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Mr. Chairman,

My research endeavor is entirely focused on an act of cartography. To map out the range, nature and purposes of the Jihadist ideology, from primary sources.

The aim of this research is to provide a text book for future study and analysis, one that will have categorized and evaluated the enormous – and growing – body of ideological works freely distributed on the net.

I began this endeavor for the simple reason that current commentary and analysis appeared to be re-circulating either the same limited number of source materials — often those which the jihadis had chosen for us as an audience — or analyses of those who had no access at all to the foundation texts, discussions and debates among the mujahideen.

Early on I was struck by one thing – that at least 60% (this is a conservative estimate) of the materials circulated on jihadist chat forums and specialist sites were *not* located in the sections devoted to news commentary or audio-visual propaganda. They populated instead the ‘doctrinal’ and ‘cultural’ sections.

Just gauging the effort put into this endeavor, it becomes clear that the ideological struggle is where the center of gravity for the jihad lies. The point was succinctly made by a sympathizer writing in autumn 2005 on a jihadi internet forum. In a posting bearing the extraordinary title: *“The al-Qaeda organization is now finished”* the writer went on to explain that the jihad is now entering on a new phase “which the infidels are unaware of, or do not wish to believe.” It turns out that the infidels among us

“are still fixated on fighting individuals, oblivious to the fact that they are actually fighting an idea, one that has spread across the globe like fire and which is embraced even by those whose faith is a mustard seed.”

It soon becomes obvious that these ‘doctrinal’ and ‘cultural’ works are meticulously composed and written for purposes specific to the jihad. They form its life-blood, its intellectual infrastructure. They are also in constant circulation. They amount to an entire educational program, a “curriculum of jihad” if you will, and with great skill illustrate to us the process of radicalization. They show how the mujahideen attract the uncommitted broad armchair sympathizer, detach him from his social and intellectual environment, undermine his self-image hitherto as an observant Muslim, introduce what the ideologues claims is ‘real Islam’, re-script history in terms of a perennial conflict, centralize jihad as his Islamic identity, train him not only militarily but also socially and psychologically for jihad and doctrinally defend the behavior of the mujahideen against criticism.

For the jihad is highly sensitive to public opinion. It depends on the mujahideen being able to maintain their claims to authenticity and the moral high ground. We see this particularly at times of crisis, when Muslims are caught in the crossfire, a bombing goes awry, or scholars cast doubt on the Islamic credentials of their actions. Productivity peaks at these moments.

Here, in short, is an entire cultural engineering project that is taking place. And few, if any, are looking at it.

Let me emphasize: the study of these works is not an obscure academic exercise. They not only provide the ideological bedrock for recruitment, and the political validation and moral justification for violence, but have immediate relevance to strategy and tactical operations. From the classic strategy works such as *The Management of Barbarism* and the 1600-page *Call to Global Islamic Resistance* to works explaining the legality of executing prisoners and ambassadors, the killing of women and children, and the use of human shields, the permissibility of suicide bombings, the propriety of mutilating dead bodies of American soldiers, to the use of weapons of mass destruction. In each case the case has to be made doctrinally if violence is not done to the mujahideen's claims to authenticity, and they thus start to lose the propaganda war.

Study of these ideological works allows us to understand priorities as perceived by the mujahideen themselves and counter our own false starting points on what *we* think these priorities are. If nothing else, knowledge of the ideology teaches us not to underestimate the jihadis intellectually, for it soon becomes clear that they have painstakingly constructed, over decades, a serious, cogently argued, academically and ideologically coherent intellectual infrastructure to their war. They are, in short, engaged in a massive re-education project, and they are going about this *unopposed*.

Which begs the question: if they are investing in this ideological war so heavily, why aren't we? Aren't we involved in some way? It must be clear to everyone that there are direct implications for the United States on the *domestic* front. For there is a dimension of Jihadist ideology whose threat is not so explicit, where the threat is not to the physical infrastructure of our nation states — which our efficient and dedicated security services have to date proved themselves successful in defending — but to the 'horizontal' infrastructure of our democracies. That is, those entirely un-codified and un-enforceable relations — the habits, obligations and disciplines that underpin the interactions between citizens. Disciplines such as the respect for personal privacy, for the open nature of society, for multiformity, diverse interests and other ethical and ideological orientations, the active will to promote social cohesion, trust and the harmonization of interests, and the support of community-based organizations. That is, the ingredients that go to make up active citizenship.

These relations the jihadist ideology is painstakingly, explicitly attempting to destroy. The electronic library catalogue is filling up with works that deconstruct modern civic society, point for point. Here is where the jihadis have located our Achilles Heel. For standing in our way is the lack of understanding among our policy-makers as to the nature, causes and position of this jihadist culture within the broader Islamic tradition. This opacity generates not only an incapacity, but also a reluctance, to challenge the threat. Yet if we continue to overlook Jihadism's ideological program it will incur serious costs for the democratic system, which will find itself wrestling with an entire generation brought up in an alternative mental universe from our own, and educated into a radicalized, aggressive form of religious absolutism. This ideology is now of such prolific productivity that a sympathizer can live an entire lifetime without ever having to stray from its cultural 'curriculum.'

It has been said that the jihad is someone else's intellectual civil war. But this civil war is not being fought — to quote a phrase — "in some far-away country between people of whom we know nothing", but is being fought here, just beyond the walls of these buildings, in a war for the minds of Muslim youth. Do we not have the right to take sides? To decide what form of ideological spectrum is permitted in a society that values tolerance, diversity and the rights of the individual? Clearly we do. But how do we take sides? Who are the ones with whom we should be associating? Who are our potential allies and who our false friends? We don't know the answer to these questions, because we haven't provided ourselves with the means to navigate.

Mr. Chairman, this is not a difficult task. It is not beyond the capacities of the world's most powerful nation, with its unparalleled concentration of intellectual and organizational skills, to set about the task methodically.

And it is not as if we have to engage in some advance work of detection. The fact is, all the raw materials are available, they are all open source. For there are no secrets to this ideology. There can't be, because what the jihadis are engaged in is a massive educational program, a huge propaganda exercise. By nature, that cannot be hidden, it must be shouted from the rooftops. And shout from the rooftops they do. But so far we have not been listening.

More than that, we do not even have to thrash around finding out how or where to start the task. A significant part of our work has already been done for us, by the jihadists themselves. Just dipping into the output of jihadi scholars throws up inward-focused analyses of the organizational and ideological problems faced by the mujahideen. The following treatises, for instance by the London-based jihadist scholar, Abu Baseer al-Tartousi: *'Reasons for the failure of Some Jihadist Movements in Transformation Operations,' 'This is a type of Jihad we do not want'* and *'Jihad Groups – Between Recognition of Errors and Reconsideration of Principles'* provide unique insights into the ideological mechanisms of the jihad and how these impact on success on the ground. The famous al-Qaeda strategist Abu Mus'ab al-Suri has actually made a speciality of this kind of analysis, as illustrated by works such as *'Observations on the Jihad experience in Syria'* and *'What I Witnessed on the Jihad in Algeria.'* All these works give clear and incisive diagnoses on the reasons for failure, the problems among the mujahideen and the effectiveness of counter-jihad policies, the failure to win over the scholars and preachers or communicate their ideological message. Most important of all, they lay out for us the internal points of tension between jihadism and traditional Islam – the areas where *the jihadis themselves* feel their weaknesses lie. We are looking here at the jihad's soft underbelly.

To sum up, Mr. Chairman:

1. We have been confronting and intercepting fully formed jihadists, but these are merely at the end of a long-term ideological training process that produces them;
2. We have yet to tackle this production process, which means that they will continue to replace themselves at a rate faster than we can intercept them;
3. We have underestimated the ideological training, which is of the magnitude of an entire education and indoctrination system, and we fail to understand its purpose;
4. We have failed to take the Jihadists seriously, intellectually and culturally, and as a result their corrosive influence is progressing *unopposed*.

It is, I think you will agree, simply unbelievable that we are now in our sixth year after the attacks on September 11th and still without a coherent map of the enemy, of their cause and their ideological methodology. And yet we know that having this proper orientation will enable us to know, in depth, our enemy, to pinpoint and exploit internal weaknesses in their ideology, to know who are our friends are and ally ourselves accordingly, to understand our own vulnerabilities at home and protect ourselves from the slow erosion of our commonly held values which alone can safeguard our peace and our freedoms.

It is my firm belief that investment in the study of this culture — on both the security and educational fronts — has been disastrously late, and that we have given those that poison the minds of Muslim youth an unacceptable head start.

We must hasten to rectify this deficit, and gear ourselves up for the long struggle ahead.