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The New Mideast and Regional Counterterrorism

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Esther Babson: Good afternoon. Thank you everyone for sticking around after lunch. I know it's always tough to keep folks around, so we're happy to have you here. My name is Esther Babson and I'm the Climate Security Program Manager at the American Security Project, and honored to be here as a scholar as part of the Aspen Security Forum Scholarship. I'm thrilled to introduce our next session titled The New Mideast: Regional Counterterrorism. As Saudi Arabia modernizes its society and also is asserting itself militarily in the region to an unprecedented degree, meanwhile Egypt's president is cracking down on militants in the Sinai, and ISIS has lost nearly all of its territory but remains a serious threat.

This panel will examine these shifting dynamics and the implications for regional counterterrorism. Moderating this session will be Dina Temple-Raston. Dina has been part of NPR's national security team as the network's counterterrorism correspondent for over a decade. She took a book leave to work on the What Were You Thinking? podcast in which she is host and co-executive producer. And she is working on a second season of the series and a book on adolescent decision making. Dina.

Dina Temple-Ras: Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you for coming today. I personally made the heavens open up so you couldn't be outside and had to come in, so I see our ... there you go, Clark just applauded. Thank you very much to the Aspen Institute and the Aspen Security Forum for bringing us together. I think what's really interesting about this particular panel -- and you may notice that some of the pictures in the program don't quite match the faces on the panel, and I'll explain in a second -- but what I thought was very interesting about this panel is I've probably been coming to the Aspen Security Forum if not every year for the last nine years, just about every year. And typically over that time, the panels that we saw were very much like this. And if you look at the program now, counterterrorism just doesn't have the same prominence of place that it used to have here at the Security Forum, and that'll be one of the things that we'll be exploring during this panel.

So because your programs might be slightly different than what we have up here, I was going to go ahead and introduce our panelists. To my left is Ambassador Nathan Sales. He's the Coordinator for Counterterrorism at the State Department. His picture actually is in your program. Next to him is Ali Shihabi. He's the founder of the Arabia Foundation, which is a think tank that focuses on the Gulf. He's a Princeton graduate -- go, Tigers -- and the author of several books on the Middle East. And last but certainly not least, Ned Price, who is the former National Security Council spokesman. He was a CIA officer for a decade and is now backing an advocacy group in D.C. as part of an advocacy group called the National Security Action. Sorry I butchered that a little bit.

So what I'd like to do is I'd like to start by getting a snapshot of where we are now in terms of terrorism, and then sort of move on to other issues about regional help in terrorism. Leon Panetta rather famously said that we'll never defeat terrorism, but we'll know that we achieved our goal if terrorism becomes

just an irritant. So my question, actually starting with you Ned, is in this country -- not Europe or elsewhere -- but in this country, are we getting close to that goal?

Ned Price: Well first of all, thank you for having me. For those of you who saw the program, I am not Lieutenant General Nagata. We don't even bear a resemblance, but I'm very honored to be here.

Dina, to your question -- and this isn't a dodge; this I think is the honest answer as least insofar as I see it -- is that we have to determine what our tolerance is for irritation. I think if you look at the post-9/11 period, from 9/11 until today, and you do an accounting of the actual terrorist threat in the United States, according to a study released last year 95 American citizens were killed by foreign terrorist organizations on U.S. soil. That's 95.

Dina Temple-Ras: Is that counting the Pulse nightclub?

Ned Price: That's counting Pulse. So if you just count Pulse, that's closer to 45. And so you look at those numbers and then you compare what we have spent on this effort since 9/11 -- \$500 billion on Homeland Security alone; by one estimate, \$4 trillion on wars, on caring for our veterans, on all of the ancillary costs that go with that -- and you compare that death toll to what we experience on a yearly, if not daily, basis with any range of threats, more Americans have been killed by choking on food, by lightning strikes each year. President Obama famously said, and was famously derided, for saying that more Americans are killed in their bathtubs each year than by terrorist organizations. But these are data points that I think we have to consider. Now of course, the counter argument to all of this -- and as the critics pointed out at the time -- is that our bathtubs are not trying to kill us. Obviously, terrorist organizations-

Dina Temple-Ras: Maybe not yours.

Ned Price: Not intentionally at least. And so obviously, terrorist organizations are out there for one reason, and that is to instill terrorism. They have done that, they continue to do that. But I think to get back to your question, we just have to come to grips, come to terms with how much of a threat level we're willing to countenance, how much we're willing to deal with. And then how that corresponds ... as a country, how much we're willing to expend in terms of blood and treasure, and I think it's something we're still wrestling with.

Dina Temple-Ras: Do you think we're at least moving in the direction of irritant? Would you say that?

Ned Price: Absolutely. My personal perspective is certainly so. I think if you look at what has happened -- and I know we'll get into this, in the counter-ISIS campaign over the past couple of years -- if you have looked at what has happened to both al-Qaeda core and to the al-Qaeda affiliates, these are groups that no longer, and

especially in the case of al-Qaeda core where the real concern was, we're no longer as concerned. There's always the concern but we're no longer as concerned with a spectacular 9/11 style threat, 9/11 style attack.

Today, what we are focused on and what we were focused on very much so during the Obama administration are home grown violent extremists. The Pulse nightclub shooters, the San Bernadino attackers, the other assailants who have over the course of the past 15 years since 9/11 inflicted these some 95 casualties on U.S. soil. So I think when you compare where we were on September 12th, 2001 to where we are now, we are moving in the direction of irritation, but it's always going to be subjective as to whether we're there yet.

Dina Temple-Ras: Right, you're more irritated if it's your father who's [inaudible 00:07:27]

Ned Price: Absolutely.

Dina Temple-Ras: Exactly. So Ambassador Sales and Ali, let me bring you into the conversation and sort of pan the camera back so we're not just looking at the United States, because I think the U.S. problem is different than the European problem for example. What conditions ... I'll start with you, Ambassador Sales, what conditions do you think we need on the ground to successfully bring terrorism to the level of irritant more generally?

Nathan Sales: I guess I'd start by resisting the characterization of terrorism as an irritant or a problem that we're trying to scale down to the level of irritation. Deliberately murdering people is not an irritant. It's something much worse than that. So I guess I would formulate the problem slightly differently. I would say what we're trying to do is address the terrorist threat using kinetic options, military options, and degrade it to the point where we're capable of dealing with it with non-kinetic options such as law enforcement tools, border security tools, sanctions, financial sanctions tools. How close are we to achieving that desired end state? It depends. Geographically, it's highly contingent. The United States, as you said, is in a different position than Europe, is in a different position than Africa, is in a different position than Southeast Asia.

I'd like to go back to the bathtub if I may. As you said, Ned, the analogy between terrorists trying to kill you and slipping and falling in your bathtub breaks down because bathtubs aren't trying to kill us. I think the comparison is flawed in another way as well. And that's because the government doesn't exist to protect us from our bathtubs. It's doesn't exist to protect us from choking on a pretzel. The government exists to defend us against hostile foreign powers, whether they are nation-states or transnational actors that are capable of inflicting harm on the magnitude of a nation-state. That's why we're in this business, not because of a actuarial table that says the risk of death from one threat is five percent versus .0003 percent. But we're in this business because that's what the business of government is, to protect us from hostile foreign threats.

Dina Temple-Ras: So using your analogy of it becoming something that law enforcement handles, are we moving more towards that direction of having terrorism be a law enforcement issue as opposed to a kinetic issue?

Nathan Sales: In some theaters, yeah. I'm sure we'll get into the details when we talk about ISIS, but the physical caliphate is on its last leg. It's down to about two percent of the territory that it once held. An extraordinary amount of territory has been liberated, an extraordinary number of people have been liberated from ISIS's clutches and that's been largely through the use of military force.

So what happens next? Well, ISIS is down but it's not out, and so the threat is going to evolve. It's going to evolve from one in which we are primarily concerned with a terrorist organization that controls territory and seeks to govern it, establishing courts, administering a system of taxation and so on, to a new type of threat that is much more diffused, one in which affiliates around the world have a measure of, indeed a large measure of independence in planning plots and executing them into an even more diffused threat in which individuals who've never been to the war zone in Syria and Iraq, who have no connection to ISIS other than the ability to watch beheading videos on YouTube or some other online platform, are able to self-radicalize, rent a truck, and drive it into a crowd.

And for those types of threats, the diffused network and the individual home grown terrorist that Ned started to get us into, that's where things like border security tools, analyzing airline reservation data to find out who's crossing your borders, prosecutors who are capable of building a successful case against a terrorist, that's where those civilian sector tools are going to be pivotal.

Dina Temple-Ras: So I have two quick questions for you and then I'll get to you, Ali. Sorry. The first is that if you hadn't used the word ISIS and you had described what you had just described about a diffuse terrorist group that was using the internet to recruit, it sounds a lot like al-Qaeda 2.0 as opposed to what ISIS was with its territory. al-Qaeda really didn't have any territory but it was able to do all those things that you just talked about. So does that mean we take out those old al-Qaeda tools and use those as opposed to just the ones you're talking about?

Nathan Sales: Well, the al-Qaeda tools are the ISIS tools. The tools are threat-agnostic. We use passenger name record data to analyze the travel of persons into our country. We can do a link analysis; has anybody booked an airline ticket with the same phone number as a known terrorist. We can do pattern analysis; is somebody traveling on an unusual pattern, unusual routing that might be indicative of nefarious intent. We use that tool against ISIS, but we use it against al-Qaeda as well. We could use it against other terrorist threats that we haven't mentioned yet. Iran backs terrorist organizations, whether it's Hezbollah or Quds Force. So I guess I would resist the characterization of a tool as being an AQ tool. I would characterize it as being a universally applicable civilian tool that can be deployed against threats regardless of what they call themselves.

Dina Temple-Ras: And I assume that you believe that a great limitation or ban on Muslims coming into this country is one of those very important tools in what you're talking about?

Nathan Sales: I'm not sure I understand the question.

Dina Temple-Ras: Muslim ban. Do you think people coming into this country, having there be somewhat of a Muslim ban of people coming into this country?

Nathan Sales: I'm not aware that there's a Muslim ban.

Dina Temple-Ras: Okay, okay. So let me turn to Ali. So Ali, what conditions do you think that we need on the ground to bring terrorism to -- and I'll do away with the word irritant; it's not my word, it was Panetta's word and I was just using that as a way to jump off -- but to bring it to a level that we can get our arms around it?

Ali Shihabi: Right, and thank you, Dina. I think there are two sections to this, if you'll allow me as an outsider looking in at America. I would agree with Ned's assessment. The problem was that 9/11 was such an enormous event that I think it skewed psychology in America because the impossible happened, and it created multiple industries and multiple professions in the terrorism business. And bin Laden's laughing in his grave because 17 years after it happened, the amount of money that you have spent in this country, the amount of restrictions on travel, on businesses, et cetera, et cetera for something statistically that, in America, I think is at the level of an irritant. It's not the level of an irritant in the Middle East.

America was always the secondary target. What bin Laden had wanted to do was he wanted to bring down the Saudi monarchy. And he hit America because in his simplistic understanding, America was protecting the Saudi monarchy. So he thought if I hit America, America will cut its ties to the Saudi monarchy and the Saudi monarchy will collapse. And that didn't happen to, again, the wisdom of two American presidents, Bush and Obama who followed that. In fact, the opposite happened. The Saudi and U.S. security relationship developed so strongly that -- and I can quote the late Ambassador Ford Fraker, who was U.S. ambassador in Riyadh at Bush 44. He told me towards the end of that tenure, he said, "Ali, the security relationship between Saudi Arabia and the United States is the closest in the world." He says, "It's closer than the U.K-U.S relationship, and it's closer than the Israeli-U.S. relationship." Now he may have been exaggerating, but the point is that that relationship has become very close. But ultimately, these people want to bring down the Saudi monarchy and their allies in the region.

Now a lot has been done with American help in the last 17 years, and I think military action against al-Qaeda and ISIS has been excellent, but it has to be a two-pronged strategy. One is also draining the swamp, and we have to understand what is feeding a lot of these recruits into ... And Americans

sometimes get caught up with organizations. There's al-Qaeda and then there's ISIS ...

Dina Temple-Ras: [inaudible 00:15:56]

Ali Shihabi: ... and you always have deputies and assistant deputies, and you're always killing off the deputies but somehow they never end. I think these things are-

Dina Temple-Ras: Third in command is a terrible job in al-Qaeda.

Nathan Sales: It's like the Spinal Tap drummer.

Ali Shihabi: My point is these ... these organizations morph, whether it's ISIS or son of ISIS, or al-Qaeda or son of ... They are jihadi Sunni organizations, and one of the biggest, most important drivers of them has been sectarianism in the Middle East, which the Iranian government has been using as a tool. So if you go to Iraq, if you go to Syria, and now you go to Yemen, one of the biggest drivers has been Iranian presence on the ground using sectarianism to push their Shiite agenda which threatens the Sunni community. And then they start to look for anybody to defend them, and then these maniacs come along from Al-Qaeda and ISIS and that starts the flow.

So for example, in Yemen today you still have ISIS and Al-Qaeda, and the Iranians through their allies, the Houthis, are helping provoke that. In Iraq, a lot has been done to destroy ISIS, but the Arabia Foundation, we just had an analyst go in Iraq last week, and a number of articles I think have come out in the Washington Post that there's a bit of a resurgence. And again, that resurgence-

Dina Temple-Ras: Resurgence of what? I'm sorry.

Ali Shihabi: Resurgence of ISIS, and that is coming from the Iranians and their allies, and the sectarianism that they're pushing on the ground. So I think that the attitude of the Trump administration to really aggressively stand up to Iran is going to be one of the parallel tools -- military tools, security tools, certainly -- and that the cooperation of the world between Western intelligence agencies and the Gulf intelligence agencies has become excellent, so there's a lot of work being done there. But also stopping the Iranians from pretending to be a fireman but actually being an arsonist.

Dina Temple-Ras: So let me build on that a little bit with you, Nathan, and that is that one of the things that we haven't been hearing a lot about is AQAP, which used to be al-Qaeda's Yemen arm. Is what's going on Yemen now in terms of the civil war that's going on there, is that really affecting or helping AQAP? Do we have any idea how that is affecting the group and any ISIS members who might be in Yemen as well?

Nathan Sales: The enduring lesson of counterterrorism is that terrorists thrive in vacuums, they thrive in safe havens. This is the lesson we learned with al-Qaeda in Sudan in the 1990s and al-Qaeda in, later, Afghanistan in the '90s and early 2001. You could even describe ISIS itself as an example of this. They created their own safe haven when they attempted to found a false caliphate in the heart of the Middle East. Anywhere you encounter weak institutions of the state that are not capable of securing borders or delivering security or prosecuting those who commit terrorist related crimes, there's always going to be a risk that terrorist organizations will plant their flag and be able to thrive. For years, al-Qaeda in the Arabian peninsula has been one the AQ affiliates that really kept us up at night.

Dina Temple-Ras: And just to remind people, AQAP was behind the Detroit ...

Nathan Sales: Well, go ahead.

Dina Temple-Ras: ... go ahead. Were you just going to say behind the Detroit [inaudible 00:19:27]?

Nathan Sales: I know enough never to interrupt a journalist when the journalist is talking.

Dina Temple-Ras: No, no, no, not at all. So AQAP was ...

Ali Shihabi: And by the way, just to give you that-

Dina Temple-Ras: Did you just interrupt a journalist?

Ali Shihabi: That incident was a good example of cooperation because it's the Saudi intelligence that supplied America with information about that parcel bomb that was coming to be blown over ...

Dina Temple-Ras: Yes, that was a slight different, actually AQ, AP one. I was talking about the Detroit underwear bomber who came over, Abdulmutallab. But again, there was a tip I think from the ... Is that public that it was the Saudis that gave us the tip?

Ali Shihabi: Yes.

Dina Temple-Ras: So the Saudis actually ...

Nathan Sales: On the printer cartridge plot.

Dina Temple-Ras: The printer cartridge plot which was also AQAP. Ingenious. In fact, I know somebody in intelligence who said that he described that printer cartridge, they basically put the explosives inside where the toner was. He described it as a thing of beauty. He said it was just amazingly well put together and he was stunned, and it made us worry about all the imaginative things AQAP is doing.

Ali Shihabi: Not to interrupt you again, but Dina, that's the point that the police approach and the military approach and the intelligence approach generally is working very well, and that really maybe the more important one is draining the swamp.

Dina Temple-Ras: Right, right. So let me let you finish your point because you should never interrupt an ambassador. So you started to say that AQAP, what is going on in ... Are they taking advantage of the fact that there's so much attention being placed on the civil war in Yemen and on the Houthis, et cetera, that they're able to grow and recruit from that population? What do we see happening to AQAP while all the attention is

PART 1 OF 3 ENDS [00:21:04]

Dina Temple-Ras: ... What do we see happening to AQAP while all the attention is elsewhere?

Nathan Sales: I wouldn't concede that the attention is elsewhere in Yemen. We're still keeping up the pressure on AQAP through a variety of tools, kinetic and otherwise. Financial designations, we've used our sanctions authorities at the State Department and our colleagues at the Treasury Department have used their sanctions authorities to choke off the flow of money to AQ affiliates across the world.

Dina Temple-Ras: Are they getting oxygen, though, from the vacuum that's going on there in Yemen?

Nathan Sales: It's a very complex situation that is changing hour by hour, if not minute by minute, which is why we are keeping up the pressure on all fronts. Our objective is not just to prevent Iran from destabilizing the region as they are by supplying missiles to their Houthis partners, which they are then lobbing into Saudi Arabia.

I was actually in Riyadh a couple of months ago and as we were driving into the airport, I noticed a couple of Patriot Missile batteries set up around the perimeter. It's not the sort of thing you see when you land in Aspen, for instance. But it's a measure of-

Dina Temple-Ras: They're in the bushes.

Nathan Sales: I'll have to look closer on my way out tomorrow. It's a measure of the extent to which the Iranian threat is severe. That's part of what we're about. What we and our partners are about in Yemen, but we're not taking our eye off the al-Qaeda ball, either. We're keeping a full pressure campaign on AQAP, as well.

Dina Temple-Ras: Are they still the most worrisome al-Qaeda affiliate?

Nathan Sales: I'd have to think about that one.

Dina Temple-Ras: Okay. They used to be right?

Nathan Sales: They certainly were until fairly recently. It's very much a pick your poison type exercise. AQAP retains the capability and intends to carry out external operations and that's really the criterion. What terrorist groups and what affiliates do we worry about the most? It's the ones that have the ambition and the ability to hit us here at home or hit our partners, whether it's in Saudi Arabia or Europe or elsewhere.

So you could run down the list of AQ affiliates around the world and take their temperature in terms of capability and intent but those are the criteria that we use to decide which ones we're focusing on with our law enforcement tools, which ones are we focusing on with capability building tools, helping partner countries around the world stand up with own law enforcement capabilities and crisis response capabilities. It's really playing follow the threat.

Dina Temple-Ras: Okay and Ned, you-

Ned Price: If I could just follow that point. Listening to the discussion of the threat we face from AQAP in Yemen or the threat we face from ISIS in Iraq and Syria, the threat we faced, or to some degree still face from al-Qaeda core in Afghanistan and Pakistan, it strikes me that, in some ways we need a new paradigm for talking about this. And listening to Ambassador Sales talk about the diversification of the threat, I was reminded that when I was at CIA as a counter-terrorism analyst, some of the first assessments I wrote in 2006 were about the diversification of the threat.

Really ever since al-Qaeda core's foothold started to erode in the tribal areas of Pakistan, we've been talking about the shifting center of gravity of the global jihad. And that's essentially what we called it. We talked about the movement of the threat from Afghanistan Pakistan in 2009 to Yemen and Somalia from there later to Iraq and Syria, but it strikes me that what has, in fact, changed is that territorial strongholds are now much less important given the presence of these groups, particularly ISIL, in the cyber domain.

They no longer need a Raqqa. They no longer need an area that's purely under their administrative control to inspire their followers, whether it's in the United States, whether it's in Europe, anywhere around the world. And so I think when we talk about the diversification of the threat today, it's less the region we're looking at and it's more how these groups use what little territory they have, meld that with their cyber know-how, their cyber expertise, and most importantly, their ability to attract a following, to attract a following through a message that resonates, both in cyberspace and then translates to those people living in their parents' basement who are disaffected, whether they're in San Bernardino or whether they're in London.

Dina Temple-Ras: And you don't think Raqqa was an animating force?

Ned Price: Well, it certainly was. And, of course, when ISIL held Raqqa, before that operation to clear it began, we were very worried, as I think was reported publicly at the time, about the types of operations that really scared us in the post 9/11 period. Attacks against commercial aviation, first and foremost. But with the momentum that has been continued with the ongoing operation to clear ISIL from its last vestiges in Syria, especially, I think we are even less worried about that now.

Of course, the threat still exists, but it is that inspiration, not within their strongholds, but the ability to propel force from where they're not.

Ali Shihabi: I would, though, comment again, coming back to my point that Americans, I think, tend to focus on organizations and these things are ... They'll melt. And they'll be called something else tomorrow. Or another 20 guys will be hiding in the cave somewhere else and you have another organization. So focusing so much on those organizations is looking at it in the wrong way, I think. Yes, you have to deal with ... But the general framework of security has improved in the world. I think you have to deal with a lot of the issues on the ground in the Middle East that allow these things to be bred, and draining the swamp, again, becomes the most important one.

But, for America, I think America is the secondary target and people sitting in America have a disproportionate fear, I think, of terrorism versus the impact that it's having on the ground in the Middle East, which is ground zero really for what-

Dina Temple-Ras: Or Europe. Or Europe.

Ali Shihabi: Well, Europe, yes, but remember, Europe has a slightly different problem. Europe has ... Colonial history, it has an immigrant alienation problem that's morphing into terrorism. Today, if you're an alienated person, in the 50s and 60s, you'd have become a communist or you would have had Che Guevara's picture on the wall. Today, the only chic thing to do is become a jihadist. That's why even some convert. You have Christians who convert just to become a jihadist. So I think, everybody's throwing all of that into the pot and say terrorism. And you've got to divide these things up and analyze them according to the quadrant that they are in. And Europe's problems are different.

America has always had ... by the way, I'll give you an example. One of the reasons Saudi Arabia had such tremendous success dealing with ISIS and al-Qaeda in the Kingdom over the last 15 years ... Yes, they built a very robust security structure, but it was that 98% of the terrorist incidents were stopped through community advice, the father, the brother, the neighbor and it was the community that helped you. In America, because your Muslim population is so much more integrated ... Now with what's been happening over the past 15 years, they are being more alienated and unfortunately some of the language that has been used in the last two years in politics also has served that. So I

think that's a risk for America because your biggest security is having a well-integrated Muslim community and that's totally different from Europe. Where Europe you have a highly alienated community which is a product of colonialism. So again-

Dina Temple-Ras: And racism.

Ali Shihabi: Sorry?

Dina Temple-Ras: And racism.

Ali Shihabi: And racism. So you can't throw ... The temptation to put terrorism in a box and have one formula for it all just does not work. It doesn't make sense.

Ned Price: And just to add to that, Europe has an added threat dimension in that they have returning foreign fighters. That's not something that we've seen, certainly not to that same degree in the United States, but the threat of the thousands of foreign fighters who have gone from Belgium and France and the United Kingdom and elsewhere to battlefields, most recently Iraq and Syria. That's not so much an issue of lack of integration into cultural society, it's more of the immediate threat of these radicalized individuals coming back to a country that they probably never saw as their own in the first place and feel no attachment which spurred them to go to those battlefields only to come back even more radicalized and, in some cases as we've seen, conduct violence.

Dina Temple-Ras: And more skilled. Not just radicalized, but more skilled.

Ned Price: Right.

Dina Temple-Ras: So in the old days when I used to study terrorism and master cells, we used to look to the UK as being a model for helping us figure out what we wanted to do here at home, the Prevent Program in the UK, that sort of thing. And which didn't necessarily work terrifically well and apply here, but at least we did a lot of talking with the UK.

Do you think that problem in the UK and the problem in the U.S. are still the same or are they ... Has the problem changed so much in the UK that now those lessons that we used to take from them maybe don't apply?

Nathan Sales: I think we're in a better place in the U.S. than ... Let me answer a broader version of the question you asked, better place than Europe writ large. That's because of a combination of demographic and sociological factors, legal factors. The United States is much more committed to free speech and free exercise of religion even than our close European allies.

Just as a quick aside, you can compare the American legal response to observant Muslim appearance to what you see in some European countries which have

taken it upon themselves to ban hijabs for women. In the United States we have exactly the opposite approach. There was a case in the Supreme Court a few terms ago in which there was a Muslim prisoner who is incarcerated in Missouri, I think. Prison rules said you can't have a beard. Neutral rule, for disciplinary reasons, no prisoner is allowed to grow a beard. This observant Muslim thought that he was required as a matter of religious conviction and practice to grow a beard. So he wanted a quarter inch beard. And when authorities denied his request, he filed a lawsuit.

Actually, let me correct myself. The U.S. government filed a lawsuit on his behalf, took the case to the Supreme Court and won. The Supreme Court held unanimously that this inmate was entitled to an exemption under federal law. So great is the United States' commitment to religious liberty, that the U.S. government takes cases like that to the Supreme Court. So that legal factor, that legal dimension, I think, is another reason why you see a different experience here in the U.S. than you do in other countries.

Geography is also important-

Ali Shihabi: Sorry, what was that?

Nathan Sales: Geography.

Ali Shihabi: Geography.

Nathan Sales: We have an ocean between us and the war zone. It's a lot harder to get from Minneapolis to Syria than it is from Brussels. And the legal tools that we have at our disposal in the United States are also extremely effective at preventing the outflow of would be foreign terrorist fighters. I think the numbers for the U.S. are about 200, which when you ... Is it a per capita percentage is really, really low when you compare it to places like the UK, Germany, Belgium, France-

Dina Temple-Ras: Belgium, yeah. Where thousands have gone.

Nathan Sales: Right, they ... Per capita basis, little Belgium really punches above its weight.

Dina Temple-Ras: Not a bad thing to punch above your weight.

Nathan Sales: No, indeed. Indeed. So we can prosecute people for providing material support to terrorism. We have extremely severe sanctions that are eligible when you're convicted in a court of law. Other countries don't have the same frameworks.

Dina Temple-Ras: I'll get to you in just a second, Ali. Let me just make this point. So when I went to Paris to report right after the Charlie Hebdo attacks, I met with a Muslim activist there who had been working in London for some time and she didn't cover. And I said to her, "Well, now you're in Paris. What do you think about this controversy about the covering?"

She said, "You know when I was in London, I never wanted to cover. It never occurred to me to cover, but now that they've told me in France that I can't do it, I feel like I should." And I think that was a really good microcosm of the attitude that comes out. And she's a very enlightened PhD student and everything else, but that's how it struck her.

Sorry, Ali, what were you going to say?

Ali Shihabi: No, I mean, following up on what the Ambassador said, obviously, the American government has built a huge infrastructure to deal with terrorism. Industry has ... So you have to show the whole gamut of things that you're doing. But, ultimately, believe me, what has saved America is the fact that America integrates immigrants better than anywhere else. And your immigrant communities here, despite all the problems that they have, are the best integrated and that is your protection. Everything else is secondary.

And the UK has a ... is from the Indian subcontinent, Muslim Pakistani Bangladeshi problem. And that feeds off it also.

Dina Temple-Ras: Right and Belgium has a Moroccan issue.

Ali Shihabi: Belgium has a huge Moroccan issue.

Dina Temple-Ras: So let us get a little bit more into this idea of regional partners and terrorism. Can we talk a little bit, Ali, about the modernization effort that's going on in Saudi Arabia and where that places terrorism within its foreign policy structure?

Ali Shihabi: No, look. I mean, there are two factors here. A lot of people came out after 9/11 and said Saudi Arabia exports Wahhabism and that that is breeding terrorism.

Dina Temple-Ras: Do you think that was unfair?

Ali Shihabi: Sorry? Oh. It has proven to be scientifically flawed. Let me tell you why. First of all, if you look at the countries that produce the highest number of recruits to ISIS, Tunisia was number one, for example. More than Saudi Arabia. Yet Tunisia was the most secular Arab country since the 1950s. If you looked at where ISIS also grew, in Iraq and Syria, they were the most violently secular countries in the Arab world again for the last 50 years. The only Wahhabi running around Syria and Iraq was a dead Wahhabi for the last 50 years. So I think that was a simplification.

That didn't mean that Saudi Arabia did not have a problem with extremism and with intolerance and I think the new government has been, under the Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman, has taken a very bold step to deal with intolerance and extremism by the clergy. And some of it has been authoritarian. They've thrown people in jail. They've intimidated clerics and a lot of the human rights community in the West and the liberal community gets upset with that,

but there aren't many democratic ways that you can deal with such an urgent problem and I think the thing in Saudi Arabia is that you've had so many years of an ultra-reactionary conservative religious establishment dominating the country, that switching that ship around needed a certain amount of authoritarian force.

Dina Temple-Ras: So before-

Ali Shihabi: And that is being done.

Dina Temple-Ras: Okay, and where does terrorism, then, place itself within the foreign policy current [inaudible 00:36:27]?

Ali Shihabi: No, I mean Saudi Arabia has from the beginning, as I said. After 9/11 the relationship between America and [inaudible 00:36:32] became extremely close and Saudi Arabia, in the Kingdom, very successfully crushed al-Qaeda and ISIS so you've had ... And, again, participated as much as possible in the Gulf, whether in Yemen, the Americans have a drone base in Saudi Arabia that is used against al-Qaeda and that's been very active actually. I mean, you asked the question of AQAP, and I would have said the Americans have been very active with their drones during this period and the Emirates actually have put together a force in the south of Yemen where they've locally trained Yemenis and they've been using them against AQAP. So I think AQAP is still very high on everybody else's agenda.

Now some of them are calling themselves ISIS in Yemen. Some of them are calling themselves [inaudible 00:37:21], whoever they are, that asset class, if you want, is being very actively dealt with in a military fashion by America and by America's allies in the Gulf.

Dina Temple-Ras: Did you want to jump in here, Ned?

Ned Price: Well, I was just going to comment on your point about Wahhabism. I come at it, I suppose, with a different perspective. I think the fact that you see so many foreign fighters going to war zones from, as you put it, secular countries, is a function of the fact that Wahhabism portrays secular countries as apostate governments and when you portray ... When your own government is being portrayed by the strain in which you believe as an apostate, of course, you're going to become more radicalized. You're going to go seek out those opportunities to affiliate with a group like ISIL, with al-Qaeda core, with AQAP, in some cases to come back and take on those very apostate governments.

Ali Shihabi: But if you look at the literature and you look at what's been going internet, the number on apostate government as far as ISIS and al-Qaeda's concerned was Saudi Arabia, you see. Their definition of apostate isn't necessarily those people that aren't ... They consider the near enemy to them is the one that is Muslim

but does not buy into their ideology. So they're very much against the established order in the region and their objective is to bring it down.

Part of it gets mixed up with religious ideology but part of it is also a class conflict. That's why I keep on saying in the 50s and 60s they would have become Marxists. There's a very interesting picture of the Polit Bureau of South Yemen in 1969. South Yemen which is ground zero now for al-Qaeda Peninsula. They're all standing up in Mao suits and the picture, and they have pictures behind them of Lenin, Mao, I think, and Marx. And that's 1969.

Today southern Yemen, which is ground zero in a way for al-Qaeda has completely switched. So my point is, again, it's a confusing, it doesn't fit into the narrative, it doesn't fit into the industry experts who are selling terrorism expertise around the region or ... It is more complicated. Class conflict is part of it. Social issues are part of it. Iranian behavior is a big part of it also. But it's complicated.

Dina Temple-Ras: So, Ambassador Sales, let me ask you this. How has the changes that's been going on in the region now, how has that changed what your job is in trying to fight terrorism and bring regional partners in to do so?

Nathan Sales: Let me give you two specific examples. So first of all, we are seeing some truly extraordinary developments in Riyadh. And I'm not just talking about women being allowed to drive, welcome though that liberalization is. I think what we're seeing from the Crown Prince is a very serious signal of a commitment to reform the brand of Islam that Saudi Arabia has backed and practiced, not only at home but abroad.

And I think a good example of the receptivity of Saudi Arabia under the Crown Prince to constructive criticism is a story that comes from Belgium. The Saudi government had a 100 year lease on the Grand Mosque in Brussels. The Belgian government raised concerns about some of the content that was being taught at that facility. Saudi government agreed to terminate the lease. That, I think, bodes well for the seriousness with which the current Saudi government will continue to take its commitment to rooting out extremism and radicalism around the world. So that's a very favorable development.

A second favorable development is making lemonade out of lemons. Iran is the world's preeminent state sponsor of terrorism. Backing organizations like Hezbollah in Lebanon and around the world, the Quds Force and the IRGC writ large, the United States is not the only country in the world to notice Iran's bid for regional hegemony and Iran's efforts to expand its malign influence across the globe.

We're working with Saudi Arabia, we're working with other Gulf states because we have a shared interest in ensuring that Iran is not capable of projecting its

influence in the way that it is. And one specific example of the partnership, the budding partnership that we're cultivating here, last year the Saudi government-

PART 2 OF 3 ENDS [00:42:04]

Nathan Sales: Last year the Saudi government and the United States and other partners created the TFTC, the Terrorism Financing Targeting Center. We just designated, in concert with a number of our Gulf partners, we just designated the [inaudible 00:42:17] Council of [Hezbollah 00:42:19].

That's a real symbolically-important step for the region to take to push back against an Iranian bid for hegemony around the region, but it's also practically-significant as well because this helps cut off the flow of money to these individuals.

Dina Temple-Ras: This is a treasury program?

Nathan Sales: Treasury and state, yeah.

Dina Temple-Ras: Okay. Okay. Do you want to talk a little bit about that?

Ned Price: Well, I would make a couple points. Look, we can't discount malign Iranian influence in the region, and even beyond, from their sponsorship of terrorism to their unhelpful, to put it mildly, activities in places like Yemen and Syria.

I think I guess I would make a distinction from what we've heard to some degree in that I think it is less a direct line of support than you might've been arguing from a [Shi'a 00:43:08] state to Sunni groups that are actually posing the threat that we're talking about today.

Now, I think Iran is a factor in all of this, is a factor in this equation, because Iran is adding to the areas of instability, areas where there is no central government, or at least there is not a central government that's fully capable in both Yemen and Syria where we could see groups like both [AQAP 00:43:34] and ISIL take root.

I think that is why we need to find a way to work to push those malign actors out of those places. I think it's less a direct connection between a [Shi'a 00:43:50] state and Sunni groups than Ali might've been portraying.

Nathan Sales: Well, just to be precise, there's a direct connection between a [Shi'a 00:43:56] and [Shi'a 00:43:57] proxies. That's the threat that we're focused on. For instance, the [inaudible 00:44:00] in Bahrain, Iran-backed terrorist organization that has been working to destabilize, inflict harm on the Bahraini government and Bahraini people. That's the kind of threat that we're focused on. We just designated them [crosstalk 00:44:13].

Ned Price: Right.

Ali Shihabi: But there's also a direct connection with Sunni organizations because Iran has been hosting Al-Qaeda leadership. A lot of literature came out, a number of books came out, which talked about the bin Laden son is in Iran.

Ned Price: [crosstalk 00:44:24].

Dina Temple-Ras: Well, but it was a ... They weren't exactly hosting them. They weren't allowed to leave [crosstalk 00:44:29].

Ali Shihabi: No. No, no.

Ned Price: Exactly. It was house arrest.

Ali Shihabi: [crosstalk 00:44:31]. What's his name? The founder of ISIS was given free passage through Iran [inaudible 00:44:36]. We all know that, and that has been documented. A number of ISIS leaders were given free passage through Iran to come into Iraq. What do you call that?

Dina Temple-Ras: Yeah, and we were also ... Osama bin Laden's son-in-law was caught quite ... Here's a tip. He's going to be here at this particular time, so, yeah.

Ned Price: You can also find writings from bin Laden in the [inaudible 00:44:55] where he reserved some of his harshest comments for the Iranian regime, so ...

Ali Shihabi: There was a letter that came out where he said we have to work with the Iranian regime because they're the only one helping us now. There has been a very counterintuitive relationship. A number of actually books came out over the last 12 months on that.

Dina Temple-Ras: I think we can agree that there's some gray area here.

Ali Shihabi: That doesn't sound great to me. Yeah.

Dina Temple-Ras: Well, not to you, but I think I-

Ali Shihabi: If they're hosting them, and if they gave the founder of ISIS ...

Dina Temple-Ras: Well, hosting is ... Are they hosting someone if they're under house arrest? I don't know if that's exactly hosting.

Ali Shihabi: No, no. Well, it depends. You control them, right?

Dina Temple-Ras: Right.

Ali Shihabi: You use them. They have Al-Qaeda [crosstalk 00:45:31].

Ned Price: Does that mean we controlled the [Blind Sheikh 00:45:32] when he [crosstalk 00:45:33] United States?

Ali Shihabi: No, but I'll give you a concrete example. One of the big terrorist events that happened in Saudi Arabia was directed from a member of Al-Qaeda in Iran. You see? Yes, they control them. They're not putting them in jail in New York City just to be in jail. They're putting them to use them as tools. I think that that has been documented. I think it's [crosstalk 00:45:55].

Ned Price: What also has been documented are the Al-Qaeda attacks that have taken place in Iran, so it's-

Ali Shihabi: One attack took place recently, and everybody was [crosstalk 00:46:02].

Ned Price: I'm not talking just the past year. I'm talking over the course of Al-Qaeda's-

Ali Shihabi: Yeah. Actually, one attack has taken place last 15 years. One of the things that people kept on saying was why has Al-Qaeda and ISIS never attacked Iran? Then we had one attack in the last 12 months to sort of prove that point, that they're not, but a lot of [crosstalk 00:46:19].

Dina Temple-Ras: I think this is a great time to talk about Africa, which I wanted to move the direction of the conversation to, which is if you look at where it seems that jihadists are really sort of getting a lot of oxygen it is Africa. I know it's a whole continent. I'm talking Nigeria, various other places in Africa. Jihadist violence in Africa is up 300% in the last seven years.

We understand that the administration is going to be pulling some military aid to force ... Military forces in Africa that are fighting this. You talked earlier about vacuums, and how these groups, however we want to call them, whether we just say jihadists or whether we mention particular groups.

[inaudible 00:47:07], you had said earlier that they love a vacuum. Is this the exact wrong time to be pulling back from Africa? Should be doing something else?

Nathan Sales: That's a great question for [John Root 00:47:18].

Dina Temple-Ras: Oh, but I just have you.

Nathan Sales: I know. Look, we don't yet know what the Pentagon's plan for Africa is going to be. We don't know what resources will be shifted from where to where. I think it's premature-

Dina Temple-Ras: What would state like them to do?

Nathan Sales: Well, so it's premature to speculate about what it might look like. It's difficult to say what we want them to do when we don't know what the options are that are on the table. That said, there's a couple of ... What is our presence in Africa right now? What are we doing there?

Well, part of it is capacity building. Part of it is advise and assist training missions to build up the capabilities of law enforcement personnel, but also armed forces, indigenous armed forces, to better protect themselves against terrorist threats. There's also the pointy end of the spear, direct action. It's hard to say what would remain, what would be drawn down and diminished, what would go away altogether.

I will say this, there are lots of substitutes, particularly in ... Well, let's use as an example [inaudible 00:48:26]. France, for historical reasons, has counted to focus on the [inaudible 00:48:33] as a foreign policy priority of the utmost importance. Operation [Barcon 00:48:39], which the French Armed Forces lead, are trying to do the same sorts of things that the U.S. Armed Forces are trying to do in building local force capacity.

I imagine that's going to continue regardless of whether the U.S. is there in that capacity or not.

At the NATO Summit last week or two weeks ago in Brussels there was a widespread sense that NATO needs to be doing more in the southern tier, the southern ... On the southern border frontier of alliance territory. That's another compliment to U.S. efforts on the continent.

I think the world understands that the terrorist threat ... We understand at the State Department, and the Pentagon understands, that the terrorist threat in Africa is not going to recede on its own and that we're going to continue to need to be engaged in some way or another. The precise contours of what that looks like, stay tuned.

Dina Temple-Ras: We're seeing new alliances between the United States and Saudi Arabia, and that's strengthening, and other regional partners. Could you imagine a scenario in which they would be helping fight terrorism in Africa given that terrorism really has no borders?

Nathan Sales: I'd be happy to pass that suggestion onto Ali.

Dina Temple-Ras: [crosstalk 00:49:53].

Ali Shihabi: Well, it is happening now. The [inaudible 00:49:55] are operating in Somalia fighting terrorism, so certainly. Africa's a big place. Again, you have to look at the micro issues that are driving it in each country.

Dina Temple-Ras: Sure. Right.

Ali Shihabi: I think as Ambassador said, the French are doing a very important job [inaudible 00:50:12].

Dina Temple-Ras: Right. Do you want to [crosstalk 00:50:14]?

Ned Price: I find that proposition unlikely, just because when it comes to our own efforts in the counter ISIS context, especially given the fact that President Trump has signaled his determination to withdraw from Syria, the freezing of the stabilization funds for Syria, our own, as I'm sure the ambassador knows, our own representatives are having trouble going hat in hand for that effort.

I think that we are not seeing the same commitment we would like to see, that we probably need to see, from our Gulf partners for the counter ISIS coalition. I find it unlikely that we would find that resource for their battles for their [inaudible 00:50:51] in Africa.

Dina Temple-Ras: Okay. I think would be a great time to take questions from the audience. If you just wait for a microphone to get to you I will point you. How about this gentleman in the beard in the lovely blue shirt? There's so many blue shirts out there.

Audience: [Allen Aysay 00:51:07] retired [inaudible 00:51:08]. Question has to do with stability in Western Iraq, which is something we've gone through three, four times this last 15, 17 years. Is it stable now or are we looking at a situation that will simply be cyclically throwing up another [inaudible 00:51:29]?

Nathan Sales: It's more stable than it was, but I think the stability is fragile and needs to be carefully tended. Prime Minister Abadi has indicated that the fight against ISIS in Iraq, it's largely over, but that doesn't mean that we can declare victory and go home.

We have to remain vigilant, particularly in light of the fact that ISIS remains active on the other side of the border. The last thing we want, or one of the many things we don't want, is for the remnants of ISIS in Syria to be able to conduct external operations in Iraq. I think we're in a much better place now than we were a year ago, two years ago, but we've still got some work to do.

Dina Temple-Ras: This gentleman in the black t-shirt, please.

Audience: [Daryl Burton 00:52:19]. Phoenix, Arizona. Since everything seems to start with young people in Muslim nations has the ...

Male: Speak up.

Audience: I was just saying as things seem to start with young people, there's so many young people in the Muslim nations, like Saudi Arabia, has anything been done

about cutting off the financing for the [inaudible 00:52:41] in all the different countries that the [inaudible 00:52:43] set up?

Ali Shihabi: Well, to the degree that those exist in that sense, one example may be Pakistan where that is a problem. In countries like ... In the Middle East particularly, and in the Gulf, but even in Egypt, the government has taken control of the curriculum or the educational institutions. Whatever you want to call them. There's been a very proactive effort over the last 15 years to remove extremists' thought from this curriculums.

In fact, Saudi Arabia's moving to make all its educational material digital to allow the government to maintain even that higher level of control to ensure that that is not spreading.

You have a situation where you have autonomous organizations, for example in countries like Pakistan, which are not funded by Saudi Arabia but are funded by private, private contributions.

Those are much more difficult even for the Pakistani government to control, so it depends on what ... Which country you're talking about.

Dina Temple-Ras: Would you say that effort has gotten better just in the last couple of years or would you say it's been a slow build of 15 years?

Ali Shihabi: No, it's been ... Look, 9-11 was a shock to everybody, right? I mean, Saudi Arabia understood that bin Laden wanted to position its relationship with the United States. The whole gamut of things, that started to be dealt with then, but these things take time.

Certainly this new government [inaudible 00:54:19] has taken a much more aggressive stance across the whole spectrum of anything to do with reactionary interpretation of Islam.

Dina Temple-Ras: Okay. This gentleman in front.

Audience: Thank you very much. Great dialogue. You made reference to the realignment in the Gulf region and you made reference to the reform efforts [inaudible 00:54:48] started to try. There's one outlier in that region, the Qataris.

Have you, Mr. Ambassador, addressed the issue of how the U.S. is going to balance in view of the different interests its policies vis-a-vis Qatar, realizing there's a big airbase there, and how you, Ali, see the Qataris? Are they part of the problem or could they be ... Become part of the solution?

Ali Shihabi: [crosstalk 00:55:25].

Audience: Right now there's a very [inaudible 00:55:27].

Ali Shihabi: Yes. They could certainly become part of the solution.

Audience: Any hope there's change? What's your view? Thank you.

Ali Shihabi: As I said, they certainly could become part of the solution. They have been part of the problem. For some reason, they have been financing a number of extremist Islamic organizations across the Middle East. [inaudible 00:55:44], the Muslim Brotherhood, which many countries in the Gulf consider to be if not terrorists, borderline terrorists organizations.

Then, the Qataris have things like the billion dollar ransom that they gave a few months ago to release some of their captives in Iraq, which literally gave a billion dollars to terrorist organizations.

Now, that can keep them in business to carry out. A terrorist attack in Europe probably costs \$50,000 or \$100,000. When you give somebody a billion dollars in cash that is enormous. I think there was a bit of surprise in Saudi Arabia and in the Gulf that the American government did not jump on the Qataris as aggressively on the ransom issue, for example, because that has been very well documented and the Prime Minister of Iraq came out and said.

He said, "Look, the Qataris showed up in Baghdad Airport carrying 500 million Euros in cash." The Qataris [inaudible 00:56:42] said, "Well, we were bringing the money to help the Iraqi government." If you want to help the Iraqi government you transfer it to the [inaudible 00:56:47]. You don't come carrying suitcases of cash.

There are issues. I think the U.S. government can play a very important role in helping to bring Qatar back into the fold because it's very important that it reintegrates into the Gulf Cooperation Council. If it does so, a major irritant and provider of funding to such organizations will be eliminated.

Nathan Sales: I'd like to say that since the rift broke out last year between Qatar and the other Gulf states, Qatar has really redoubled its efforts to work with the United States on counter terrorism.

We signed a memorandum of understanding with the Qataris last year that's really the gold standard when it comes to counter terrorism cooperation. Cooperating on things like counter terrorist finance, on border security, on aviation security. It's really a model.

Can they do more? Certainly they can do more. A lot of countries in the region can do more. The United States looks forward to putting this unpleasant episode behind us. We continue to call on all parties in the Gulf to deescalate the situation and to reconcile, because for as long as this dispute continues it only benefits Iran. Iran is the principle beneficiary of a divided [GCC 00:58:14].

We have to put this behind us so that we can turn our attention to the true and enduring threat in the region.

Dina Temple-Ras: I have time for one more question. How about the young lady in the back? If you could wait for the mic.

Audience: Thank you. For the last couple decades-

Dina Temple-Ras: Who are you?

Audience: [Suzanne Spalding 00:58:37].

Dina Temple-Ras: Okay.

Audience: For the last couple of decades we and our allies have been bringing terrorists to justice and locking them up. We are now on the verge of seeing hundreds of those terrorists released because they have paid their debt to society.

My question is are we ... What are we ... How are we thinking about that? How are we getting ready for that?

Nathan Sales: Yeah. Hey, Suzanne. Good to see you. In the U.S. we're in better shape than a lot of other countries around the world. The United States is lucky. Actually, not lucky. We are the beneficiaries of a strong legal tradition that combines on the one hand the highest possible standards of rule of law compliance. We don't send you to jail unless we prove beyond a reasonable doubt that you did it, along with very severe penalties once you are duly convicted in a court of law.

Our material support statute is really a model for the rest of the world to follow. If you provide material support to a terrorist organization you can go to jail for 20 years. If death results from the material support that you provided, you can go away for life.

We are sort of an outlier in this respect. If we convict you on terrorism-related charges you're going to get old in prison.

Dina Temple-Ras: Yeah, but what happens when you get out.

Nathan Sales: Yeah. Right, so let me ... Well, when you get out that's-

Dina Temple-Ras: That's what Suzanne's question [crosstalk 01:00:01].

Nathan Sales: This is more of a problem in Europe and it's more of a problem for former Guantanamo detainees who have been repatriated to their countries of origin or to other countries, third country transfers.

A lot of those countries when they agreed to take Guantanamo detainees back agreed to subject the former detainees to various security measures that would begin to expire right about now.

That's a real problem, so what we need to do is redouble our efforts in encouraging the international community to continue to maintain the security assurances that they made to the previous administration. We can't simply allow terrorists to disappear back into the wild.

Dina Temple-Ras: [crosstalk 01:00:45].

Nathan Sales: We have to continue to monitor them upon their release, we have to continue to subject them to strict security safeguards, because the goal here is to prevent them from returning to the battlefield.

Dina Temple-Ras: Let me just get Ned in here for a second, because in the United States what's about to happen ... I don't know if you're talking, yes, okay, so in the United States a lot of the guys who went to go and join [inaudible 01:01:03], a lot of people who were Al-Qaeda people, have served their debt to society. [inaudible 01:01:08] guys are about to get out, a lot of Al-Qaeda guys are about to get out.

Can you apply Suzanne's question to that? What is being done in this country for those people who are about to [crosstalk 01:01:19]?

Ned Price: Well, from the way I see it more needs to be done. We need the types of reintegration programs that we have seen in places where former Guantanamo detainees have been sent. We do an okay job of this on the prevention side working with the local U.S. attorneys, the [inaudible 01:01:38] programs that were introduced in several cities across the country in recent years.

I think we need to do more of that, but we certainly need to do more on the reintegration side.

Dina Temple-Ras: Right.

Ned Price: It's, that program, is minuscule. I think there's an example of one person who-

Dina Temple-Ras: In Minneapolis.

Ned Price: Right, in Minneapolis, who's now going through that. We're going to clearly have quite a few more than that. I just don't think we're fully equipped, nor do we have the funding yet there for that kind of program on a broader scale.

Dina Temple-Ras: I'm going to have to stop it there. I'm sorry I couldn't take more questions. If you'll thank our panel, thank you very much for being here on a Saturday.

PART 3 OF 3 ENDS [01:02:18]

