internet, and when they were asked to show where on the Internet, these were all pro-al-Qaida sites.

So clearly the Internet has played a much larger role than most people realize.

MR. ZARATE: Next question. Yes, ma'am?

Q: Hi. Shareena Sarmiento (sp) with Dice (ph) Security, independent consultant. So with this phenomenon of grassroots jihadism in the West – law enforcement and intelligence agencies focus in identifying potential attackers before they can actually launch their attacks – how can the West effectively counter these – or this grassroots threat with grassroots defenders as this could probably generate the most serious problems for street cops and us civilians? Thanks.

(Cross talk.)

MR. GRENIER: I think I understand your question, and please correct me if I'm going off a few degrees of center here, but the issue that I think you're raising here is an extremely important one, and that is, you know, how do we, A, recognize, and then, B, counter those individuals, whether it's actually individuals, you know, small groups and cells, who are moved to violence within their societies, and very much, obviously, as we now know, more than ever before within our society as well.

And I think – as I think you were just alluding – that places a tremendous burden of responsibility, if you will, on the communities – in this case the Islamic communities within the United States – to understand their own communities, to have positive relations between themselves and authorities very much to include law enforcement so they can work together in a

partnership to identify those who are going to take the violent path and to address the problem before we have bombs going off in Times Square.

One of the things that I very much worry about is overreaction on the part of Americans to incidents like what we very nearly had in Times Square. Let's suppose for a moment that Abdulmutallab had been successful. Let's suppose for a moment that this bomb had gone off in Times Square. What sort of a popular reaction might we have? What sort of distrust, indeed hatred, might we see engendered toward Muslims as a group within the United States?

Not only does that legitimately concern us as good Americans and as humanitarians, it should also very much concern us as a practical matter in the context that we've just been discussing. If those in Muslim communities feel that they can't reach out to the authorities; if they feel that they are being oppressed as a group, we will then have unilaterally foreclosed the most important, the most powerful tool that we have to control this phenomenon itself.

Is that getting at what you were – okay.

MR. ZARATE: Walid, if you'd like.

MR. PHARES: Yeah, just a couple of points. We need to be attentive to what the numbers are telling us, statistically speaking. Between '01 and '08 we had, as a government, 1.5 cases a year. From the beginning of '09 until now, it's one case a month. There is a critical change in the numbers of these homegrown – quasi-homegrown, internationally motivated, or other. What it means is that there is a systematic growth, a mushrooming of that, and that mushrooming is not the reaction to one or other policy; it is a phenomenon that has started a while ago.

So that systemic growth of jihadi-inspired terrorism in the United States needs to be studied better in the sense that it is not the last critical moment of when an individual makes the decision to attack or form the bomb that is important. Of course it is important, but the crucial one is to know when the click, the ideological click, has begun, because from that moment, then there are signals.

Abdulmutallab was blogging about a variety of things in '05. Now, our interception basically came in the end of the process. The same goes for most of these people. So we need to equip our law enforcement, equip our national security agencies with the knowledge on radicalization.

The Europeans have begun that but we need to equip them with the knowledge of when radicalization began, not when they're buying the C-4. That's too late. That's 90 percent of the process.

MR. ZARATE: But let me just add something here because this was a bit of a passion of mine when I was at the NSC, and Bob can maybe attest to this. But I think one of the challenges for the U.S. government is trying to figure out how to foment a grassroots countermovement that has a social activist dimension to it.

And we talked a lot about this in the U.S. government. It's very hard for the government to do because it has to be credible, has to be organic, has to come from within Muslim communities or communities of interest. But there are activists out there who are fighting against the ideology.

You look at ex-jihadis like Maajid Nawaz and Ed Husain, who started Quilliam Foundation. These are ex-extremists who now are recruiting against the ideology. You get musicians, people like Dani (sp) in Indonesia who are coming out with very popular music that's counted as clerics.

In your midst you have somebody who's led the Global Survivors Network, which is a group of victims of al-Qaida terror globally – Carie Lemack, sitting at your table. You know, these are the kinds of movements that have to emerge organically, and I think a challenge for the U.S. government is figuring out how to do that without tainting it and without meddling in what is otherwise a very powerful organic grassroots development.

Yes, ma'am.

Q: Paula Gordon. I have a site called GordonHomeland.com, and I've been writing on pre- and post-9/11 perspectives. And I'm concerned here that they have not heard one word about lunacy or mental illness as a characterization of individuals, heads of state such as Ahmadinejad or Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida.

If we don't understand that this is an irrational state of mind that they're in, that nihilistic, homicidal, suicidal kind of approach that they're taking, I think we miss the boat. There is an analogy given in the "Discourses," (Meher ?) Baba to a situation where you have a mad dog loose in a schoolyard. A responsible person takes action when there is a mad dog. If that mad dog or that mad individual is threatening the dissolution of a state, such as Iran is, surely we have to take cognizance of that and be concerned about it.

MR. BORCHGRAVE: I think, ma'am, that perhaps one of the persons you're referring to is Qaddafi of Libya – Ahmadinejad, Qaddafi. He asked me in 1993 when we were talking about what happened to Pan Am 103 to inform the CIA that he was threatened just as much by Islamist extremists as we were and that he wanted to cooperate.

That's exactly what happened. He was indeed threatened by his own Islamist extremism, yet everyone thinks he's a fruitcake. He behaves like a fruitcake but certainly the things that he's done behind the scenes would indicate just the opposite.

MR. GRENIER: I'd like to address that. With regard to, you know, the clinical state of some of these high-profile terrorists or those who –

MR. BORCHGRAVE: Personalities.

MR. GRENIER: – personalities who are willing to embrace terrorism, in the case of Ahmadinejad, as a matter of state policy, I guess that's probably less important than is the issue of the appeal that they are able to make whatever the organic cause of their personal state of mind.

But it raises another issue, and it's probably something that I should mention right away because I've been presenting myself here as sort of a humanitarian and we really need to reach out in dealing with this phenomenon in its broader social aspects.

But make no mistake about it. There's no way that we are going to convince those hardened terrorists who have embraced violence that they should, with few exceptions, put down the gun and accept alternative means of redressing grievances.

If you're talking about bin Ladens, if you're talking about the Zawahiris, if you're talking about any number of hardened terrorists, there's only one thing that we and allied governments can do, and that's to hunt them down and either arrest them or kill them in the process.

So let's make no – when we're talking about figures like that, let's make no mistake about where the solutions lie.

MR. ZARATE: We've got about five minutes left, so if we can do kind of a quick, rapid round we can probably take at least two questions. Ma'am, why don't we take you, and then, Ozzie, you're next.

Q: Thank you. Jennifer Brinkerhoff, George Washington University. Mr. Borchgrave, you mentioned a couple of times the level of global poverty, and one of the things that we didn't talk about in terms of the election of Hamas was the fact that they were meeting a lot of physical needs on the ground of the people.

And so, I would like to hear from the panel what role, if any, you see in terms of what we can do as a government and as a society in terms of promoting development and good governance from afar in order to not win the hearts and minds but at least deter them from looking to others to meet those needs. Thank you.

MR. BORCHGRAVE: Well, obviously I think that we should be perhaps spending less money on conducting warfare in places where we had no business conducting it – namely Iraq. The president told us that we had to keep going in Afghanistan because that's where al-Qaida is. That's precisely where al-Qaida is not. They made their way out during the Battle of Tora Bora, and Bob Grenier and I were in Pakistan at the same time.

So it seems to me that a lot of this is not thought through too carefully, and I think if we were to go into another military-type operation against Iran, or Israel were to do it and we would be blamed for it, another trillion dollars.

So Afghanistan, by the time we're through, is going to cost a trillion. Iraq cost a trillion. And heaven help us if we're to spend another trillion on Iran. And that's the kind of money that could easily be spent on the things that you were addressing yourself to.

MR. ZARATE: Walid, very quickly, please.

MR. PHARES: Yes, poverty is a problem that is a problem everywhere. The response to poverty is different from who are the conveyers from one spot to the other? So poverty does not generate suicide bombers; poverty provides a situation. The one who wins that situation can drive it into suicide bombing, can drive it into the Communist Party, can drive it into union, can drive it into committing suicide personally, can drive into different directions.

So the real battle basically is who is going to win the so-called war of ideas? The National Socialists in the Republic of Amar (ph) could have been beaten by the socialists, by the Koaists (ph), by everybody else. So it's really a political battle of ideas.

Now, in my recommendation in the current state for Gaza, Southern Lebanon, other places, what we need to do is develop a policy of absolute support to NGOs, go way below these organizations, non-government organizations, and let Hamas or Hezbollah say no. They will be cornered. Tell them, I want to help NGOs. Give me your independent NGOs and then that will be the debate. You don't have to go to the regimes, you don't have to go to the armed organization; go straight to the people.

MR. ZARATE: Let's go to the final question. Ozzie?

Q: Hi. Rick "Ozzie" Nelson. One question I would like to emphasize is Pakistan. We talked about safe havens – (unintelligible) – a study a while back about FATA being a dangerous place. I'll give the last question as the easy question. What do we do about Pakistan and what do we do specifically about the FATA because that's really the global epicenter of terrorism in many regards.

MR. BORCHGRAVE: That's the key question, Ozzie – Pakistan and what we do about FATA. It seems to me that if you study what's happened during the past three months, the Pakistani military and the White House and the Pentagon have drawn closer. There is a certain element of trust now that didn't exist before. On a scale of one to 10 it's no more than two or three in terms of trust but it is slowly building.

Unfortunately, because of our commitments in Iraq and in Afghanistan, we haven't been able to supply them with the things that they desperately need, such as more helicopters to move around FATA, which is the most rugged country in the world, as you well know.

So we're on the right track now but it's going to take a long time. When you think of the madrasahs, there are still 11,000 madrasahs in Pakistan. These were originally built along the border by President Zia, the late President Zia, as an ideological barrier against the penetration of communist ideology coming in from the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

So this requires money and a lot more than we have allocated, which, as you know, is 7.5 billion (dollars) over a five-year period, which is peanuts.

MR. PHARES: In a nutshell, in my perspective, this is a government and it has a majority in parliament – Pakistan – which is going to be very difficult to gather again in the future. It's an anti-Taliban, anti-terrorist government, so we have a partner in Pakistan.

What is more important to me in my perspective is once the Pakistani armed forces – and I agree that there should be more strategic war with the Pakistanis – ensure a battle takes over an area. The big question is what are you going to do with it? It is not just we are running out the Taliban. What is it that you're going to do? Who are you going to move in? What kind of NGOs. Who is going to be in the municipalities?

So there is a whole architecture in the war of ideas that need to be worked on.

MR. ZARATE: Bob, a great way to end, with your expertise.

MR. GRENIER: Yeah, well, there's short-term imperatives and long-term imperatives. The short-term imperative is, you know, for we acting unilaterally where we can in helping the Pakistanis where they must to deal with extremists who are actively engaged either in attacking the government of Pakistan, attacking targets in Afghanistan across the border, or, in the case of al-Qaida and perhaps some others as well, attacking targets much further afield.

Unfortunately, that imperative tends to work against the longer-term imperative, which is even more critical, and that is to solve this problem of safe haven once and for all. It's probably going to be – it's at least the project of a generation. It's going to require a combined effort – a political, economic development and military, and unfortunately Pakistan really hasn't even started out on the path.

They have talked about it, but at the end of the day the FATA needs to be – right now it is essentially a buffer zone. I think there is still an unspoken belief on the part – to include many in the political and the military class in Pakistan that somehow if we can just get through this period, we'll go back to where we were and the FATA will be what it always was and life will return to normal is simply not going to happen. The FATA needs to be incorporated into the settled areas of Pakistan.

I was encouraged very early on when President Zardari was elected. He mentioned very briefly that he wanted to repeal the Frontier Crimes Regulations, which are the unusual set of laws that roughly govern the tribal areas. He rather quickly dropped that idea. In fact, I don't think that Pakistan can succeed in this generational project unless they set out right from the beginning what their intent is and then follow through in a systematic way. They're not there yet.

MR. ZARATE: Fantastic. I want to thank the panelists for deepening our understanding. This concludes our panel, I think right on time. I want to thank all of you for attending as well as the online audience.

This also concludes the forum. There is not a concluding session, so this ends the forum, so I want to thank, obviously, all of those from CSIS who supported this, as well as Finmeccanica, which has supported this event. And I'm happy to say that this forum will happen again next year, so we'll see you next year. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

(END)