

Winning The War On Terrorism

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Lt. Gen. Dunn: Good morning. Once again, welcome back to class.

Our speaker this morning specializes in national security. He's an author, a writer on both air power and on terrorism. He's a professor at University of Chicago. He's taught at the School of Advanced Aerospace Studies at Maxwell. We were blessed to have him when I was President of the National Defense University, we were blessed to have him speak to the National War College students and he came multiple, multiple times. He was always thoughtful and controversial. So as he gives his presentation, think of your questions that we're going to ask you to come down and ask him questions and interact with him.

Each of you have a copy of his bio, it's in the program. I'd like to turn the podium over now to Dr. Robert Pape, Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago.

[Applause].

Dr. Pape: It's a great pleasure to be here.

Over the last 18 months or so it's been my pleasure to give many talks to different government, political, academic audiences, but coming to speak for the Air Force is really quite a special pleasure for me. You see, that job at SAS that General Dunne referred to, that was really where I first cut my teeth, so to speak, in the business of national security affairs, and it's where I learned first-hand, year after year, just what an excellent group of people have come into not just the Air Force but the U.S. military as a whole. And I've always enjoyed my discussions after, make several arguments, and I'm sure that will be the case today.

Suicide terrorism is rising around the world, but there's great confusion about why. Since many of the attacks, including 9/11, have been perpetrated by Muslim suicide terrorists, many have presumed that Islamic Fundamentalism must be the obvious central cause. This presumption has fueled the belief that future 9/11's can be avoided only by wholesale transformation of Muslim societies which was a core reason for broad public support for our invasion of Iraq. However, this presumed connection between suicide terrorism and Islamic Fundamentalism is misleading and may be encouraging domestic and foreign policies likely to worsen our situation.

Over the last few years I've compiled the first complete database of every suicide terrorist attack around the world from 1980 to early 2004, and then as you'll see, I've recently updated that database globally through 2006 and for Iraq, through this summer. That core database, and I'm going to refer to that first, contains 315 completed suicide terrorist attacks by 462 suicide terrorists who actually killed themselves. There are more attackers than attacks, because many of the attacks were team attacks.

When I published the first version of this database as an article I knew at that point no academic or think tank had such a database. What I didn't know is that no government did either. I'm sure many of you know that our government, like the British government, has been keeping global ordinary terrorism statistics for decades. We started doing this in the 1970s. It's actually done in Monterrey, California which then feeds data into the Defense Department, State Department, CIA, et cetera.

After I published this article I got a call from our Department of Defense, and specifically DTRA, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency. What I didn't know until that phone call is that we didn't begin to track suicide terrorism until the fall of 2000. As a result, they were quite eager to get my data, which I gave them, and in return the Defense Department has been one of the generous funders for the update and expansion of the database that's the foundation of what I'm going to speak about here today.

I also want to point out that I've also received funding from the Carnegie Corporation in New York, Argonne, National Laboratories, and the University of Chicago itself. Altogether, this generous funding has made it possible for me to become the Director of the Chicago Project on Suicide Terrorism which collects information about suicide terrorist attacks around the world, not just in English, but in the key native languages associated with the phenomenon -- Arabic, Hebrew, Tamal, and Russia. I essentially have a research team of ten people who are fluent in those languages so it makes it possible for us to break the language barrier.

This survey examines all the available open source documents from the suicide terrorist groups themselves, from the target countries under fire from the media, Alexis and Fibus, now called open source. In addition, we've sent people to conduct international research in Cairo, Beirut, Damascus, and elsewhere.

Today I'm going to present a lot of lists, a lot of charts, but I want to emphasize that this rests on a rather large amount of new information.

I also want to emphasize that I use a two independent source verification rule. We don't use uncorroborated anonymous internet chatroom data, certainly not after the WMD fiasco. Nonetheless, we do have a rather large amount of information and what I want to do, I don't have a chance to show you too much of it because I do have to summarize it, but I brought something that I'm hoping the camera might be able to pick up.

It may come as a bit of a surprise to you, but the suicide terrorist groups are quite proud of their activities in their local communities. This glossy, yearbook-like album is produced by the Tamal Tigers in Sri Lanka. It's published in Tamal in Jafna. Well, this is the book dedicated to the actual Black Tigers, their actual suicide attackers. As I'm hoping many of you can see, this contains pictures -- not body parts, but pictures of the actual suicide attackers. Their names, their birth places, their ages, and other socioeconomic data about them specifically.

Now they're not doing this and publishing it and sending it off to Langley, you have to go to get it. But it's really quite helpful if we want to find out who the suicide attackers actually are and what motivates them. We, of course, have such information for Islamic groups as well.

What does the data show? First, the data shows that suicide terrorism and ordinary terrorism have been moving in opposite directions. From the mid 1980s to early in the 2000s, terrorism incidents of all types have been declining, they have been falling. In fact you can see that from their peak in the mid 1980s they fell nearly in half by 2001. At the same time that little bit of terrorism that was suicide terrorism has been climbing from this tiny fraction of just a few attacks around the world per year in the 1980s to a growing amount, and you'll see just how much it's growing later on.

These facts help to explain why there was such a failure of imagination before 9/11. Since all terrorism was declining and we weren't tracking suicide terrorism it was hard to see that the threat was actually growing.

The data also shows that suicide terrorism and Islamic Fundamentalism are not as closely associated as many people think. Overall there were 315 completed suicide attacks worldwide during this period. The world leader is the Tamal Tigers in Sri Lanka. It's a group most people won't have heard of. They're a Marxist group, a secular group, a Hindu group. The Tamal Tigers in Sri Lanka have done more suicide terrorist attacks than Hamas or Islamic Jihad, and that's true to this day.

Further, at least 30 percent of all Muslim suicide attacks were by purely secular groups such as the PKK in Turkey which is

a Marxist, that is anti-religious suicide terrorist group. Overall, at least 50 percent of all suicide attacks were not associated with Islamic Fundamentalism.

What nearly all suicide terrorist attacks have in common is not religion but a specific political and strategic objective to compel a democratic state to withdraw combat forces. I don't mean advisors with sidearms. I mean tanks, fighter aircraft and armor units, from territory the terrorists consider to be their homeland or prize greatly. From Lebanon, to the West Bank, to Sri Lanka, to Kashmir, to Chechnya, every suicide terrorist campaign since 1980 has been waged by terrorist groups whose main goal has been to establish or maintain self determination for territory that the terrorists prize.

Religion is rarely the root cause, although religion is often used as a recruiting tool for terrorist organizations. Three general patterns in the data support my conclusions.

The first concerns the timing of suicide terrorist attacks. Suicide terrorism rarely occurs as an isolated, scattered or random phenomenon as it would if it were the product of religious fanaticism or merely ideology, independent of circumstance. Instead, the attacks tend to occur in clusters that look very much like campaigns, and specifically 301 of the 315 attacks occur in coherent, organized strategic campaigns that terrorist groups design for mainly political purposes. Only five percent are random or isolated attacks.

To be clear, I'm not claiming to account for every suicide attack that has occurred. I am, however, suggesting that the patterns I'm identifying today do account for 95 percent of all the suicide terrorism we've seen around the world since 1980.

This table shows all the campaigns. Five were ongoing.

This table reorganizes those campaigns by the disputes that produced them. As you can see, suicide terrorist campaigns are directed at gaining control of territory that the terrorists prize. This has been the central objective of every suicide terrorist campaign since 1980.

Let me talk about the first one, Lebanon, in this regard.

Hezbollah, that famous suicide terrorist group. In June 1982, Hezbollah did not exist. In June 1982 Israel invaded southern Lebanon with 78,000 combat soldiers; 3,000 tanks and armor vehicles. One month later, Hezbollah was born.

Hezbollah then began to experiment with suicide attacks. It's very fourth suicide attack about a year later, in October 1983, was the famous attack against the U.S. Marine Barracks in

Beirut killing 241 Marines. As a result of that attack Ronald Reagan, no pacifist, just two months later withdrew all American combat forces from Lebanon. The French also withdrew their combat forces from Lebanon. They too had suffered an attack, actually on the same day as the Marine Barracks attack. Then later Israel steadily withdrew from Lebanon until it withdrew completely in 2000.

What's striking is when the Americans left, Hezbollah suicide attackers did not follow the Americans to New York; they didn't follow the French to Paris; they didn't even follow the Israelis to Tel Aviv. When those foreign combat forces left, suicide terrorism stopped completely. In fact since 2000, since the Israelis left, Hezbollah still has not done even a single suicide attack, much less against Israel, which is really quite striking. Even last summer that did not happen.

Now I'm not saying that foreign occupation or the threat of foreign occupation is a sufficient condition for suicide terrorism, but the military presence of foreign combat forces on territory that the terrorists prize does appear to be virtually a necessary condition.

The third pattern concerns target selection. If suicide terrorism is a calculated, coercive strategy one might think that it would be applied against states viewed as especially vulnerable to coercive punishment. Rightly or wrongly, democracies are widely viewed as soft, especially vulnerable to coercive punishment. The target audience of every suicide terrorist campaign has been a democracy.

Let me refer to the PKK, that Kurdish suicide terrorist group in Turkey in this regard. As I'm sure many in this audience know, in the 1980s and '90s the Turks were at least moderately brutal toward their Kurds and the Kurds did use suicide terrorism against the Turks in the mid 1990s. However, just a few miles away in Iraq Saddam Hussein was far more brutal to Iraq's Kurds. He was exterminating them at 20,000 a clip. And neither the PKK nor any other terrorist group ever thought to use suicide attacks against Saddam. Now that we know more about the logic it helps us to explain why. Who would ever think killing hundreds or even thousands of Iraqi civilians would have caused Saddam to change his mind about anything?

So the bottom line is that the timing, the goals, and the societies targeted by suicide terrorism suggests it is a coherent strategy designed to cause democratic states to abandon foreign military presence on territory that the terrorists prize.

Al-Qaida fits the pattern. Since al-Qaida suicide attacks began in 1995, al-Qaida's core strategic logic has been to compel American and Western combat forces to leave the Arabian

Peninsula, a logic that al-Qaida has been pursuing with increasing vigor since 9/11.

This chart shows you all the al-Qaida attacks since they began, and you can see I'm running out of room. So if you would just mentally add the London 2005 suicide attacks on to the bottom you can easily see that since 2002 al-Qaida has carried out over 17 suicide and other terrorist attacks, killing over 700 people. That's more attacks and more victims than all the years before 9/11 combined.

Although many of us would have hoped our counter-terrorism efforts would have weakened the group, by the measure that counts the ability of al-Qaida to kill us, al-Qaida is stronger today than before 9/11.

Now there are multiple causes behind the threat. I don't mean to deny that, but the driving force behind the threat is the presence of American and Western combat forces on the Arabian peninsula and not any ideology, even Islamic Fundamentalism, independent of circumstance.

Perhaps the best way to talk about the motivation of al-Qaida is to show you where al-Qaida suicide attackers come from. This research is the first to collect the complete set of the 71 individuals who actually killed themselves to carry out attacks for Osama from 1995 to early 2004. Of these we know the names, nationalities and other socioeconomic data about 67. And as you can see from the table, the largest number, 34, have come from Saudi Arabia, the majority from the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Peninsula where the United States first began to station combat forces in 1990.

It's important to underscore even to an expert audience that 1990 was a watershed year in our military deployment to the Persian Gulf. Yes, before 1990 we had some advisors with sidearms on the peninsula, mostly Marines standing in front of embassies, but the fact is before 1990 we had no tanks, no fighter aircraft, no armor units going all the way back to World War II. 1990 was a fundamental shift in our military combat deployment to the Persian Gulf.

Notice where the al-Qaida suicide attackers are not coming from -- Iran. Surely an Islamic Fundamentalist population, three times the population of Saudi Arabia. No al-Qaida suicide attackers.

Sudan. Sudan is an Islamic Fundamentalist population about the same size as Saudi Arabia with a brand of Islamic Fundamentalism so congenial to Osama he chose to live there for three years in the 1990s. No al-Qaida suicide attackers.

Pakistan. Pakistan is the largest Islamic Fundamentalist population on the planet, 149 million people. Two.

If Islamic Fundamentalism is what was driving the threat we should have been seeing suicide attackers hopping out of Iran, hopping out of Sudan, and hopping out of Pakistan and that's not the pattern that we see.

Now I'm not saying that al-Qaida has no transnational support, but it's crucial to see that the presence of American and Western combat forces on the Arabian Peninsula is Osama's best mobilization appeal.

Since we have the complete set of al-Qaida suicide attackers we can go further to assess the effect of American military policies. With only one exception, al-Qaida suicide terrorists from 1995 to early 2004 were all nationals of various Sunni majority countries. Hence, we can compare the rate at which al-Qaida suicide terrorists emerge from a Sunni country with American combat presence, and a Sunni country without American combat presence. As you can see, al-Qaida suicide terrorists are over ten times more likely to come from a Sunni country with American combat presence than a Sunni country without American combat presence.

This does not mean that we should blame ourselves for the deaths of our civilians on 9/11. Suicide terrorism is murder and there's nothing our combat forces did when they were stationed on the Arabian Peninsula that would justify the murder of our civilians. In fact I know many of the pilots who went to Saudi Arabia, because in fact they came through SAS. I know the extent we went to to minimize our footprint but that should not cause us to overlook that what recruits suicide attackers better for Osama better than anything else, his best mobilization appeal, is the presence of American and Western combat forces on the Arabian peninsula.

Moreover, I'm not trying to tell you that all al-Qaida suicide attackers come from Sunni countries where we station combat forces. Two-thirds do, one-third do not. One-third are transnational in nature. But if we look at the transnational al-Qaida suicide attackers we can see that the presence of American and Western combat forces on the Arabian Peninsula is a powerful motivating factor.

Let me talk about the July 2005 London bombers in this regard and make four points about those al-Qaida suicide attacks.

First, the al-Qaida group that claimed responsibility just two hours after the attacks and with specific operational details not yet in the press said the London attacks were to punish Britain for British military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Second, Hussein Osman. Osman is one of the would-be July 21st bombers, the fellow we picked up in Rome. Osman said in his interrogation, and I quote, "This was not about religion. This was about Iraq. We watch films of American military atrocities in Iraq."

Third, Mohammed Kahn. Mohammed Kahn is the ringleader, the fellow from Leeds, of the actual 7/7 attacks. Several months after the bombing al-Qaida released Mohammed Kahn's martyr video, and you can still watch it. It's a little eerie because he's speaking in English about the suicide attacks that he's going to carry out. He says the attacks are going to be to punish Britain for British military operations in Muslim countries.

Finally, the British government itself. In 2004 the British government conducted a four-volume survey of the attitudes of the 1.6 million Muslims in Britain. They found that between 8 and 13 percent of British Muslims supported more suicide attacks against the West. They further found the number one reason for that was Iraq.

I've been laying out this litany for about a year now, maybe a little over a year and a half. Folks from the British Home Office have actually heard it. I just encourage you to go look at last October, just Google "head of MI5". She's a woman. She gave a 40 minute speech, rare for her to give a public speech, and you will see that she lays out the motivations for the London bombers including the video testimony wills I just talked about in great detail. She doesn't say, and therefore the British are leaving Iraq, but I think you can see that once you understand the nature of the threat it does have an affect on foreign policy.

What's al-Qaida been up to since 9/11? A closer look at those attacks helps us to see how al-Qaida's strategic logic has been evolving. Although many of the attacks occur across a broad geographic range and in many Muslim countries, notice the striking consistency in the victims of the attacks. They are consistently Western civilians, and not just any Western civilians -- Western civilians from countries who are military allies with combat forces stationed side by side with the United States in Afghanistan and especially in Iraq. That is, since 9/11 al-Qaida has not been thrown into chaos. They're not off kilter. They have been focused. They have been focused on stripping the United States of its military allies. And we know this not only from the pattern of the attacks, but because we have an important al-Qaida strategy document.

In fall 2003 al-Qaida published a 42 page strategy document on radical web sites for how to deal with the United States given Iraq. In December '03 this was found by Norwegian intelligence

and it's still sitting on the Norwegian intelligence security web site. The Norwegians gave it to our Office of Terrorism in OSD and the Office of Terrorism in the White House, and I've talked to the heads of both of those who agree that they've got it, but they put the document aside because it was just published out in the open.

Well, we're not paying so little attention to it now, and I think you'll see why once I tell you more about it.

This document says directly that with Iraq al-Qaida should not seek to attack the American homeland in the short term, but instead should focus on hitting America's military allies. Then it goes on at the length of 42 pages to assess whether they should hit Spain, Britain or Poland -- this is in the fall of '03. They conclude they should hit Spain in Madrid just before the March 2004 elections because that would be the attack most likely to knock Spanish forces out of Iraq and put pressure on the British in Iraq.

Since we didn't pay much attention to the document at the time I'd just like to read a few sentences. "Therefore we say that in order to force the Spanish government to withdraw from Iraq the resistance should be dealt painful blows. It is necessary to make utmost use of the upcoming general election in Spain in March of next year. We think that the Spanish government could not tolerate more than two, maximum three blows, after which it will have to withdraw as a result of popular pressure. If it's troops still remain in Iraq after these blows then the victory of the socialist party is almost secured and the withdrawal of Spanish forces will be on its electoral program. Lastly, we are emphasizing that a withdrawal of Spanish forces from Iraq would put huge pressure on the British in Iraq."

Those attacks happened, just as they called for. They got the political results they wanted. They probably think they're winning. And in fact the London attacks were simply the next step of al-Qaida executing this strategic logic.

When I go to give this talk, and I give talks to all our intelligence agencies -- CIA, SDI, et cetera -- but also to the FBI a number of times because they're very interested in what's motivating suicide attackers. You should know that of course if you're tasked with defending our security right on the home front you have to ask an important question. Is it so bad they're going after our allies? After all, that means they're not coming after us.

Well, I'm afraid the answer is actually no for a couple of reasons. First, al-Qaida is now fairly far along down that variant of their strategy. They probably don't think they have much further to go. Secondly, if you look more closely at the

statements by Osama in the last 12 months you will see in language that's very similar to the Norwegian document, where he says directly that for the last few years al-Qaida has been focusing on killing civilians from military allies of the United States and now they're going to put American targets back on the radar. They're not taking our allies off, but they are putting us back on.

How is that going to happen? What are the indications of this? Rather than have me tell you about it what I'd like to do is show you a video. What I want to do is show you a recruitment video that's al-Qaida's recruitment video to recruit homegrown suicide attackers so you can see how they're doing it.

I'm going to show you a video by Adam Gaddan. Adam Gaddan is an American. He is probably the poster child for recruiting homegrown suicide attackers in the United States and Western Europe.

Adam Gaddan is 29 years old. He was born in Riverside, California. His name is Adam. His father was Jewish. When the family was very young, when he was young the whole family converted to Christianity and then when Adam was a teenager he converted to Islam.

Since 1998 Adam has been living with Osama, either in Afghanistan or now in parts of Pakistan we think Osama is at, and last year -- he's been on some videos before with his face covered, but last year you might call it his coming out video. I'd just like to play it.

[Video shown - transcript follows]

"It's crucial for Muslims to keep in mind that the Americans, the British and the other members of the Coalition of Terror have intentionally targeted Muslim civilians and civilian targets both before as well as after September 11th in both the first and second Iraq wars as well as in their forays into Somalia and the Sudan and Afghanistan, just to give you a few examples. They've done this with the support and backing of their populations and electorates. I mean, even if there have been some feeble protests scattered here and there in the West, chiefly against the latest war in Iraq, all the same the governments that started these wars have been reelected by a majority of the popular vote.

"In their aggression against Afghanistan, which for Westerners and their mercenary sympathizers, is the least controversial of Bush and Blair's terrorist wars, they have targeted civilians for assassination and kidnapping. They kidnapped any non-Afghans they found and shipped them off to Guantanamo or worse. Many were handed over to the American and

British backed despotic regimes of the Islamic world to be brutally interrogated and with the blessing and support of that notorious Afghan killer, Hammad Karzai. They've murdered thousands of Afghan civilians as they slept in their beds, traveled on the roads, attended weddings, and prayed at the mosques.

"I know they've killed and maimed civilians in their strikes because I've seen it with my own eyes. My brothers have seen it. I've carried the victims in my arms -- women, children, toddlers, babies in their mother's wombs. You name it, they've probably bombed it. I could go on and on, and that's just Afghanistan. We haven't talked about American and British atrocities in the two Iraq wars. Let's take a look at the latest to be revealed.

"In Mahmodia, five American soldiers gang rape an Iraqi woman, and then to hide the evidence murder her and three members of her family and burn her body. Then when our Mujahadin take revenge on the unit which committed this outrage and capture and execute two of its members they're called terrorists and Muslims are supposed to disown them or face the consequences. I'm not saying that we should go and slaughter their women and children one by one like they did ours at Hadisa and Dishaki and Mahmodia and God knows where else, even if some of our legal experts have permitted that. And even if it's hard to imagine that any compassionate person could see pictures, just pictures, of what the crusaders did to those children, and not want to go on a shooting spree at the Marine's housing facilities at Camp Pendleton.

"But what I am saying is that when we bomb their cities and civilians like they bomb ours, or destroy their infrastructure and means of transportation like they destroy ours, or kidnap their non-combatants like they kidnap ours, no sane Muslim should shed tears for them. They should blame no one but themselves because they're the ones who started this dirty war and they're the ones who will end it by ending their aggression against Islam and Muslims, by pulling out of our region, and by keeping their hands out of our affairs. And until and unless they do that, neither forced gate style police raids nor Belmarsh or Guantanamo prison cells nor the mosques and Imam's Advisory Council will be able to prevent the Muslims from exacting revenge on behalf of their persecuted brothers and sisters."

[End video].

Dr. Pape: No 72 virgins. Hardly any discussion of Islam as a religion. From beginning to end this is an empathetic plea based on the plight of a people under foreign occupation.

Notice how he gives us no credit for policing ourselves. He's spinning the facts. But also, as I'm sure you all were

noticing, underneath it the core facts he was referring to actually occurred. He wasn't making them up whole cloth.

If we're going to confront this enemy, if we're going to win the war on terrorism it's terribly important that we take into account who the enemy actually is, how the enemy actually mobilizes recruits. I've just been delighted that over the last year numerous security forces not just in the United States, not just our FBI, but also in Western Europe, have been focusing on motivations, and you'll see this with the Fort Dix attack that we disrupted, you'll see this with the recent attack we just disrupted in Germany against Ramstein Air Force Base, motivations directly related to America's combat forces. I think those steps have helped our security.

Next slide.

I'm running out of time. I could go on for a long time. But I just want to mention that Iraq is a prime example of the strategic logic of suicide terrorism.

Before our invasion in March 2003 Iraq never experienced a suicide terrorist attack in its history. Since our invasion suicide terrorism has been doubling every year that we've had about 150,000 combat forces stationed there. That last line, 2007, is already bigger than all -- that's just through the end of July. That's already bigger than 2006.

I have lots of things to tell you about the geography of the suicide attacks -- a little different than what you might be thinking because you're probably used to just seeing the most prominent ones. Also the targets of the suicide attacks to show you that in fact the insurgents are following a fairly standard model of insurgency. This is not the only model, but it's a normal model of insurgency. This is not a chaotic phenomenon.

But the main thing I want to show you is what we know about the nationality, the identity of the suicide attackers. Right now their identity is murky. That's normal. Most of our information about suicide attackers comes after their campaign. But we can only confidently code right now about 15 percent of the identity of the Iraqi suicide terrorists. They come from two main groups -- Iraqi Sunnis and Saudis. The next largest from Syria. That is, the overwhelming majority are coming either from Iraq or the immediately adjacent border communities, some of which are on our hit list to go after next.

This idea that they're coming and they're all foreign is just simply a red herring. At least from what we can tell from the data and from what I can tell from the government folks I talk to, their data doesn't show much different pattern. That is, it's an overwhelmingly Arabian peninsula phenomenon.

Notice how we don't have a single Iranian suicide attacker to this point. That, of course, may change.

This is strongly consistent with the strategic logic of suicide terrorism.

As I told you, we've just completed an update for suicide terrorism around the world and it comes as no surprise that Iraq is the largest campaign. You may be surprised, although some of you probably know, that Afghanistan has been exploding, especially in the last year, and in fact when we do 2007 those lines are going to be up even more. But the critical point is that the other campaigns have been occurring.

I just want to call your attention, especially in this audience, to one little itty bitty campaign. Notice Uzbekistan. There were four suicide attacks in Uzbekistan. When did they occur? We put our air base in Uzbekistan, as you know, after we toppled the Taliban. It's actually up and running in late '01 into 2002. Well the suicide attacks, there's only four of them, which are occurring in a market right outside the air base, start after that point. Then we withdrew our air base in the fall of 2005, after which there hasn't been a single suicide attack in Uzbekistan. Just a little itty bitty case. And I point it out to show you just how sensitive suicide terrorism is to foreign military presence.

What does the pattern show overall? Let's count the rest of the world against the pattern and let's count every suicide attack in Pakistan against the pattern I'm suggesting, although I think about half of them should count for it, but let's just count them all against it. Even then 87 percent of all the suicide terrorism from 2004 to 2006 is directly related to the onset of American military presence in those countries, and 94 percent all around the world. Undoubtedly after this year those numbers will go up even higher.

This has not been a happy talk. I'm telling you that the war on terrorism is heading south and I'm telling you that a key reason is that our strategy for fighting the war on terrorism has been based on a faulty premise. The faulty premise that suicide terrorism is mainly a product of Islamic Fundamentalism. If that premise were true, it would make sense in extremists to conquer Muslim countries and to wring the Fundamentalism out of them, so to speak. However, although there are multiple causes the main cause of the threat we face is not merely an ideology independent of circumstance, but the sustained presence of American and Western combat forces on the Arabian Peninsula.

On 9/11 we had 12,000 combat forces stationed on the Arabian Peninsula -- 5,000 in Saudi, 7,000 in countries on the rim. Now

we have over 150,000 stationed there. As our military presence has gone up, side by side so has suicide terrorism both in Iraq and by al-Qaida.

What does this mean? Obviously policy is not simply a function of facts and figures, but also value. So I don't mean to suggest that there's a one size fits all. For me, it doesn't mean we should simply cut and run. We have important obligations in the region, chiefly among them being stability and access to oil. Nor do I think we should simply stay and die. Because the longer our combat forces are stationed on the Arabian Peninsula, the greater the risk of the next 9/11, 7/7 or Bali bombings or worse.

Instead, I think we need a new strategic approach, a new strategy for the Persian Gulf. I call it off-shore balancing which relies on air and naval forces stationed over the horizon and not on-shore combat presence.

How do we get there? I would move to this strategy over the next two or three years, not all at once. Specifically I would begin to withdraw combat forces over the next year in serious ways. I would go beyond what Patreaus is talking about, but that's not really the crucial issue. The crucial issue is that as we withdraw we should also be transitioning to the strategy, how would I do that? We already can identify the one mechanism by which the war could escalate as we withdraw combat forces. That one mechanism is if heavy arms, heavy arms are used against civilians in Iraq. Right now that hasn't happened. But as anybody who's seen what's happened in Bosnia knows, if heavy arms -- tanks and heavy machine guns start to be used against Iraq's civilians, the deaths we've seen in Iraq could go up. That, the use of heavy weapons, is something we can do something about with air and naval power. We have the technology over the horizon to not necessarily end it completely, I'm not suggesting that for a moment, but to keep a lid on the volcano of violence which is an excellent thing for us to do.

This strategy of off-shore balancing is actually not a new strategy. It's quite similar to the strategy we pursued for decades before 1990. In the 1970s and '80s the United States successfully secured its interests in the Persian Gulf without stationing a single combat soldier there, even when there was a major war between Iraq and Iran. Instead we relied on an alliance with Iraq and Saudi Arabia which we can do again; we stationed numerous aircraft carriers off the coast, and as I don't have to tell you, air power is far more effective today than it was 30 years ago; and we maintained bases without troops, but bases so that we could rapidly deploy in a crisis if necessary.

Off-shore balancing worked splendidly to reverse Saddam Hussein's aggression against Kuwait in 1990 and an over-the-horizon posture is again our best strategy to secure our interests in the region, to prevent the rise of more suicide terrorists against us, and it's a policy that we can sustain for decades. Not just hold on by our fingernails for a year or two here or there as we're doing right now.

For the last ten years our enemies have been dying to win, but with the right strategy it's America and our allies who are poised for victory.

Thank you very much.

[Applause].

Lt. Gen. Dunn: I am sorry so say, but we have hardly any time for questions. But I will take the prerogative of the chair to ask one question for you, Dr. Pape.

What do you say to the skeptics that would say by limiting your analysis to suicide attacks what you've done is you've taken a narrow subset of the larger picture. And of course suicide bombers are going to be the most effective against the well-armed Western and U.S. troops. Therefore when you analyze the data you're going to see of course more attacks against the U.S. and the West.

And the other skeptical comment I might make is Osama bin Laden in his 1998 Fatwa against the United States and the West did not mention the word Israel once, and he wanted U.S. troops out of Saudi Arabia, not the larger Gulf. And of course, U.S. troops are now out of Saudi Arabia. So what we see sometimes is a changing set of desires.

Dr. Pape: Excellent, General.

The first question about why focus on suicide terrorism. First in a small say, 9/11 could not have killed 3,000 people without the willingness of the 19 to kill themselves. We know that because there was an ordinary attack on the very same towers at the World Trade Center in 1993 which killed six people. Most people don't even remember that event.

But more broadly, suicide terrorism and terrorism is a lot like cancer. Yes, it would be great if some day we could find a cure for all cancer, but while we're waiting it's very helpful to see that there's one form that's very lethal, the most lethal of all, and that's lung cancer. And it's helpful to see that there's one risk factor that's head and shoulders above the others that causes lung cancer, and that's smoking.

Suicide terrorism is the same way, sir. You see, suicide terrorism accounts for about 73 percent of all deaths around the world due to terrorism. That is it's mostly been suicide terrorism that's been killing people. There is one risk factor that's head and shoulders above the others, and it's just terribly important to know that so we don't kind of dig the hole deeper and deeper and deeper and we can pursue strategies that will actually advance our interests over the long run.

Your second question -- Saudi Arabia.

It's important to see that Osama has never used the term Saudi Arabia. He uses the term the Arabian Peninsula. In fact if somebody says why don't you -- In Peter Bergen's famous interview he tried to use the word Saudi Arabia. He called them a British Imperialist. You see, it's the British who drew the lines in the Arabian Peninsula after World War I, not the people on the Arabian Peninsula. So for Osama there are no borders between Yemen and Saudi Arabia; between Yemen and most of Iraq. It's the Arabian Peninsula as a whole, and that is what he's speaking about and what he's referring to. When he's trying to mobilize the support is the Arabian Peninsula as a whole. And actually, sir, withdrawing the combat forces from Saudi Arabia, given that we've increased them around the rest of the Arabian Peninsula so much, is the exact wrong concession. It's the worst of both worlds. It's the kind of concession which does nothing to end the threat and persuades them that if they keep going they'll get even more.

Lt. Gen. Dunn: Dr. Pape, on behalf of the Air Force Association and all our conference attendees we want to thank you for a thoughtful, provocative in some cases, presentation. I know we don't have enough time for questions, but let me suggest that Dr. Pape at the end of this presentation, if anybody wants to talk to him down front to your left, that you come up and have a discussion with him.

Thank you very much and on behalf of all of us I want to present this book which is how the Air Force Memorial was built and the story of the Air Force Memorial and we're delighted that you took the time with us this morning. Thank you.

[Applause].

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