

# WORLD-WIDE THREATS TO THE HOMELAND

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## HEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

**Serial No. 116-83**

Printed for the use of the Committee on Homeland Security



Available via the World Wide Web: <http://www.govinfo.gov>

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

43-956 PDF

WASHINGTON : 2021

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# CONTENTS

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	Page
STATEMENTS	
The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson, a Representative in Congress From the State of Mississippi, and Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security:	
Oral Statement .....	1
Prepared Statement .....	3
The Honorable Mike Rogers, a Representative in Congress From the State of Alabama, and Ranking Member, Committee on Homeland Security:	
Oral Statement .....	4
Prepared Statement .....	9
The Honorable Sheila Jackson Lee, a Representative in Congress From the State of Texas:	
Prepared Statement .....	10
WITNESSES	
Mr. Christopher A. Wray, Director, U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation:	
Oral Statement .....	14
Prepared Statement .....	16
Mr. Christopher Miller, Director, National Counterterrorism Center:	
Oral Statement .....	22
Prepared Statement .....	23
FOR THE RECORD	
The Honorable Mike Rogers, a Representative in Congress From the State of Alabama, and Ranking Member, Committee on Homeland Security:	
Prepared Statement of the Senior Official Performing the Duties of Deputy Director, Mr. Kenneth T. Cuccinelli II, U.S. Department of Homeland Security .....	5
The Honorable Al Green, a Representative in Congress From the State of Texas:	
Article, <i>Washington Post</i> , September 14, 2020 .....	62
The Honorable Sheila Jackson Lee, a Representative in Congress From the State of Texas:	
Article, <i>New York Times</i> , Published July 18, 2020/Updated July 21, 2020 ....	76
Article, <i>Washington Post</i> , September 11, 2020 .....	78
Article, <i>ABC News</i> via <i>Everett Post</i> , September 8 .....	80
Article, <i>NPR</i> , August 2, 2018 .....	84
APPENDIX	
Questions From Chairman Bennie G. Thompson for Christopher Miller .....	89
Questions From Chairman Bennie G. Thompson for Christopher A. Wray .....	91
Questions From Honorable Lauren Underwood for Christopher A. Wray .....	93
Questions From Honorable Lauren Underwood for Chad Wolf .....	93



## WORLD-WIDE THREATS TO THE HOMELAND

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Thursday, September 17, 2020

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:06 a.m., in room 2167, Rayburn House Office Building and via Webex, Hon. Bennie G. Thompson (Chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Thompson, Jackson Lee, Langevin, Richmond, Payne, Rice, Correa, Torres Small, Rose, Underwood, Slotkin, Cleaver, Green of Texas, Clarke, Titus, Watson Coleman, Demings, Rogers, Katko, Higgins, Lesko, Joyce, Crenshaw, Guest, Bishop, Van Drew, and Garcia.

Chairman THOMPSON. The Committee on Homeland Security will come to order.

As I said, the Committee on Homeland Security will come to order.

Without objection, the Chair is authorized to declare the committee in recess at any point.

Good morning.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Good morning.

Chairman THOMPSON. Before we begin, I want to say our thoughts are with those Americans dealing with devastating natural disasters, including the wildfires in the West and Hurricane Sally in the South. As Chairman, I remain committed to ensuring they receive the Federal help needed to respond, recover, and build back stronger.

Today, the Committee on Homeland Security is meeting for its annual hearing on "World-wide Threats to the Homeland." Our Nation recently observed the 19th anniversary of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Nearly 2 decades later, we continue to mourn the nearly 3,000 lives lost that terrible day and keep their loved ones in our prayers.

This committee and the Department of Homeland Security were established in the wake of 9/11 to help prevent future attacks on our soil. Regardless of who was Chairman, we have held regular hearings examining world-wide threats with leaders from the Department of Homeland Security, FBI, and National Counterterrorism Center. Regardless of who was occupying the White House, whether Democrat or Republican, we have received cooperation in that effort. Today was supposed to be no different.

Unfortunately, as we see from the empty chair in front of us, Mr. Chad Wolf is not here to represent the Department of Homeland Security. Let me be clear about how we got here. The committee

began engaging with the Department over 3 months ago on June 10, 2020, to secure Mr. Wolf's participation in this hearing, alongside his colleagues from the FBI and National Counterterrorism Center.

Any assertion that the administration committed to having DHS, FBI, and NCTC testify before this committee as a world-wide threats hearing in July is false. DHS tentatively offered a couple of dates but then could not agree with its FBI and NCTC counterparts on the date for the hearing in June or July.

In fact, it was the Department of Homeland Security that conveyed to the committee that September 17 was the earliest Mr. Wolf would be available to testify at this hearing. In the interest of receiving Mr. Wolf's testimony, the committee agreed to the offered date. It was not until last week that the Department informed the committee that Mr. Wolf would be reneging on the commitment to testify in anticipation of being nominated for Secretary of Homeland Security.

I would note that, despite his refusal to testify today, Mr. Wolf has spoken to the media on multiple occasions since President Trump announced he intended to nominate Mr. Wolf to be Secretary of Homeland Security, including no fewer than 4 appearances on FOX News. Mr. Wolf has run the Department of Homeland Security for the last 10 months and has been responsible for numerous decisions directly relevant to the subjects the committee intends to explore.

With that in mind, last week I wrote Mr. Wolf to make clear that there is no legal prohibition barring a nominee's testimony, and to urge him to honor his commitment. In response, the Department, again, declined to provide Mr. Wolf to testify at this hearing.

Faced with continued refusal, on Friday, I issued a subpoena for his appearance in accordance with House and Committee rules. Regrettably, he has chosen to defy the subpoena. That he would refuse to come before the committee after committing to do so should appall every Member of this committee. Insisting Mr. Wolf keep his commitment to testifying before Congress isn't playing politics, it is doing our job.

Congress has the authority and obligation to execute its Constitutional oversight responsibilities regarding Mr. Wolf's decision and the Department's action during his tenure. As Chairman, it is my responsibility to ensure the committee fulfills its Constitutional responsibility.

Nineteen years after the attacks of 9/11, we continue to face grave threats to the homeland, including the rise of domestic terrorism, on-going foreign interference in the 2020 elections, and a coronavirus pandemic that has claimed nearly 200,000 American lives.

As the person running the Department of Homeland Security, Mr. Wolf should be here to testify as Secretaries of Homeland Security have done before. Instead, we have an empty chair, an appropriate metaphor for the Trump administration's dereliction on so many of these critical homeland security issues.

Mr. Wolf may attempt to evade oversight and the Department may try silly stunts to distract from this hearing, but we will not waiver. The stakes are just too high. Indeed, former Department of-

ficials, the administration's own political appointees, are coming forward to sound the alarm that our Nation's security is being compromised in favor of the President's political interests.

Americans who care about securing the homeland and upholding our most sacred values expect their representatives to hold the Department of Homeland Security and this administration accountable. Be assured that, under my Chairmanship, I will not waiver in my commitment to doing so today or in the future.

To that end, I am pleased that Director Wray and Director Miller are hear today. I look forward to their testimony and the Members' questions.

[The statement of Chairman Thompson follows:]

STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN BENNIE G. THOMPSON

SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

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Mr. Wolf may attempt to evade oversight and the Department may try silly stunts to distract from this hearing, but we will not waiver. The stakes are just too high. Indeed, former Department officials—the administration's own political appointees—are coming forward to sound the alarm that our Nation's security is being compromised in favor of the President's political interests.

Americans who care about securing the homeland and upholding our most sacred values expect their representatives to hold the Department of Homeland Security and this administration accountable. Be assured that under my Chairmanship, I will not waiver in my commitment to doing so today or in the future. To that end, I am pleased that Director Wray and Director Miller are here today.

Chairman THOMPSON. The Chair now recognizes the Ranking Member of the full committee, the gentleman from Alabama, Mr. Rogers, for an opening statement.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Before I get started, I want to acknowledge our newest Member of the committee, Mr. Garcia, who I know is going to be a great addition to our committee's work in the future.

Since the heinous attacks of September 11, we have made great strides to thwart global jihadist operations and to stop threats before they reach our shores. However, today, global jihadists are joined by cyber hackers, rival nation-states, and transnational criminal organizations. Together they present incredible new risk to our economy, our safety, and our way of life. Make no mistake, the threats to our homeland have never been more real than they are today. That is why it is important that we, as Members of this committee, understand those threats.

It is our job to ensure that DHS, FBI, and our intelligence community have the resources and authorities they need to continue to dismantle terrorist organizations and protect our homeland.

I look forward to hearing more about how the administration's countering the threat from al-Qaeda, China, and Iran, and others who seek to do us harm.

Mr. Chairman, I am also disappointed DHS is not here today, but I want the record to be very clear on why DHS is not represented. It is not the fault of the Department or this administration. Acting Secretary Wolf offered to testify before this committee in both July and August. Unfortunately, the Majority refused to make either of those dates work. Now, due to his nomination, Mr. Wolf is prohibited from testifying under a policy that has been in place under both Republican and Democrat administrations for decades.

Nevertheless, due to the significance of today's hearing, the Department offered to have Mr. Cuccinelli testify. He is the second-highest ranking official at DHS and perfectly qualified and informed on today's subject matter.

I ask unanimous consent to include his testimony for the record.

Mr. THOMPSON. Without objection.

[The information follows:]



PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE SENIOR OFFICIAL PERFORMING THE DUTIES OF DEPUTY  
DIRECTOR, KENNETH T. CUCCINELLI II, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

9 O'CLOCK A.M., THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

Good morning Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Rogers, and distinguished Members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you on behalf of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) regarding today's threats to the Homeland. Born out of the ashes of 9/11, the American people tasked DHS with one purpose: To protect this great Nation and keep our citizens safe.

As Acting Secretary Wolf said in his recent State of the Homeland remarks, "the Department of Homeland Security is bound by one mission, one creed. Answering the call, often times in the most arduous of environments and difficult of circumstances, to safeguard the American people, our homeland, and our values from all threats, all the time—both today, tomorrow, and in the months and years to come."

Although the threats facing our Nation 17 years ago when DHS was founded have evolved significantly, DHS continues to be motivated to adapt in order to address these new and emerging threats.

DHS addresses these emerging threats with a clear mandate from President Trump: The safety, security, and prosperity of the American people comes first. DHS, using our unique authorities, and in collaboration with our Federal, State, and local partners, will continue to make good on this promise.

Indeed, under the leadership of President Trump, the 240,000 men and women of the DHS family have been empowered to overcome new and challenging threats, as well as accomplish our enduring no-fail missions. Specifically:

- We are combating crises at the Southern Border—such as human trafficking, drug smuggling, and unprecedented illegal migration flows—while restoring integrity to the immigration system;
- We are maintaining vigilance against terrorist threats, foreign and domestic, within the bounds of our authorities;
- DHS has been a part of the whole-of-America response to COVID-19, leveraging every aspect of our Federal Government through a locally-executed, State-managed, and Federally-supported strategy;
- We are protecting Federal buildings and Federal workforce, including Federal law enforcement officers, from an emerging threat of violent rioters;
- We are preparing for and responding to natural disasters;
- We are identifying and preventing malign foreign actors and nation-states from interfering in our elections and protecting our election infrastructure, as part of our broader mission to safeguard and secure cyber space; and
- We are aggressively responding to the threat posed by China—now and in the future.

#### BORDER SECURITY

Nearly 4 years ago, the American people elected President Trump with a mandate to secure our borders and enact an America First immigration policy.

To stem the tide of human smuggling, drug smuggling, and criminal gangs flooding across our border and into our country, the Trump administration has constructed more than 300 miles of the border wall system. Our work is not finished. We are on track to complete 450 miles by the end of 2020.

We have interdicted more than 4 million pounds of illegal drugs on the Southern Border, including methamphetamine, cocaine, as well as fentanyl and drug analogues originating from China. Most of these drugs are supplied by transnational crime organizations making billions in profits while tens of thousands of Americans die due to overdoses. With these efforts, the Trump administration has inhibited the ability of these transnational criminal organization to further devastate our communities—including every Congressional district in America.

#### RESTORING INTEGRITY TO THE IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

Building the wall system is not a stand-alone solution to these problems. The wall fits into a greater, holistic approach to secure the border.

Through President Trump's diplomatic agreements and arrangements with our neighbors to the south, our allies have taken steps to secure their own borders. These include historic border security arrangements with Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. A secure Mexico means a secure United States. A secure Honduras means a secure United States. A secure El Salvador and a secure Guatemala means a secure United States.

Under President Trump, we have made regulatory changes to enforce our immigration laws as Congress originally intended. We also have been able to enact a common-sense approach that not only supports our National security requirements but also protects the American worker. We have done so by terminating the dangerous “catch and release policy” and closing loopholes that led to asylum fraud and employment authorization abuse.

Our immigration system is not only designed to support National security requirements, but also protect American workers. Tightening our immigration system also fortifies economic security.

The days are over of looking the other direction while allowing unfettered illegal foreign labor to flood our domestic labor markets, depress American wages, and strain our municipalities.

#### TERRORISM

The Nation continues to face threats from foreign and domestic terrorists inside our borders—the threats that animated the Department’s founding. I’m proud to stand with the Acting Secretary and say that DHS has taken unprecedented actions to address all forms of violent extremism.

Last year, the Department released a comprehensive strategy that contextualizes the threats from violent extremists and lays out the DHS mission in preventing such violence. We secured—with help from Congress—additional funding in fiscal year 2020 for these initiatives. And the President requested a 300 percent increase in funding for DHS-wide efforts in this area in his fiscal year 2021 budget request.

We recently released a Public Action Plan that outlines dozens of separate actions across the DHS enterprise designed to combat domestic terrorism, and just yesterday announced our fiscal year 2020 Terrorism Prevention grant recipients.

Let me be clear: DHS stands in absolute opposition to any form of violent extremism. We will continue our daily efforts to combat all forms of domestic terror.

#### COVID-19 RESPONSE

Of all the threats DHS has confronted in the last year, the COVID-19 pandemic has posed one of the most formidable, rapidly evolving, and uniquely challenging.

President Trump’s decisive and rapid action led our Federal Government to pursue a whole-of-America response, which continues to deliver results through a locally-executed, State-managed, and Federally-supported strategy.

Early on, President Trump acted swiftly, banning travel from hot spots like China, to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. Despite criticism from certain politicians, the President’s action saved lives. Our efforts to secure the border also directly correspond to DHS’s unique authorities and mission to combat the spread of COVID-19.

CBP and FEMA play a particularly important role in serving the American people during this crisis.

On the domestic front, FEMA has marshalled all available resources to support President Trump’s strategy to combat the pandemic and safely reopen America. FEMA processed the first-ever Nation-wide emergency declaration under the Stafford Act. This was in addition to simultaneous major disaster declarations granted to all 50 States, 5 territories, and the District of Columbia.

Following the emergency declaration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) requested DHS assistance in enforcing the Director’s order issued under Title 42, which suspended the introduction into the United States of certain persons from countries where a communicable disease exists. To date, CBP has halted and expelled over 90 percent of aliens crossing the Southern Border within 2 hours of encountering them—an incredible feat and of critical importance to the public health and the protection of our workforce in response to COVID.

Under President Trump’s direction, we utilized the Defense Production Act to procure more than 220 million respirators from the 3M Company, saving American lives. By taking historic action to better collaborate with the private sector, we have helped deliver and allocate billions of pieces of scarce PPE to our front-line health care workers and first responders.

FEMA has delivered millions of units of personal protective equipment (PPE) to our Federal, State, territorial, and Tribal government partners, allocated billions of dollars in public and individual assistance, and provided tremendous guidance to local officials.

In August, in the absence of Congressional action, President Trump authorized FEMA to use \$44 billion from the Disaster Relief Fund to alleviate the effects of lost wages due to COVID-19, allowing States to make supplemental payments to those receiving unemployment insurance compensation. FEMA acted in short order.

As of September 8, FEMA has already provided more than \$29 billion to 47 States for Lost Wages Assistance to support American workers.

#### CIVIL UNREST/RIOTS

While responding to the pandemic, we have simultaneously worked to combat the violence that has erupted in several metropolitan areas across the country.

In cities like Portland, Oregon, arsonists, looters, and agitators attacked Federal property, law enforcement officers, and local small businesses.

For more than 60 days, DHS law enforcement personnel in Portland were under siege by a violent mob intent on destroying a Federal courthouse. Federal law requires DHS to protect buildings, grounds, and property that are owned, occupied, or secured by the Federal Government and the people on that property. Despite hundreds of injuries, our officers courageously held the line and fulfilled their statutory duty to defend Federal property.

President Trump has offered Federal assistance to every community that has suffered from this type of violence. DHS is proud to support our Department of Justice counterparts as they execute their Constitutional mandate to keep order in American cities when requested by our local partners and governments.

DHS is ready to assist in restoring peace should the communities request our support.

#### NATURAL DISASTERS

The Department continues our role overseeing natural disaster response efforts during these unprecedented times.

DHS recognized early on that we would likely have to respond to the 2020 hurricane season while also continuing our efforts to counter COVID-19.

As Hurricane Laura was about to make landfall just last month, President Trump immediately authorized emergency disaster declarations for Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas. And DHS personnel are responding to Hurricane Sally as we speak.

The President's decisive action and FEMA's prevention and preparedness measures continue to enable DHS to rapidly respond to that hurricane and any future natural disasters.

#### ELECTION SECURITY

DHS is committed to ensuring that our election system functions free from interference, both foreign and domestic. In that vein, the administration has continually called out malign actors, such as China, Russia, and Iran, which seek to interfere in our elections and threaten our democracy.

DHS, through our Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), continues to make progress securing the election systems and our Nation's critical infrastructure. The 2018 mid-term elections were the most secure in modern history, and DHS is working diligently with State and local election officials to make the 2020 elections even more secure.

As such, CISA is currently working with representatives from all 50 States, thousands of local jurisdictions, and our election technology partners to make sure they have the resources they need to keep our elections secure and resilient.

#### SECURING CYBER SPACE AND EMERGING THREATS

Cyber threats to the homeland, from both State-affiliated actors and cyber criminals have been and will remain one of the most prominent threats facing our Nation. All levels of Government and entities across the private sector, to include the vast array of critical infrastructure upon which we rely, are facing a constant barrage of multifaceted cyber-enabled threats. These threats are designed to access and collect sensitive information, to hold operational technology at risk, and interrupt the accessibility of vital networks.

DHS, including through the operations of CISA, the United States Secret Service, the U.S. Coast Guard, ICE—Homeland Security Investigations, and the Transportation Security Administration, is, leveraging its full suite of authorities to mitigate this cyber threat, increase the resilience of those systems upon which our critical infrastructure sectors rely and impose costs on malicious cyber actors looking to leverage vulnerabilities for financial or other gain.

In addition, DHS, through its Science and Technology Directorate, works in collaboration with CISA and our Federal partners to characterize and better understand emerging technological and science-based threats facing our Nation's critical infrastructure.

## CHINA

Surveying the threat landscape, one menacing actor is ever-present—China.

In the midst of our complex challenges, DHS must also confront an aggressive nation-state. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) seeks to assert its influence in both overt and covert ways to achieve a variety of geopolitical and domestic goals. The Peoples Republic of China's (PRC) increasingly aggressive and bold actions—from undermining long-standing Hong Kong autonomy to attempting to build a data collection network that spans the globe—imperils the United States and the international rules-based order that DHS has helped to sustain and enforce since its inception.

Across a wide range of policy spheres, from threatening U.S. economic security and prosperity, to undermining the core notion of a secure representative democratic process, DHS is on the front line of growing tensions with the PRC.

President Trump has taken unprecedented action issuing a Presidential proclamation restricting travel of certain Chinese graduate students and researchers with ties to entities in China supporting China's military-civil fusion strategy to prevent them from stealing and otherwise appropriating sensitive research. DHS is working closely with the Department of State to enforce that Presidential proclamation.

We are targeting illicit Chinese manufacturers who have exploited the COVID-19 pandemic by producing fraudulent or prohibited PPE and medical supplies that especially endanger our front-line workers.

We are preventing goods produced by forced labor from entering our markets and demanding that China respect the inherent dignity of each human being. CBP continued that effort just this week with the announcement of 5 Withhold Release Orders.

At our borders and our ports of entry, we are leveraging technology and innovation to target and interdict deadly Chinese-made fentanyl and fentanyl-like substances before they can destroy American communities and take American lives.

DHS is working with our interagency and industry colleagues to protect our information and communications infrastructure from intellectual property theft and nefarious data collection by China.

China's relentless barrage of attacks aimed at undermining American workers, American economic dominance, and the American way of life cannot be allowed to stand—and under President Trump, it won't. A policy of appeasement is not an option; it is a proven road to failure.

The power dynamic DHS is witnessing between the United States and China will be a focus for many years to come. In the near-term, DHS will continue to relentlessly respond to the threat posed by Beijing, consistent with the National Security Strategy and the Strategic Approach to the People's Republic of China.

## CONCLUSION

DHS continues to demonstrate its ability to take on and overcome wide-ranging and diverse threats.

As we seek to fulfill our mission, the men and women of DHS look forward to continued cooperation with Congress so that together we can keep our citizens safe and secure.

Thank you again. I will now be happy to take your questions.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you. He should be here today providing the Department's perspective on those threats we face and what DHS is doing to counter them. But instead of having productive hearing with Mr. Cuccinelli, the Chairman chose to subpoena and then empty-chair Mr. Wolf. This is a political stunt. It is a huge disservice to our committee, and to the public.

This is the single-most important hearing we hold in this committee, but, unfortunately, as with most things this Congress, the Majority has chosen to play politics. As a result, the public is being deprived of critical information from DHS. Perhaps that is the real reason why this Majority didn't want Mr. Cuccinelli here.

Having the public hear about all the good things DHS is doing to protect them might undermine the radical left's latest rallying cry: Dismantle DHS. Unfortunately, Director Wray and Director Miller are here—I am sorry.

Fortunately, Director Wray and Director Miller are here to provide us with their valuable perspectives. I look forward to hearing from both of you about the threats we are facing.

With that, I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

[The statement of Ranking Member Rogers follows:]

STATEMENT OF RANKING MEMBER MIKE ROGERS

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Since the heinous attacks of September 11, we have made great strides to thwart global jihadist operations and stop threats before they reach our shores.

However, today, global jihadists are joined by cyber hackers, rival nation-states, and transnational criminal organizations.

Together, they present incredible new risks to our economy, our safety, and our way of life.

Make no mistake, the threats to our homeland have never been more real than they are today.

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It's our job to ensure DHS, FBI, and our intelligence community have the resources and authorities they need to continue to dismantle terrorist organizations and protect the homeland.

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Fortunately, Director Wray and Director Miller are here today to provide us with their valuable perspectives.

I look forward to hearing from you both on how the threats against us are evolving and what actions Congress can take to assist you in combatting them.

I yield back.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

The committee does not want to hear testimony from the Department. Therefore, after Mr. Wolf declined our invitation, we issued a subpoena to obtain his testimony. The so-called standard practice by which the Department says Mr. Wolf cannot testify is the administration's own self-imposed limitation.

I also note that this is an administration whose respect for so-called precedence, and even laws, is highly situational. If the Minority wanted to hear testimony from Mr. Cuccinelli, they had

every right to invite him to appear as their witness at this hearing today. I am not aware of the Minority's requesting his testimony.

Other Members of the committee are reminded that, under committee rules, opening statements may be submitted for the record. [The statement of Honorable Jackson Lee follows:]

STATEMENT OF HONORABLE SHEILA JACKSON LEE

SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

Thank you, Chairman Thompson and Ranking Member Rogers, for convening this hearing and affording us, the Homeland Security Committee, the opportunity to hear testimony on "World-wide Threats to the Homeland."

I welcome today's witnesses and look forward to their testimony:

- Hon. Chad Wolf, Acting Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS);
- Hon. Christopher A. Wray, director, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); and
- Hon. Christopher Miller, director, National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC).

No matter what other challenges might emerge we must never forget that one of our Nation's greatest threats comes from our struggle against violent extremism that began on September 11, 2001, and has extended to attacks on religious freedom, diversity, equal rights for women, and other core principles that are foundational to our Nation's expression of a democratic republic.

September 11, 2001, remains a tragedy that defines our Nation's history, but the final chapter will be written by those who are charged with keeping our Nation and its people safe while preserving the way of life that terrorists sought to change.

I visited the site of the World Trade Center Towers in the aftermath of the attacks and grieved over the deaths of so many of our men, women, and children.

I was heartbroken over the lives lost at the Pentagon.

Since September 11, 2001, it has been a priority of this Nation to prevent terrorists, or those who would do Americans harm, from boarding flights whether they are domestic or international.

Over the last 18 years, since enactment of the Homeland Security Act, the mission of the Department of Homeland Security has expanded to include cyber defense of civilian agency and private-sector networks; protecting critical infrastructure in the form of the Nation's electric grid, water delivery systems, transportation networks and Federal election systems; and, most recently managing the question of essential workers during this pandemic.

Annually the Committee on Homeland Security has held a hearing on the topic of "World-wide Threats to Homeland Security", which have covered a range of topics from terrorist organizations like al-Qaeda and ISIS, to home-grown involving lone wolves or White Supremacist.

Today's Government witnesses will provide insight into terrorism threats and how the Federal Government is addressing those threats to protect the homeland.

This hearing provides Members of the committee with the opportunity to focus on international terrorism threats, including the threats to the homeland resulting from the resurgence of ISIS in Syria, and the rise in domestic terrorism incidents and recent shootings, including those inspired by or related to militias, conspiracy theorists, or violent.

My primary domestic security concerns are how to maintain a United—United States by:

- preventing foreign fighters and foreign trained fighters from entering the United States undetected;
- countering international and home-grown violent extremism;
- preserving Constitutional rights and due process for all persons;
- addressing the uncontrolled proliferation of long-guns that are designed for battlefields and not hunting ranges;
- controlling access to firearms for those who are deemed to be too dangerous to fly;
- protecting critical infrastructure from physical and cyber attack;
- creating equity and fairness in our Nation's immigration policies; and
- strengthening the capacity of the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice to meet the challenges posed by weapons of mass destruction.

The list of 2020 threats to the homeland include:

- COVID-19 pandemic;
- Proof of Climate Change;

- Social unrest due to killing of unarmed black people;
- Internal and external on-going attacks targeting the November 3, 2020 election;
- The rise of extremist right-wing groups like QAnon or Boogaloo; and
- Efforts by terrorist groups to reemerge or reorganize following our Nation's efforts in battling ISIS and al-Qaeda.

## COVID-19

- As of 4 o'clock pm on September 16, 2020 the Centers for Disease Control reports that the United States has 6,571,867 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 195,053 deaths attributable to the illness.
- Dr. Anthony Fauci and medical experts warn that the worse months for COVID-19 may be ahead of us, when the weather cools and human activity moves indoors.
- The contributing factors in their assessment are the lack of broad adoption of mask-wearing, the lack of ventilation in interior spaces, combined with inadequate space for requisite social distance in buildings may all contribute to re-emergence of higher infection rates.
- The President's own words, recorded by Bob Woodward during an interview for a new book, condemns him of having violated the most basic duty as President, which is to inform the public of a threat and help to prepare the Nation to repel the threat to preserve as many lives as possible.
- In the President's own words we learn that he told Bob Woodward that he knew how deadly COVID-19 actually was, but he chose not to inform the public.

The President's oath of office:

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

The preamble to the Constitution establishes the purpose of the United States:

"We the People of the United States in order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

To faithfully execute means making sure that the laws established by the Constitution and all laws that flow from it are followed to achieve justice, domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote general welfare, and support freedom not just for ourselves but our future generations.

President Trump has shown his disdain for the American people's welfare and well-being and strong aberrance to following the law and norms of public elected officials, which resulted in his impeachment.

Examples of his ill fit for the task of President is evident in what he has said and done.

President Trump's attacks on the *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, and *CNN* by calling them enemies of the people is an assault on the first Amendment.

His refusal to address the murder of Jamal Ahmad Khashoggi a United States permanent resident, who was a Saudi Arabian dissident, author, columnist for *The Washington Post*, and a general manager and editor-in-chief of Al-Arab News Channel who was assassinated at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on 2 October 2018 by agents of the Saudi government was an abdication of his duty to hold those to account for the fate of citizens or permanent residents while abroad.

## VOTE-BY-MAIL (ABSENTEE VOTING)

The President has engaged in efforts to undermine confidence in voting by absentee or mail ballots, which will put people at risk during the pandemic.

As the Nation heads toward Election Day in the midst of a persistent pandemic and simmering social unrest, a new Pew Research Center survey finds that Americans' deep partisan divide, dueling information ecosystems, and divergent responses to conspiracy theories and misinformation are all fueling uncertainty and conflict surrounding the Presidential election.

While evidence indicates that mail-in voting is associated with only minuscule levels of fraud, 43 percent of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents identify voter fraud as a "major problem" associated with mail-in ballots. By contrast, only 11 percent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents say the same thing.

This unfounded fear of mail voting will push voters to vote in person on Election Day creating potentially high risk environments where the virus that causes COVID-19 may be easily transmitted.

We may be witnessing once again; a foreseeable disaster being created by preventable or mitigatable circumstances that the President that he may not move to avert or provide adequate relief to those impacted to reduce the level of suffering and death.

When the Nation witnessed the President not responding with the full scope of resources available to address the depth and scope of assistance needed to aide Puerto Rican victims of Hurricane Maria many assumed he did not know what to do—or that he was overwhelmed by the scope of the disaster, but there may be another explanation.

For months the administration grossly misled the public when it claimed that only 64 deaths occurred, in Puerto Rico due to Hurricane Maria, when in fact 2,975 people died as a result of the storm, most of which succumbed to heat, lack of access to health care, such as dialysis, medications for diabetes, heart and hypertension, or lack of access to safe water to drink in the days and weeks following the storm.

The administration placed blame for the poor response to the disaster on the Puerto Rican government.

The assumption was made that this was a learning experience for the Trump administration and that surely, he would not repeat this error in the future.

This was likely the most important notice to the public that when this President was presented with a scenario with dire consequences; absent Government intervention, he may not act to reduce the loss of life, that he would provide an overly upbeat message, to match his inaction in doing anything to end or mitigate the crisis.

As we grieve the loss of over 195,000 mothers, fathers, grandfathers, grandmothers, in-laws, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles, cousins, neighbors, friends, co-workers and colleagues who have died, we should not forget Puerto Rico and the nearly 3,000 U.S. citizens who died because they may have been the first victims of a pathology that plagues the Nation today.

#### QANON

Is comprised of a loose collection of conspiracy theories that followers believe and will go to great lengths to act on those beliefs.

Anon followers believe, without foundation in truth that the world is run by a secret cabal of Satan-worshipping Democrats and Hollywood celebrities who are engaged in wide-scale child trafficking, pedophilia, and cannibalism.

The followers or believers in QAnon have not room for nuance or rational thought there is only good versus evil and any disagreement in their minds is evidence of abject depravity in the form of child murder.

In recent weeks, President Trump has praised followers of QAnon followers, a QAnon-backed candidate is all but assured a place in the U.S. House of Representatives in the next Congress.

Trump went so far as to accuse his Presidential opponent of “pedophilia,” feeding the QAnon attack machine.

The FBI was right to identify the work of groups like QAnon because they are now and have been throughout history a danger to people and communities.

As far back as the Salem witch trials and McCarthyism in the 1950’s are evidence of what harm can be caused by zealots pushing fanatical beliefs when violence is their form of expression because they inflict harm on people and societies.

QAnon and their followers will create false narratives about persons, businesses, or institutions without fear of reprisals in the form of court actions.

On May 30, 2019, the FBI issued an Intelligence Bulletin on Anti-Government, Identity-Based, and Fringe Political Conspiracy Theories Very Likely Motivate Some Domestic Extremists to Commit Criminal, Sometimes Violent Activity that designated QAnon as a “domestic terror threat” because of its potential to incite extremist violence.

In spite of this, several U.S. Congressional candidates for the 2020 November election proclaim support for the QAnon conspiracy.

Several key events from 2017 to 2020 have contributed to its spread, including Jeffrey Epstein’s arrest and death, and the coronavirus pandemic lockdowns.

It does not help matters to add Federal Government agents in unmarked vehicles pulling people off the streets of Portland.

What started out as a primarily U.S.-based conspiracy theory, has expanded to gain international recognition.

Currently, QAnon followers seem to be propagating misinformation pertaining to both COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) and the George Floyd protests, all while



membership across various digital platforms, such as Facebook, seem to be on the rise.

QAnon adherents have been disrupted from carrying out violent attacks based on the beliefs espoused by the conspiracies peddled.

A California man was arrested in 2018 after being found with bomb-making materials with the intent to construct an explosive device that he wanted to use to blow up a satanic temple monument at the Illinois Capitol rotunda in order to “make Americans aware of Pizzagate” and “the New World Order” who were dismantling society.

In another case a Nevada man used an armored truck to block traffic on the Hoover Dam Bypass Bridge and held up signs—then he fled to Arizona where he was arrested.

At the time of his arrest he referenced QAnon conspiracy theories and discussed related conspiratorial beliefs.

The Pew Center discovered through surveys that in this environment, the QAnon conspiracy theories have become another area of partisan divide.

An overwhelming majority of Democrats who have heard something about QAnon (90 percent) say it is at least “somewhat bad” for the country, including 77 percent who say it is “very bad.”

But 41 percent of Republicans who have heard something about it say QAnon is somewhat or very good for the country, modestly fewer than the 50 percent who think it is at least somewhat bad.

#### BATTLE TO DEFEAT ISIS AND AL-QAEDA

I will never forget September 11, 2001, when 2,977 men, women, and children were murdered by 19 hijackers—15 of whom were Saudi nationals, who took control of commercial aircraft and used them as missiles.

I stood on the East Front steps of the Capitol on September 11, 2001, along with 150 members of the House of Representatives and sang “God Bless America.”

We did not know if there was another plane or other follow-on attacks being attempted.

We did know that the American People needed to know that their Government was still here ready to serve and protect them from harm.

The days and weeks following the attacks we were uncertain what threat might come and how many lives might be lost as we worked to put resources in place to deal with an enemy that might be among us.

We did not have to worry about the President of the United States dividing Americans and pitting us against each other with wild conspiracies or aggravating old wounds based upon race, ethnicity, or religion.

We needed unity and we had it.

After years of fighting al-Qaeda, President Obama killed Osama Bin Laden and had his body buried at sea.

It was also President Obama who crafted a strategy for combating ISIS and al-Qaeda that would keep them at bay in the Middle East for some time to come.

The Kurds were the allies the United States needed to finally plan a permanent exit strategy from the Middle East.

They were effective fighters who worked well with our special forces.

The Trump administration’s betrayal of the Kurds in allowing Turkey to invade Syria leading to the deaths of the very ground forces our Nation relied upon to defeat ISIS was tragic and undermined our work to end this threat for ever.

This betrayal has real long-term consequences for our Nation because the Kurds offered an opportunity to have a strategic partner and reliable Muslim ally in the region that the United States could have called upon, should another ISIS or al-Qaeda threat emerged.

Over the past 18 years we have learned a great deal.

Those who wish to do us harm can come from any race, religion, ethnicity, or political persuasion.

We are better when we are one Nation prepared to face these challenges against a common foe.

That sense of unity has been under assault by forces within and outside of the country.

Conspiracies were used in 2016 to stoke fear and hate against then-Presidential Candidate Hilary Clinton.

To succeed in meeting the threats we face we must work to strengthen our Nation’s leadership in all spheres by making sure that Congress and the Executive branch work together as co-equal branches of Government.

Our Nation cannot afford leadership in any branch of Government that is laser-focused only on a few narrow issues and not looking at the landscape and countering threats where ever they may exist.

I want to note for the record that since the emergence of protests following the death of George Floyd and the actions of DHS and Federal agencies to attack and attempt to suppress protests that the use of an end-to-end encryption application called Signal has been on the rise.

The actions by some may be to attempt to characterize the use of encryption as being suspect, when in fact it is a reaction to threats posed by Boogaloo and QAnon and others who may attempt infiltrate peaceful protests to attack demonstrators or law enforcement at these events.

It is also a reaction to the overreaction of Federal agencies that resulted in attacks against peaceful protestors outside of the White House, and unwarranted actions involving putting people in unmarked Government vehicles.

The use of encryption by U.S. citizens is a clear indication that trust is eroding between the people and the Government.

I look forward to the testimony of today's witnesses and the question-and-answer opportunity that will follow.

Thank you. I yield back the remainder of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON. Members are also reminded that the subcommittees will operate according to the guidelines laid out by myself and Ranking Member in our July 8 colloquy.

I welcome our panel of witnesses. Our first witness is the director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Christopher Wray. Director Wray began his law enforcement career in 1997, serving in numerous positions at the Justice Department before assuming his current role in 2017.

Next, we have the director of the National Counterterrorism Center, Christopher Miller. Director Miller served in the United States military from 1983 to 2014 and in numerous civilian National security roles before assuming his current position.

Without objection, the witnesses' full statements will be inserted in the record.

I now ask each witness to summarize his statement in 5 minutes or the best you can do within that time, beginning with Director Wray.

#### **STATEMENT OF CHRISTOPHER A. WRAY, DIRECTOR, U.S. FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION**

Mr. WRAY. Morning, Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Rogers, and Members of the committee. I am honored to be here today on behalf of the men and women of the FBI to discuss our Nation's top threats from the FBI's perspective and what we are doing to counter those threats.

I know we all share a lot of the same concerns about topics ranging from international and domestic terrorism, cybersecurity, to the violence in our streets, and particularly this year, to the threat of foreign influence in our elections, and that is just to name a few.

I look forward to updating you on these and other important topics this morning, but I would like to begin by covering quickly a few items that have been particularly top of mind for us at the FBI over the past few weeks.

First, terrorism remains the FBI's top priority, although the nature of that threat has evolved significantly since 9/11. We are ever-vigilant in our efforts to prevent attacks by international terrorist groups like al-Qaeda and ISIS. Those groups pose a threat not just to Americans overseas, but also here at home, most nota-

bly by those we call home-grown violent extremists, often lone actors inspired by foreign terrorists, self-radicalized on-line, and motivated to attack soft targets with readily-available weapons.

We are also working around the clock to prevent attacks by domestic terrorist who are inspired by one or more extremist ideologies to commit violent acts. In recent years, we have been laser-focused on threats by racially- or ethnically-motivated violent extremists. They, too, are often radicalized on-line and mobilized quickly to carry out their violent plans.

People like Richard Holzer, who our Denver Joint Terrorism Task Force arrested on hate crime charges just last year while he was planning to blow up a synagogue in Pueblo, Colorado.

As with any terrorism case, we are focused on disruption, on making arrests before a criminal can act. Just this year alone, through the hard work and dedication of countless men and women, both at the FBI and across our partners agencies, we have successfully thwarted potential terrorist attacks in Kansas City, Tampa, Cleveland, Oklahoma City, Boston, Phoenix, and other locations.

Now, in recent months, we have witnessed protests in various places around the country, and many Members of Congress have raised questions about those protests. Although the majority of protesters have been peaceful, we have opened investigations on individuals involved in criminal activity at these protests, some of whom adhere to violent extremist agendas designed to sow discord and upheaval.

Let me be clear: We do not investigate groups or individuals based on ideology or the exercise of First Amendment protected activity alone, but when the ideology leads someone to commit criminal acts and pursue violence, the FBI will not hesitate to take appropriate action. That is why we have been working closely with our Federal, State, and local partners to ensure the safety of all of our citizens, including, I should say, the safety of those trying to exercise their First Amendment rights peacefully.

We, in law enforcement, must keep our communities safe and secure while safeguarding our citizens' Constitutional rights and civil liberties. As I have said before, one of those need not and must not come at the expense of the other.

We also remain focused on other threats. In less than 2 months, of course, Americans will exercise one of their most cherished rights to vote in a free and fair election. Americans must have confidence in our voting system and our election infrastructure. That is why the security of our elections is, and will continue to be, one of our highest priorities.

We will not tolerate foreign interference in our elections. We are working closely with our Federal, State, and local partners, as well as the private sector to share information, bolster security, and identify and disrupt any threats.

Just recently, for example, we shared threat indicators with both Facebook and Twitter that allowed them to take down fake accounts created as part of a Russian disinformation campaign before those accounts could develop a broader following.

Turning to the cyber arena. We are focused on an increasingly diverse array of threats from our cyber adversaries from State-

sponsored cyber intrusions by nation-states like China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea, to sophisticated cyber criminals seeking to exploit technical vulnerabilities primarily for personal profit.

Just yesterday I announced the FBI's new cyber strategy, leveraging our unique expertise and authorities to impose risk and consequences on our cyber adversaries. We are focusing on results, and that means we are working to enable our partners' operations, as well as our own.

To take one example, the FBI and NSA recently joined to expose highly sophisticated Russian military intelligence malware providing the private sector and other Government partners the indicators they need to disrupt that tool.

We also face increasingly blended threat of state-sponsored economic espionage facilitated by cyber intrusions. In July, based on the FBI's investigative work, DOJ indicted 2 Chinese hackers working with the Ministry of State Security for carrying out a global computer intrusion campaign that targeted hundreds of victims, including, I should note, companies developing COVID-19 vaccines, testing technology, and treatment.

With that kind of behavior, China continues to undercut their own claims of being a trusted and effective partner of the international community. Just yesterday, we unsealed charges against 5 Chinese hackers who were targeting victims around the world from their safe haven in China.

With our partners, we have now arrested 2 of their co-conspirators in Malaysia and seized or took down hundreds of the hackers' accounts, servers, and domains.

Now, I have touched on only a handful of the important threats we face, and only quickly at that. Of course, there are many significant others. As the threats evolve in scale, impact, complexity, and agility, we are relying on our deep well of expertise, intelligence, and partnerships.

I am committed to ensuring that the Bureau does great work while adhering to our core tenets of fidelity, bravery, and integrity. In these challenging times, I tell my folks that we have got to keep calm and tackle hard, remaining faithful to our core values and best traditions, while making sure that we are always doing the right thing in the right way.

Thank you. Happy to take your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Wray follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHRISTOPHER A. WRAY

SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

Good afternoon, Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Rogers, and Members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the current threats to the United States homeland. I am pleased to be here representing the nearly 37,000 dedicated men and women of the FBI.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has presented unique and unprecedented challenges to the FBI workforce, I am proud of their dedication to our mission of protecting the American people and upholding the Constitution. Hostile foreign actors, violent extremists, and opportunistic criminal elements have seized upon this environment. As a result, we are facing aggressive and sophisticated threats on many fronts. Whether it is terrorism now moving at the speed of social media, or the increasingly blended threat of cyber intrusions and State-sponsored economic espionage, or malign foreign influence and interference or active shooters and other violent criminals threatening our communities, or the scourge of opioid trafficking and

abuse, or hate crimes, human trafficking, crimes against children—the list of threats we are worried about is not getting any shorter, and none of the threats on that list are getting any easier.

#### COUNTERTERRORISM

Preventing terrorist attacks remains the FBI's top priority. However, the threat posed by terrorism—both international terrorism ("IT") and domestic violent extremism—has evolved significantly since 9/11.

The greatest threat we face in the homeland is that posed by lone actors radicalized on-line who look to attack soft targets with easily accessible weapons. We see this lone actor threat manifested both within Domestic Violent Extremists ("DVEs") and Home-grown Violent Extremists ("HVEs"), 2 distinct sets of individuals that generally self-radicalize and mobilize to violence on their own. DVEs are individuals who commit violent criminal acts in furtherance of ideological goals stemming from domestic influences, such as racial bias and anti-Government sentiment. HVEs are individuals who have been radicalized primarily in the United States, and who are inspired by, but not receiving individualized direction from, Foreign Terrorist Organizations ("FTOs").

Many of these violent extremists, both domestic and international, are motivated and inspired by a mix of ideological, socio-political, and personal grievances against their targets, which recently have more and more included large public gatherings, houses of worship, and retail locations. Lone actors, who by definition are not likely to conspire with others regarding their plans, are increasingly choosing these soft, familiar targets for their attacks, limiting law enforcement opportunities for detection and disruption ahead of their action.

DVEs pose a steady and evolving threat of violence and economic harm to the United States. Trends may shift, but the underlying drivers for domestic violent extremism—such as perceptions of government or law enforcement overreach, socio-political conditions, racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, misogyny, and reactions to legislative actions—remain constant. As stated above, the FBI is most concerned about lone offender attacks, primarily shootings, as they have served as the dominant lethal mode for domestic violent extremist attacks. More deaths were caused by DVEs than international terrorists in recent years. In fact, 2019 was the deadliest year for domestic extremist violence since the Oklahoma City Bombing in 1995.

The top threat we face from domestic violent extremists stems from those we identify as Racially/Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremists ("RMVE"). RMVEs were the primary source of ideologically-motivated lethal incidents and violence in 2018 and 2019 and have been considered the most lethal of all domestic extremists since 2001. Of note, the last 3 DVE attacks, however, were perpetrated by Anti-Government Violent Extremists.

The spate of attacks we saw in 2019 underscore the continued threat posed by DVEs and perpetrators of hate crimes. The FBI works proactively to prevent acts of domestic terrorism and hate crimes. For example, in November 2019, the Denver Joint Terrorism Task Force arrested Richard Holzer on Federal charges of attempting to obstruct religious exercise by force using explosives. This disruption is just one example of the strength of our Domestic Terrorism—Hate Crimes ("DT-HC") Fusion Cell. Our Counterterrorism ("CTD") and Criminal Divisions ("CID") working together were able to prevent a potential terrorist attack before it occurred and, for the first time in recent history, make a proactive arrest on a Hate Crimes charge. Through the DT-HC Fusion Cell, subject-matter experts from both CTD and CID work in tandem to innovatively use investigative tools and bring multiple perspectives to bear in combatting the intersecting threats of domestic terrorism and hate crimes, preventing attacks, and providing justice to victims.

We recognize that the FBI must be aware not just of the domestic violent extremism threat, but also of threats emanating from those responding violently to First Amendment-protected activities. In the past, we have seen some violent extremists respond to peaceful movements through violence rather than non-violent actions and ideas. The FBI is involved only when responses cross from ideas and Constitutionally-protected protests to violence.

Regardless of the specific ideology involved, the FBI requires that all domestic terrorism investigations be predicated based on activity intended to further a political or social goal, wholly or in part involving force, coercion, or violence, in violation of Federal law.

HVEs and FTOs have posed a persistent threat to the Nation and to U.S. interests abroad, while their tradecraft, tactics, and target sets have evolved. The international terrorism threat to the United States has expanded from sophisticated, externally-directed FTO plots to include individual attacks carried out by HVEs who

are inspired by designated terrorist organizations. As stated above, the FBI assesses HVEs are the greatest, most immediate international terrorism threat to the homeland. These individuals are FTO-inspired individuals who are in the United States, have been radicalized primarily in the United States, and are not receiving individualized direction from FTOs. We, along with our law enforcement partners, face significant challenges in identifying and disrupting HVEs. This is due, in part, to their lack of a direct connection with an FTO, an ability to rapidly mobilize without law enforcement detection, and their frequent use of encrypted communications.

Many FTOs use various digital communication platforms to reach individuals they believe may be susceptible and sympathetic to violent terrorist messages. However, no group has been as successful at drawing people into its perverse ideology as ISIS, which has proven dangerously competent at employing such tools. ISIS uses traditional media platforms as well as wide-spread social media campaigns to propagate its ideology. Terrorists in ungoverned spaces—both physical and virtual—readily disseminate propaganda and training materials to attract easily influenced individuals around the world to their cause. With the broad distribution of social media, terrorists can spot, assess, recruit, and radicalize vulnerable persons of all ages in the United States either to travel to foreign lands or to conduct an attack on the homeland. Through the internet, terrorists anywhere overseas now have direct access to our local communities to target and recruit our citizens and spread their message faster than was imagined just a few years ago.

We remain concerned that groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham (“ISIS”) and al-Qaeda intend to carry out large-scale attacks in the United States. Despite their territorial defeat in Iraq and Syria, ISIS remains relentless and ruthless in its campaign of violence against the West and has aggressively promoted its hateful message, attracting like-minded violent extremists. The message is not tailored solely to those who overtly express signs of radicalization. It is seen by many who use messaging apps and participate in social networks. Ultimately, many of the individuals drawn to ISIS seek a sense of belonging.

Echoing other terrorist groups, ISIS has advocated lone-offender attacks in Western countries. Recent ISIS videos and propaganda have specifically advocated attacks against soldiers, law enforcement, and intelligence community personnel.

As noted above, ISIS is not the only terrorist group of concern. Al-Qaeda maintains its desire for large-scale, spectacular attacks. While continued counterterrorism pressure has degraded the group’s Afghanistan-Pakistan senior leadership, in the near term, al-Qaeda is more likely to focus on building its international affiliates and supporting small-scale, readily achievable attacks in key regions such as East and West Africa. Simultaneously, over the last year, propaganda from al-Qaeda leaders seeks to inspire individuals to conduct their own attacks in the United States and the West. For example, the December 2019 attack at Naval Air Station Pensacola demonstrates that groups such as al-Qaeda continue to be interested in encouraging attacks on U.S. soil.

The FBI regularly reviews intelligence to ensure that we are appropriately mitigating threats from any place by any actor, and the possible violent responses and actions. We are sensitive to First Amendment-protected activities during investigative and intelligence efforts so as to ensure that our investigative actions remain aligned with our authorities and are conducted with the appropriate protections in place for privacy and civil liberties.

As the threat to the United States and U.S. interests evolves, we must adapt and confront these challenges, relying heavily on the strength of our Federal, State, local, Tribal, and international partnerships. The FBI uses all lawful investigative techniques and methods to combat these terrorist threats to the United States. Along with our domestic and foreign partners, we are collecting and analyzing intelligence concerning the on-going threat posed by violent extremists motivated by any ideology and desire to harm Americans and U.S. interests. We continue to encourage information sharing, which is evidenced through our partnerships with many Federal, State, local, and Tribal agencies assigned to Joint Terrorism Task Forces around the country. Be assured, the FBI continues to strive to work and share information more efficiently, and to pursue a variety of lawful methods to help stay ahead of these threats.

#### ELECTION SECURITY

In less than 2 months, Americans will exercise one of their most important and cherished freedoms; the right to vote in a democratic election. Our Nation is confronting multi-faceted foreign threats seeking to both influence our National policies and public opinion, and cause harm to our National dialog. The FBI and our inter-agency partners remain concerned about, and focused on, the covert and overt influ-

ence measures used by certain adversaries in their attempts to sway U.S. voters' preferences and perspectives, shift U.S. policies, increase discord in the United States, and undermine the American people's confidence in our democratic processes.

Foreign influence operations—which include covert, coercive, or corrupt actions by foreign governments to influence U.S. political sentiment or public discourse or interfere in our processes themselves—are not a new problem. But the interconnectedness of the modern world, combined with the anonymity of the internet, have changed the nature of the threat and how the FBI and its partners must address it. This year's election cycle, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, provides ample opportunity for hostile foreign actors to conduct disinformation campaigns and foreign influence operations in an effort to mislead, sow discord, and, ultimately, undermine confidence in our democratic institutions and values and in our Government's response to our current health crisis.

Foreign influence operations have taken many forms and used many tactics over the years. Most widely reported these days are attempts by adversaries—hoping to reach a wide swath of Americans covertly from outside the United States—to use false personas and fabricated stories on social media platforms to discredit U.S. individuals and institutions.

The FBI is the lead Federal agency responsible for investigating foreign influence operations. In the fall of 2017, the Foreign Influence Task Force (“FITF”) was established to identify and counteract malign foreign influence operations targeting the United States. The FITF is led by the Counterintelligence Division and is composed of agents, analysts, and professional staff from the Counterintelligence, Cyber, Counterterrorism, and Criminal Investigative Divisions. It is specifically charged with identifying and combating foreign influence operations targeting democratic institutions and values inside the United States. In all instances, the FITF strives to protect democratic institutions and public confidence; develop a common operating picture; raise adversaries' costs; and, reduce their overall asymmetric advantage.

The task force brings the FBI's National security and traditional criminal investigative expertise under one umbrella to prevent foreign influence in our elections. This better enables us to frame the threat, to identify connections across programs, to aggressively investigate as appropriate, and—importantly—to be more agile. Coordinating closely with our partners and leveraging relationships we have developed in the technology sector, we had a number of instances where we were able to quickly relay threat indicators that those companies used to take swift action, blocking budding abuse of their platforms.

Following the 2018 mid-term elections, we reviewed the threat and the effectiveness of our coordination and outreach. As a result of this review, we further expanded the scope of the FITF. Previously, our efforts to combat malign foreign influence focused solely on the threat posed by Russia. Utilizing lessons learned over the last year-and-a-half, the FITF is widening its aperture to confront malign foreign operations of China, Iran, and other global adversaries. To address this expanding focus and wider set of adversaries and influence efforts, we have also added resources to maintain permanent “surge” capability on election and foreign influence threats.

We have also further refined our approach. All efforts are based on a three-pronged approach, which includes investigations and operations; information and intelligence sharing; and a strong partnership with the private sector. Through the efforts of the FITF, and lessons learned from both the 2016 and 2018 elections, the FBI is actively engaged in identifying, detecting, and disrupting threats to our elections and ensuring both the integrity of our democracy is preserved and the will of the American people is fulfilled.

Protecting policy makers is an important part of our efforts to combat malign foreign influence and protect our elections. As you are aware, the FBI and our inter-agency partners have been providing on-going election security threat briefings to Congress. We will continue to do so throughout the fall and into the future, where there is actionable intelligence.

#### LAWFUL ACCESS

I want to turn now to an issue continuing to limit law enforcement's ability to disrupt these increasingly insular actors. We are all familiar with the inability of law enforcement agencies to access data, even with a lawful warrant or court order, due to “end-to-end” encryption. Increasingly, device manufacturers and communications service providers have employed encryption in such a manner that only the users or parties to the communications can access the content of the communications or devices. This is known as “end-to-end” encryption.

This development has meant that, in recent years, the FBI has observed a decline in its ability to gain access to the content of both domestic and international terrorist communications, due to the wide-spread adoption of encryption for internet traffic and the prevalence of mobile messaging apps using end-to-end encryption as default.

The FBI certainly recognizes how encryption increases the overall safety and security of the internet for users. But, in fulfilling the FBI's duty to the American people to prevent acts of terrorism, this kind of end-to-end encryption creates serious challenges. Accessing content of communications by, or data held by, known or suspected terrorists pursuant to judicially authorized, warranted legal process is getting more and more difficult.

The on-line, encrypted nature of radicalization, along with the insular nature of most of today's attack plotters, leaves investigators with fewer dots to connect. As was evident in the December 9, 2019, shooting at Naval Air Station Pensacola that killed 3 U.S. sailors and severely wounded 8 other Americans, deceased terrorist Mohammed Saeed Alshamrani was able to communicate using warrant-proof, end-to-end encrypted apps deliberately to evade detection by law enforcement. It took the FBI several months to access information in his phones, during which time we did not know whether he was a lone-wolf actor, or whether his associates may have been plotting additional terrorist attacks.

If law enforcement loses the ability to detect criminal activity because communication between subjects—data in motion—or data held by subjects—data at rest—is encrypted in such a way making content inaccessible, even with a lawful order, our ability to protect the American people will be degraded. Providers and law enforcement must continue to collaborate to explore possible technical solutions that would provide security and privacy to those using the internet while also contributing to the FBI's ability to complete its mission.

Despite the successes that result from the hard work of the men and women of the FBI, our Joint Terrorism Task Forces, and our partners across the Government, terrorism continues to pose a persistent threat to the homeland and our interests overseas.

#### CHINA THREAT

The greatest long-term threat to our Nation's information and intellectual property, and to our economic vitality, is the counterintelligence and economic espionage threat from China. It is a threat to our economic security and by extension, to our National security.

As you have seen from the recent closure of the Chinese Consulate in Houston, this issue is not just an intelligence issue, or a Government problem, or a nuisance largely just for big corporations who can take care of themselves. Our adversaries' targets are our Nation's core economic assets—our information and ideas, our innovation, our research and development, our technology. No country poses a broader, more severe threat to those assets than China. It is the people of the United States who are the victims of what amounts to Chinese theft on a scale so massive that it represents one of the largest transfers of wealth in human history. If you are an American adult, it is more likely than not that China has stolen your personal data.

In 2017, the Chinese military conspired to hack Equifax and made off with the sensitive personal information of 150 million Americans—we are talking nearly half of the American population and most American adults. Our data is not the only thing at stake here—so is our health, livelihood, and security.

The FBI is opening a new China-related counterintelligence case approximately every 10 hours. Of the nearly 5,000 active FBI counterintelligence cases currently under way across the country, almost half are related to China. At this very moment, China is working to compromise American health care organizations, pharmaceutical companies, and academic institutions conducting essential COVID-19 research. They are going after cost and pricing information, internal strategy documents, personally identifiable information—anything that can give them a competitive advantage.

It is important to be clear: This is not about the Chinese people as a whole, and certainly not about Chinese-Americans as a group, but it is about the Chinese government and the Chinese Communist Party. Every year, the United States welcomes more than 100,000 Chinese students and researchers into this country. For generations, people have journeyed from China to the United States to secure the blessings of liberty for themselves and their families—and our society is better for their contributions. So, when the FBI refers to the threat from China, we mean the government of China and the Chinese Communist Party.



Confronting this threat effectively does not mean that we should not do business with the Chinese. It does not mean that we should not host Chinese visitors. It does not mean that we should not welcome Chinese students or coexist with China on the world stage. But it does mean that when China violates our criminal laws and international norms, we are not going to tolerate it, much less enable it. The FBI and our partners throughout the U.S. Government will hold China accountable and protect our Nation's innovation, ideas, and way of life—with the help and vigilance of the American people.

#### CYBER

With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, the nature of the cyber threat has become increasingly concerning. As more individuals telework and increasingly use the cloud, we encounter less secure networks. As a result, the scope of our cyber threats has changed, the impact has deepened, and many of the players have become more dangerous as we have become increasingly vulnerable. We are still seeing hack after hack and breach after breach. We hear about it daily in the news. The more we shift to the internet as the conduit and the repository for everything we use and share and manage, the more danger we are in.

Today we are worried about a wider-than-ever range of threat actors, from multinational cyber syndicates to nation-state adversaries. We are concerned about a wider-than-ever gamut of methods continually employed in new ways, like the targeting of managed service providers—MSPs—as a way to access scores of victims by hacking just one provider.

China's Ministry of State Security ("MSS") pioneered that technique and, as you saw in July, we indicted 2 Chinese hackers who worked with the Guangdong State Security Department of the MSS. These individuals conducted a hacking campaign lasting more than 10 years, targeting countries with high technology industries, to include the United States. The industries targeted included, among others, solar energy; pharmaceuticals; and defense.

Cyber crimes like these, directed by the Chinese government's intelligence services, threaten not only the United States but also every other country that supports fair play, international norms, and the rule of law, and they also seriously undermine China's desire to become a respected leader in world affairs.

Theft of intellectual property is not the only cyber threat presented by the People's Republic of China ("PRC") government. They are also working to obtain controlled defense technology and developing the ability to use cyber means to complement any future real-world conflict. All of them, and others, are working to simultaneously strengthen themselves, and weaken the United States. And we are taking all these nation-state threats very seriously.

But as dangerous as nation-states are, we do not have the luxury of focusing on them alone. We also are battling the increasing sophistication of criminal groups that place many hackers on a level we used to see only among hackers working for governments. The proliferation of malware as a service, where dark web vendors sell sophistication in exchange for cryptocurrency, increases the difficulty of stopping what would once have been less-dangerous offenders. It can give a ring of unsophisticated criminals the tools to paralyze entire hospitals, police departments, and businesses with ransomware. Often the hackers themselves have not become much more sophisticated—but they are renting sophisticated capabilities, requiring us to up our game as we work to defeat them, too.

Hackers have not relented under the COVID-19 pandemic. On the contrary, they have attempted to compromise the computer systems of hospitals and medical centers to obtain patient financial data, medical records, and other information. In addition, such attacks on medical centers may lead to the interruption of computer networks and systems putting patients' lives at an increased risk when America faces its most dire health crisis in generations.

#### CONCLUSION

Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Rogers, and Members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am now happy to answer any questions you might have.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much for your testimony.

I now recognize Director Miller to summarize his statement for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF CHRISTOPHER MILLER, DIRECTOR,  
NATIONAL COUNTERTERRORISM CENTER**

Mr. MILLER. Thank you, sir.

Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Rogers, distinguished Members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the global counterterrorism environment and to highlight the tireless work of the professionals of your National Counterterrorism Center. I am truly honored and humbled to lead such an extraordinary group of patriots.

As my statement for the record reflects, today's terrorism threat to the United States and our allies is less acute but more ideologically and geographically diffuse, emanating from more groups in more places than it did in 2001. ISIS and al-Qaeda operate in more than 2 dozen countries world-wide. Iran and its Shia allies increasingly threaten U.S. interests overseas, and lone actors, inspired by a range of ideologies, pose the primary terrorism threat on U.S. soil.

Our focus remains defeating al-Qaeda, its affiliates, and other terrorist actors while defending our shores from terrorist entry. We believe this threat picture will only grow more complex over the coming year as technological advances, changing geopolitical dynamics, and instability resulting from global pandemic create more opportunities for terrorists to benefit.

However, the United States and our CT partners world-wide can exploit some of these same dynamics to our advantages. The complex landscape requires thoughtful responses that evolve along with our adversaries, and we apply the lessons that we have learned over the last 19 years to adapt for the future. At the National Counterterrorism Center, we are innovating new ways of doing business to ensure we are best aligned to connect the dots amid a flood of ever-changing information. Through technological innovation and organizational realignments, we are positioning ourselves to mitigate the threat of today and preempt the threat of tomorrow.

To do this will require greater resources to enrich our terrorist identities analysis and enhance our ability to detect and prevent terrorist travel to the United States. We also will need to invest in new data science and information technology solutions to optimize how we harness information available from our interagency partners about the threat.

In addition to adaptability, evolving terrorist threat requires vigilance, especially as other National security priorities eclipse counterterrorism in prominence and the United States' physical footprint in key jihadist theaters shrinks. We believe that the changing National security framework and priorities only reinforces NCTC's mandate to serve as the Government's lead agency for counterterrorism threat, information, and analysis.

As our interagency partners work diligently to allocate resources to address the full scope of National security challenges, we remain focused, laser-focused, on leading the Government's CT enterprise, guarantee that we maintain relentless pressure on terrorist networks and preclude them from creating sanctuaries in which they can plot and project combat power. That is the essential lesson

learned from our 19 years of experience in this global war on terror.

Nearly 2 decades after 9/11, it is now more important than ever that the NCTC remains positioned to lead the fight against terrorism by building on its legacy of vigilance and adaptation to prepare for the future. I am confident that our integrated and agile model has revolutionized how the United States addresses transnational threats.

Our approach as a no-fail mission is one that remains worthy of emulation across the Federal Government. But perhaps most importantly, it has allowed us to uphold our sacred commitment to protect and serve the American people.

In closing, thank you, again, for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Miller follows:]

#### PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHRISTOPHER MILLER

SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

#### OPENING

This year, the United States and its allies have sustained pressure against key terrorist organizations, including al-Qaeda, ISIS, and groups aligned with Iran, disrupting numerous plots and further diminishing their ability to target the United States and U.S. interests overseas. Concerning al-Qaeda, U.S. and French operations this year have removed the group's long-time leader in Yemen, Qasim al-Rimi, as well as its veteran commander for North Africa, Abdelmalek Droukdal. Against ISIS, the U.S.-led coalition has continued targeting the group's leadership cadre following the October 2019 raid that removed amir Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, killing several prominent commanders and hampering the group's resurgence. Finally, the United States and its allies have ramped up diplomatic, military, and economic efforts against Iran and its partners and proxies, including individuals who have conducted attacks that targeted U.S. personnel.

While recognizing these successes, we also understand the challenge of translating these tactical wins into lasting gains. Time and time again, terrorist groups have absorbed similar losses only to reconstitute by exploiting local instability, adapting their tactics, and waiting out CT pressure. We need only refer to AQAP which, despite years of concerted pressure, was able to confer with a U.S.-based violent extremist who went on to kill 3 Americans at the Naval Base in Pensacola in December 2019, underscoring the resilience of such groups and their threat to the United States. Additionally, jihadist groups continue to stoke and harness instability in a growing number of countries, particularly in Africa, and are accruing new resources and expanding operations. Meanwhile, Iran's intensified use of violence and militant allies to expand its influence in the Middle East heightens the overall threat to U.S. and allied interests.

In the United States, we face the enduring challenge of Home-grown Violent Extremists (HVEs) inspired by the global jihad as well as the growing threat of Domestic Violence Extremists (DVEs). These lone or loosely-organized actors seek to use violence to advance a wide range of extremist agendas, and their diffuse nature adds to the challenge of detecting and disrupting their activities. Finally, broader global trends including the COVID-19 pandemic, the rapid development of pertinent technologies including encrypted communications, and the intensifying competition for global influence, all of which may provide terrorists with new opportunities to evade authorities and carry out attacks.

#### HOMELAND

We continue to assess that the preeminent terrorist threat to the United States comes from lone actors or small cells motivated by a diverse range of ideologies. These include HVEs who have conducted 3 attacks this year, targeting law enforcement personnel and military facilities. DVEs have also been active, conducting 3 attacks against police and civilians in 2020. The majority of DVE attacks since 2018 have been carried out by Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremists (RMVEs), whose attacks have been the most lethal of DVE attacks. Some RMVEs

in the United States draw inspiration from and are influenced by like-minded violent extremists overseas, who have conducted lethal attacks in at least 4 countries since 2018. DVEs are aggressively leveraging the on-line space to recruit new followers, network, and instigate violence. Many of these groups and individuals have sought to exploit and aggravate heightened societal tensions in the United States stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic and protests. My colleagues from FBI and DHS will use their testimony to expand on how these violent extremists are shaping the domestic threat environment.

As NCTC's role in joint analysis to better understand and deter DT actors has grown, we are also realigning resources to enhance our ability to detect and prevent terrorist travel to the United States. These adjustments will strengthen NCTC's role as the National CT identity intelligence leader and further enhance our identity discovery, screening and vetting, and information-sharing abilities.

#### ISIS

U.S. and coalition CT efforts in the past year have killed prominent ISIS leaders and disrupted the terror group's operations in several regions, but the group continues to pursue an aggressive global strategy. Following the death of the group's leader in October 2019, the United States and its partners have successfully targeted other prominent ISIS figures including its spokesman Abu Hasan al-Muhajir and senior leader Hajji Taysir, a veteran member of the group who had overseen the group's insurgent and global terrorism operations. In addition, the United States is working to pressure the group's networks where they're strongest, in Diyala and Kirkuk Governorates in Iraq, and in eastern Syria.

Despite these successes, ISIS has repeatedly demonstrated the ability to rebound from severe losses over the past 6 years by relying on a dedicated cadre of veteran mid-level commanders, extensive clandestine networks, and downturns in CT pressure to persevere. The group has appointed a new leader, Muhammad Sa'id Abdal-Rahman al-Mawla—also known as Hajji Abdallah—and its spokesman in May trumpeted recent attacks in Iraq and Syria and promised additional operations around the world. The group has conducted a steady rate of assassinations, and IED and mortar attacks in mostly rural parts of northern and central Iraq and eastern Syria, including a series of assaults in May that killed and wounded dozens of Iraqi soldiers. These operations are celebrated in graphic propaganda videos that showcase the group's battlefield prowess. ISIS is also working to release thousands of terror group members and their families currently detained in prisons and living in camps in northeastern Syria, where our foreign partners face growing security and humanitarian challenges.

Outside of Iraq and Syria, ISIS continues to prioritize the expansion and reinforcement of its global enterprise, which now encompasses approximately 20 branches and networks. In January, the group's chief spokesman heralded the group's growth and pledged to expand its attacks including against Israel, echoing earlier statements made by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi prior to his death. Since last year, ISIS leaders have touted the strength of the group's transnational network by launching 5 global campaigns that incorporate attack claims and propaganda videos from its branches and networks. Individually, these ISIS branches and networks have made uneven progress in advancing the group's agenda. In several parts of Africa, ISIS groups conduct frequent attacks against local security forces and have expanded their safe havens, while coalition operations and attacks from local rivals have stunted the group's growth in Afghanistan, Libya, Somalia, and Yemen.

ISIS continues to seek out avenues for external operations against the West, although CT pressure has diminished the group's ability to execute operations on the scale of previous attacks in Paris and Brussels. ISIS leaders have repeatedly called on supporters in the West to conduct attacks, including attacks using toxic substances, and reiterated these calls in July in its first English-language video in 18 months since the death of the group's last official English translator. ISIS-inspired attacks in the West have declined significantly since 2015 in part because authorities around the world continue to detain local ISIS adherents some of whom were planning terrorist attacks or attempting to join the group.

#### AL-QAEDA

CT pressure against al-Qaeda has diminished its cadre of veteran leaders and ability to strike the West, but the group's global network still poses a significant threat to U.S. and allied interests. Al-Qaeda's significant leadership losses include AQIM leader Abdelmalek Droukdal in June 2020, AQAP leader Qasim al-Rimi in January 2020, the leader of AQIS in September 2019, and several senior Syria-based leaders, including deputy amir Khalid al-Aruri and Sari Shihab. However,

several of the group's remaining senior leaders continue to find safe haven in Iran, and will likely play a key role in the group's efforts to reconstitute its leadership.

Leadership losses have not diminished the group's determination to strike American and Western targets. Through its propaganda, al-Qaeda leaders continue to exhort their adherents to strike U.S. persons and installations: In February, AQAP media hailed the Pensacola attack and issued a call for supporters to attack U.S. and Israeli interests around the world. Earlier propaganda lauded al-Shabaab's attacks against U.S. military personnel in Kenya and Somalia, linking those operations to al-Qaeda's global response to the movement of the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Al-Qaeda has also attempted to capitalize on global unrest and the COVID-19 pandemic in its media products and messaging.

Al-Qaeda's reach is sustained through its affiliate groups in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, which continue to launch attacks against local governments, expand their territory, and look for opportunities to advance the group's transnational agenda by striking U.S. or Western targets. In Somalia, al-Shabaab controls large parts of the country despite significant CT pressure, using these safe havens to sustain a relentless insurgent campaign against the Somali government and African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) forces. Earlier this year, the group launched an attack on a joint U.S. and Kenyan military base at Manda Bay airfield and killed 3 Americans, highlighting the group's external reach and determination to strike U.S. interests. Al-Shabaab also linked its attack against a hotel in Kenya in January 2019—which killed one American—to al-Qaeda's global campaign targeting the United States and Israel.

As noted previously, AQAP continues to threaten U.S. interests, underscored by its communication with the Pensacola attacker and its subsequent claim of responsibility. In Yemen, continued fighting amongst warring factions and the withdrawal of some CT forces have helped the group sustain some operations and territory despite continued CT pressure. However, the group's ability to exploit these opportunities and expand its safe havens has been undermined by the loss of Rimi and other prominent operatives, internal tensions, and battles with other local factions, including the Huthis. In Syria, Hurras al-Din—a group made up of several al-Qaeda veterans—has suffered successive losses of key leaders and operatives, which, along with conflicts with other violent extremist factions and the erosion of its safe haven in Idlib Province, has stunted the group's growth. As of late June, battlefield conflicts between Hurras al-din and the Nusrah Front continued to escalate prompting al-Qaeda to issue a public statement condemning the fighting.

In North Africa, the loss of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) leader Abdulmalek Droukdal is the latest setback suffered by the group since 2018, but it will probably continue to provide guidance to other al-Qaeda elements in the region despite its own lack of attacks. In West Africa, al-Qaeda-affiliated group Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) has exploited growing instability to expand its operations and carry out attacks—including a complex VBIED and indirect fire attack that killed 1 and wounded 2 French soldiers at a French military camp in Mali on 23 July—against local and Western government and security targets in the region and rivals aligned with ISIS.

In South Asia, al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) has struggled to rebound from the death of its leader, Asim Umar, in a U.S. military raid in Afghanistan in September 2019 and is probably only capable of small-scale regional attacks. Additionally, in mid-March, AQIS published a special issue of *Nawai Afghan Jihad* praising the U.S.-Taliban agreement, which mirrored al-Qaeda's leaders' statements on the deal. Finally, al-Qaeda's presence in Afghanistan has been reduced to a few dozen fighters who are primarily focused on their survival, and are probably incapable of conducting attacks outside the country under sustained CT pressure.

#### IRAN, LEBANESE HIZBALLAH, AND OTHER TERRORIST GROUPS

In addition to the global jihadist challenge, the United States faces a confrontation with Iran, which remains the world's foremost state sponsor of terrorism. Tehran views terrorism as a key tool to counter U.S. influence and uses the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps—Quds Force (IRGC-QF)—which is a component of a designated foreign terrorist organization—to provide weapons, funding, and training to a range of terrorist and militant partners and proxies throughout the Middle East. Following the U.S. military operation that targeted IRGC-QF chief Qasem Soleimani in January, Iranian leaders promised to take revenge and accelerate their efforts to eject the United States from the region.

In Iraq, Tehran supports several Shi'a terrorist groups including U.S.-designated FTOs Kata'ib Hizballah (KH) and Asa'ib Ahl al-Haqq (AAH), which in the past 2 years have conducted an increasing number of indirect fire attacks against U.S. dip-

lomatic installations, including the U.S. embassy in Baghdad, and military installations in Iraq, killing 3 Americans. These groups—which continue to receive advanced weaponry and training from their Iranian backers—have pledged to exact revenge for the death of a senior militia leader in the same U.S. military operation that killed Soleimani and have pledged to force the U.S. military to withdraw from Iraq. In the Palestinian territories, Iran backs terrorist groups including HAMAS and the Palestine Islamic Jihad, which regularly targets Israel. Tehran also works with militants in the Arabian Peninsula to counter U.S. allies including Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

Iran also continues to support Lebanese Hizballah, which uses its sophisticated terrorist apparatus to advance Tehran's regional strategy. Following the death of Soleimani, Hizballah leader Hassan Nasrallah called for retaliation including against U.S. military personnel in the Middle East, and has blamed the United States for the German Government's recent ban of the group's operations. We are closely monitoring for indications of how political and economic fallout from the Beirut explosion could impact the group's position in Lebanon. Within Lebanon and the broader region, the group has expanded its stocks of advanced weapons systems including Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) and long-range rockets while deploying trainers to Yemen to train the Houthis, threatening U.S. allies. Finally, Hizballah's global terrorist operations arm—the Islamic Jihad Organization (IJO)—has in recent years deployed operatives to almost every continent and extended its reach into the United States: Since 2019, 2 U.S.-based individuals have been jailed for scouting potential targets on the group's behalf.

Finally, Iran continues to employ and support terrorism outside the region, potentially including the United States. In 2018, 2 Iranians were arrested in the United States for surveilling Iranian oppositionists and Jewish and Israeli groups and passing the information to Iran. In Europe, Iranian operatives since 2018 have been implicated in 2 unsuccessful terrorist plots in Denmark and Belgium.

#### CHALLENGES

I'd like to highlight and briefly discuss 3 broader trends that will increasingly influence the U.S. CT campaign in the coming years.

*COVID-19 and Heightened Instability.*—The COVID-19 pandemic may fuel greater instability and degrade humanitarian conditions in several parts of the developing world, providing terrorists with opportunities to undermine local governments and expand their safe havens. Prior to the outbreak, terrorists groups were already enjoying success exploiting endemic instability to entrench and expand in parts of Africa and the Middle East. In these regions, local authorities often lack the capability or will to mitigate the terrorist threat, while intractable conflicts and economic instability render society vulnerable to violent extremist encroachment. The spread of COVID-19 may worsen these conditions by sapping governments' CT and security resources and depressing local economies. Meanwhile, terrorists have recognized the potential opportunities of the COVID-19 pandemic and have accelerated attacks against over-extended security forces, used propaganda to blame the outbreak on their enemies or characterize the disease as divine punishment, and moved to undermine civilian confidence in the ability of local governments to care for civilians.

*Great Power Competition.*—Sustaining pressure against key terrorist threats amidst the intensifying contest for influence amongst major global powers will pose a growing challenge for the United States. Increasingly, U.S. adversaries like China and Russia are expanding their military footprint and security partnerships in regions where the United States has critical CT equities, including Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Both powers regularly use their overseas presence to secure new influence, attempt to diminish U.S. power, and showcase their own CT capabilities, efforts that can complicate U.S. efforts against ISIS and al-Qaeda. In addition, the U.S. Government's reapportionment of resources to better meet the challenge of heightened global competition will place pressure on the CT community to prioritize high-impact strategies targeting those groups that pose the most severe threats to U.S. interests.

*Emergent Technologies.*—The CT community is moving aggressively to keep pace with the rapid development of pertinent technologies including advances in dual-use technology, UAS, 3D printing, ubiquitous end-to-end encryption, cryptocurrency, and new social media platforms, a complex challenge that demands a whole-of-Government response and partnership with private industry. Terrorists have historically proven adept at harnessing these and other emergent technologies to disseminate their propaganda, attract new members, advance their weapons capabilities, and support operations, including the development of chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear (CBRN) capabilities. Regarding social media, terrorist groups are increas-

ingly transitioning to smaller, less-visible platforms to share content following intensified voluntary efforts by prominent companies to restrict violent and extremist material consistent with their terms of service. Terrorists are also looking to exploit the move toward greater encryption to safeguard their communications. For its part, in coordination with State, FBI, and DHS, NCTC has worked with U.S. technology companies, including several members of the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT), a private industry initiative and now a non-governmental organization, to provide technology companies with information about how terrorists use the internet, including specific key words and logos. The Center has also worked with members of the GIFCT to help identify terrorist content.

#### CLOSING

Since the Global War on Terror began nearly 2 decades ago, we've significantly degraded our terrorist adversaries and made the United States a considerably harder target for them to reach; today's terrorism threat to the United States and our allies is less acute but more diffuse—emanating from more groups in more places than it did in 2001. Technological innovation, great power competition, and instability resulting from a global pandemic are only a few of the factors that will make this landscape increasingly complex in the coming year. These challenges necessitate a dynamic response that evolves along with our adversaries and applies lessons learned to adapt for the future. At NCTC, we are committed to combatting this adversary and are innovating new ways of doing business to ensure that we are best aligned to connect the dots amidst a flood of ever-changing information. What remains constant is our commitment to the mission and to supporting our partners in their unrelenting efforts to sustain pressure against terrorists and violent extremists spanning an ideological spectrum around the globe.

Mr. THOMPSON. I thank the witnesses for their testimony. I will remind each Member that he or she will have 5 minutes to question the panel. I will now recognize myself for questions.

Director Wray, can you, for the sake of the committee, identify what organizations propose the greatest threat from a domestic standpoint here to the homeland? Is it right-wing extremists or is it left-wing, or what does your reports reflect?

Mr. WRAY. Mr. Chairman, we assess that the greatest threat to the homeland, to us here domestically, is not one organization, certainly not one ideology, but rather lone actors, largely self-radicalized on-line, who pursue soft targets using readily accessible weapons, and those include both domestic violent extremists of a variety of sorts, as well as home-grown violent extremists who are motivated by foreign Jihadist-type sources.

Those 2 groups—those 2 categories as a whole provide the greatest challenge and threat to us here at home, partly because—and you have often heard the expression in the past—the importance of connecting the dots. Well, if you compare the threat I just described to these sort-of al-Qaeda sleeper cells of old, that group, the sleeper cells, you have got a group of people colluding, conspiring, fundraising, planning, preparing, communicating. So there is a lot of dots out there to connect if the intelligence community and law enforcement know where to connect. It usually occurs over a long period of time.

These people, both categories, the domestic violent extremists and the home-grown violent extremists, they don't have a lot of people they are working with. They don't take a lot of planning and preparation. They can go from radicalization to mobilization in weeks if not days. So the challenge of connecting the dots, working with NCTC and our other partners, is that much greater because there is that many fewer dots to connect and that much less time to do it. So the time, as the experts say, from flash to bang is that much more daunting.

So that is why that is the biggest challenge to us here in the homeland.

Mr. THOMPSON. So, when we hear officials say Antifa is the biggest threat on the left, are they being correct?

Mr. WRAY. Well, we don't—we don't really think of threats in terms of left and right at the FBI. We are focused on the violence, not the ideology. Our domestic violent extremists include everything from racially-motivated violent extremist, which we have talked about here in this committee before—I think when I testified last year, for example—all the way to anti-Government, anti-authority violent extremist, and that includes people ranging from anarchists violent extremists, people who subscribe to Antifa or other ideologies, as well as militia types and those kinds.

Mr. THOMPSON. Right. I think what I am trying to reflect on is we hear from time to time that this organization by name, we need to investigate. Secretary designee, if he was here, he would get asked this question, but he is not. He asks for an investigation of Antifa because they were the greatest threat to the homeland. If I am hearing you correctly, you are saying that it is really not organizations so much as it is ideology. I don't want to put words in your mouth, but I think that is what I heard.

Mr. WRAY. I appreciate that. We look at Antifa as more of an ideology or a movement than an organization. To be clear, we do have quite a number of properly-predicated domestic terrorism investigations into violent anarchist extremists, any number of whom self-identify with the Antifa movement, and that is part of this broader group of domestic violent extremist that I am talking about. But it is just one part of it. We also have racially-motivated violent extremists, militia types, and others.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you. Can you tell me if, as of this date, you have information that Russia is trying to influence the election for 2020?

Mr. WRAY. Yes. I think the intelligence community's consensus is that Russia continues to try to influence our election, primarily through what we would call malign foreign influence as opposed to what we saw in 2016, where there was also an effort to target election infrastructure, cyber targeting. We have not seen that second part yet this year or this cycle, but we certainly have seen very active, very active efforts by the Russians to influence our election in 2020 through what I would call more the malign foreign influence side of things, social media, use of proxies, State media, on-line journals, et cetera, in effort to both sow decisiveness and discord, and—and I think the intelligence community has assessed this publicly—to primarily to denigrate Vice President Biden and what the Russians see as kind-of an anti-Russian establishment. That is essentially what we are seeing in 2020.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

The Chair recognizes the Ranking Member for questions.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Director Wray, the FBI—I am sorry—the Department of Justice has recently announced many FBI investigations that led to the arrest of Chinese nationals conducting highly-sensitive research in the United States that have been found to be connected to the Chi-



nese military. The growing number of these types of cases and non-public details of those arrests raise alarm bells for me.

I am introducing legislation this week to address China's efforts to circumvent our existing vetting procedures and take advantage of our open and world-renowned education research institutions, particularly those that are taxpayer-funded through Government grants.

What is the significance in the prevalence of this threat?

Mr. WRAY. I am sorry. I couldn't hear the very end of your question.

Mr. ROGERS. The Chinese nationals who are using our educational facilities for their research and stealing our intellectual property, what is the threat, significance of it, in your view?

Mr. WRAY. So the Chinese view themselves as in an international talent war, and they recognize that American innovation and research is the envy of the world and, frankly, the envy of China. When they can't innovate and research themselves, they send people over here, in some cases legitimately but in many cases not, who engage in intellectual property theft, taking information, American research, and bringing it back to China to advance China's National security goals, which has the perverse effect, since a lot of this research is taxpayer-funded, as essentially the perverse effect of having American taxpayers funding China's advancement at our expense.

Mr. ROGERS. What can Congress do to help you combat that threat?

Mr. WRAY. Well, certainly we appreciate the Congress' allocation of resources to our counterintelligence efforts. That is an important part of it. I think I publicly acknowledged that the FBI now has over 2,000 counterintelligence investigations related to China, by far the biggest chunk of our counterintelligence portfolio. We are opening a new Chinese counterintelligence investigation about every 10 hours. So the scope and scale of this threat is really breathtaking, and we need as many resources as we can to help everybody tackle it, but it is not just a Government problem. We need to work with the private sector. You mentioned the academic sector. I will tell you, I am very encouraged by the response we have gotten from both the private sector and, frankly, the academic sector. Lately, I think people in this country are starting to wake up to the threat and voluntarily undertaking appropriate measures. So the Congress can be very helpful in kind-of raising awareness, both when you are all at home in your districts but also through your work here in Washington, in highlighting the importance of the threat and communicating, in effect, back to the Chinese that this is an issue that—it is bipartisan, that all Americans care about, and that we are not going to tolerate any more.

Mr. ROGERS. So you do believe that the academic sector is sensitive to this?

Mr. WRAY. Well, yes. It varies, I will tell you, significantly from university to university about how sensitive and how cooperative with us they have been, but I think this is, frankly, one of the bright spots over the last couple years. We have had quite a few universities. I have been to all 56 FBI field offices, and I will tell you, I am struck by the number of offices where universities that

3 or 4 years ago wouldn't have wanted an FBI agent anywhere near campus to some that have now have office space set aside for our people.

I think that is not just because they are idealistic and, you know, believe in the country, I hope, but rather it is recognition that the information that is being stolen is their information. So it is about protecting their research, their professors, their hard work, frankly. I think the more of that we can have, the better off we will be because the FBI certainly can't tackle this alone.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I yield back.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from Texas, Ms. Jackson Lee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, to both of the witnesses. We thank you for your presence and also your service to this Nation.

Director Wray, the FBI on May 30, 2019, issued the intelligence bulletin on anti-Government identity base and fringe political conspiracy theories very likely motivate some domestic extremists to commit criminal, sometimes violent activity. I think you focused or made the point today in your testimony that you act more toward the ideology or you don't investigate ideology; you are determined to assess the threat to the United States.

So I am interested—QAnon activity has resulted in arrest of persons planning to carry out violent acts based on the nonsense spouted in web forums and social media that form the core of QAnon beliefs. How do you characterize that organization?

Mr. WRAY. How do I characterize QAnon?

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Yes. QAnon activity has resulted in arrest of persons planning to carry out violent acts. How do you assess that organization as it relates to violent acts?

Mr. WRAY. So we view QAnon as essentially less of an organization and more of a sort-of a complex set of conspiracy theories, and certainly we have had cases that properly predicate cases involving violence where people have been motivated by some of those conspiracy theories. But as you said, we don't investigate the ideology or the conspiracy theory itself. I don't think we have seen lethal attacks involving that kind of motivation, but we have certainly—

Ms. JACKSON LEE. So your investigations would be driven based upon any violent act?

Mr. WRAY. Correct. No matter what ideology or belief it is of domestic violent extremism, we look at three things: No. 1, violence or a threat of violence; No. 2, a Federal crime obviously; and then, third, the motivation that fuels it. We have to have those 3 things to open an investigation.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Black Lives Matter was organized shortly after the tragic, senseless death of Trayvon Martin. Young people took to the streets asking for justice. They have obviously continued their fight for justice and particularly in the wake of police shootings of African-American men and, most recently, of course, George Floyd, my constituent, and Elijah Blake in States in this country.

Do you see, just on the name of Black Lives Matter and the basis of their organizing them as an extremist group intending to turn America into a socialist Nation or to destroy America?

Mr. WRAY. We don't express a view on the sort-of political organization itself, Black Lives Matter. If there were people who follow that group or who adhere to that ideology who were then to, based on that ideology or anything else, to commit violent criminal activity, then we would approach them just like we would anyone else.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. But you are no longer pointing to Black identity groups?

Mr. WRAY. I think what you are referring to—and we had some good conversations in the past about this. In 2017, there was briefly a product or a category that the FBI came up with that predates me about Black identity extremism.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Right. I just want you to say yes or no. The reason is because my time is short. I appreciate the work. I am familiar with it. The point I am trying to make is that just the existence of Black Lives Matter and their advocacy for justice is not determine them to be disruptive socialist groups trying to destroy the Nation; you have not characterized them in that way?

Mr. WRAY. We don't characterize them one way or the other, no.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Have you seen any excessive violence that can be attributable to Black Lives Matter as opposed to any other groups that may be involved in violence?

Mr. WRAY. I can't think of one sitting here right now. Certainly, we have had racially-motivated violent extremist cases involving African-American defendants who have pursued violence against law enforcement. Whether any of those cases involved some reference to Black Lives Matter, sitting here right now, I can't recall one, but we certainly have had cases of the first category.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. As you have had cases with White individuals as well, violence against officers?

Mr. WRAY. Absolutely.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. In particular, the one in Oakland, California, individuals Carrillo and Justus were known to have been the culprits in the shootings, Boogaloo Bois and Proud Boys, those individuals were not involved in protests, to your knowledge, as Vice President Pence indicated. Pence indicated that they were involved in protests. These were White individuals who, unfortunately, tragically shot officers Dave Patrick Underwood and another one.

Are you familiar with that?

Mr. WRAY. Yes, I am familiar with the case.

Mr. THOMPSON. The gentlelady's time has expired.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Can he—were those protestors?

Mr. WRAY. Well, on the Carrillo case, I don't think we—my recollection is there was no evidence that he was participating in the protest himself. I think there was information that he capitalized on the protest as a setting or a medium for which he could commit the tragic attack on the FPS officers that you referred to.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Thank you.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana, Mr. Higgins, for 5 minutes.

Mr. HIGGINS. I thank the Chairman and the panelists. For the record, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the Department of Homeland Security and Secretary Wolf for actively and personally participating in the recovery supervision of my district after Hurricane Laura. Secretary Wolf was on the ground fast, and he has been personally at my avail.

I regret that we were not able to work out his appearance here today, but I do appreciate his service and the direction he has given and the personal assistance he has given to my office in the wake of Hurricane Laura and the devastation we have suffered there.

Director Wray, thank you for being here today. I would like to talk to you about election security. The National Counterintelligence Security Center, the NCSC, released a statement last month outlining China, Russia, and Iran's effort to interfere with the upcoming Presidential election. You also mentioned in your written testimony that foreign adversaries are attempting to sway U.S. voters' preferences and perspectives to shift U.S. policies and to increase discord in the United States and ultimately to undermine the American people's confidence in our election process.

Can you share with us regarding social media platforms, which is primarily the means by which this interference effort is being pushed, how is the FBI working with the social media platforms to ensure our election security and to minimize fake profiles and foreign influence in the attitudes and perspectives of the American people?

Mr. WRAY. Well, Congressman, thank you for the question.

You are correct that we are working increasingly closely and have been building over the last few years in our working with the social media sector, in particular, but also other kinds of technology companies to thwart [inaudible].

Mr. HIGGINS. I lost the director's audio, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. WRAY. We will take leads that we have, information that we have, work very closely with some of the key social media companies. We feed them information, and they are able to take action on their platforms using their terms of service or terms of use to shut down and kick off fake accounts, trolls, bots, et cetera. In turn, a lot of times what will happen, and this is happening more and more, which is great, they are sending back to us new accounts they have identified that then allow us to have more leads to pursue more investigative activity.

So I mentioned one example in my opening statement that recently occurred where we were able to pass information to Facebook and Twitter. They were able to shut down Russian influence accounts, really, right before they could ever build a following. The faster we can do that and the more agile way we can do that, the better, and the reason for that I think is important for people to understand.

Misinformation or disinformation or fake information is only effective if it seems credible, and it is only credible if it was built up some reservoir of credibility, which means that these Russian efforts require a certain amount of time to build up kind-of a reservoir of credibility so that, when they are really active, people care what they have to say. If we are able to shut them down and knock

them back quickly before they can really build up that credibility, then it is not going to stop it, but it means that it is much, much less effective. So we need more of that. We are having more of that.

Mr. HIGGINS. Yes, sir. Thank you for that assessment. Those were encouraging words.

Can we conclude, based upon your perspective, Director Wray, that the FBI does have an on-going and functional relationship with the social media platforms to deter or to dismantle ultimately individual efforts by foreign nation-states to sway the perspectives of the American people and to ultimately influence our elections?

Are you comfortable with the kind of relationship and communications you are having with the social media giants?

Mr. WRAY. Well, I guess the best way I could answer that is to say, I tend to be ambitious for the organization and for the country, and so I think there is always room for improvement, and I am always impatient for more progress and more improvement, but certainly the strides that we have made at the FBI, working with some of those companies over the last few years has really been very encouraging, and I think we are making great progress. I would like to see more progress, including from them, but we are moving in the right direction for sure.

Mr. HIGGINS. Thank you, sir. Mr. Chairman, my time is expired. I yield.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island, Mr. Langevin, for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to begin by thanking Director Wray and Director Miller for your presence here today and for your testimony. Hearing from our Nation's top law enforcement and Homeland Security officials on the—enforcement of Homeland Security officials on the threats facing our country is of paramount importance to the American people.

I would also like to note my profound disappointment that Mr. Wolf had declined to join you, and I associate myself with the Chairman's remarks earlier on that topic.

Director Wray, let me begin with you and let me start on the topic of the Solarium Commission, which I served as the Commissioner, as did you. I want to thank you for your participation on the Commission, as well as that of Deputy Director Bowdich on his Commission. I am very proud of the work that we did in developing recommendations, many of which I am optimistic will become law by the end of the year.

What are your observations, Director, on the final report, and which recommendations do you consider most pressing?

Mr. WRAY. Well, first, let me say I appreciated the opportunity to serve on the Commission, and I commend my fellow commissioners, especially you and Senator King and others for really pushing this topic before, hopefully, we have some truly apocalyptic cyber crisis in this country and for not shying away from some very hard issues. I think there are several recommendations in the report that we really would think would benefit our cyber investigative and intelligence missions, and I think the Commission was on the right track on that, including, in particular, really highlighting and encouraging the Government to double-down on our National

cyber investigative—Joint Investigative Task Force, the NCIJTF, that sort-of brings a whole-of-Government approach to the importance of attribution, which is so key. You also—I think the Commission also highlighted a number of statutory gaps and inconsistencies. There is references to the need to update, for example, the pen register and trap and trace statute. There is references to administer subpoena authority for computer intrusion cases. Those are a few things that jump out at me. Certainly——

Mr. LANGEVIN. That is good. My time is short. So let me jump to another topic. I also want to highlight the joint collaborative environment to allow analysts across Government and the private sector to work together to produce their cyber threat intelligent products. So that is another important one, but let me turn to elections because this is a very important topic. We only have about 7 weeks to go until the election, and early voting begins Monday. Misinformation and disinformation from foreign and domestic actors are wide-spread. We have discussed some of this topic already this morning.

Director Wray, who is responsible for coordinating election security across the interagency? To put it bluntly, who is in charge? I also want to note, who is responsible for coordinating efforts to combat election-related misinformation and disinformation?

Take them in order there.

Mr. WRAY. So the FBI takes the lead on malign foreign influence domestically, and we work closely through our foreign influence task force. We have people from NSA, for example, on our task force. We work very closely, as I mentioned a few minutes ago, with the social media companies, and that is really an almost daily engagement. We engage through the foreign influence task force really every day, especially in the current run up to the election in the interagency on the malign foreign influence piece.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Who would you say is in charge at the interagency?

Mr. WRAY. I am sorry?

Mr. LANGEVIN. Who would you say is responsible for coordinating across the interagency? Who is in charge?

Mr. WRAY. Well, we all work together, just as we do against the terrorist threat. It is an interagency process. We take the lead on the malign foreign influence threat. DHS takes the lead on the election infrastructure hardening. ODNI takes the lead in terms of coordinating the intelligence analysis that comes out of it.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Who is responsible for combating the election-related misinformation/disinformation?

Mr. WRAY. I think the FBI takes the lead in combating that.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Well, this is—I appreciate your answer and perspective. I know my time has run out, but I will say this really underscores the need for a National cyber director so that across response we have someone that is identified as the person in charge. Working together is important. I highly support a collaborative environment. Also having someone in charge is essential. I know my time has expired.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back at this point [inaudible].

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from Arizona, Mrs. Lesko.

Mrs. LESKO. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you both of you and all your employees for the hard work you do protecting our Nation.

Director Wray, when do you plan to declassify the 302s that were produced regarding the Ukraine election interference in the 2016 election?

Mr. WRAY. I don't have an update for you on the timing of any specific declassification document, but I am happy to see if there is information we can provide back to your office as a follow-up.

Mrs. LESKO. Thank you.

Director Wray, as you know, IG Horowitz identified numerous major errors in the FISA court application process under the Obama administration's—I would classify it as spying on the Trump campaign. So what status are we at in cleaning that whole process up?

Mr. WRAY. So I appreciate the question. Let me say first that I think that report describes conduct that I consider unacceptable and unrepresentative of who I know the FBI to be as an organization, and it cannot be allowed to happen again. I have installed an entirely new leadership team. I put in place on the same day the report came out, implemented over 40 corrective actions that accepted every recommendation in the IG's report and then went above and beyond. The senior-most people involved in that investigation are all gone, either terminated during my tenure or resigned or retired, and we are moving forward with changes to processes, training, oversight within the organization. We are creating a new office of internal audit. You may have seen an announcement from the Attorney General on that. We have got his approval to do that, which will, sort-of, provide the back-end check, the old sort-of "trust but verify." We will get the verify part coming through that. So I am very encouraged by the progress we are making, but it is going to take hard work.

Mrs. LESKO. Well, thank you, and I am glad that you appreciate it because, obviously, to the average American person, including me, if the FBI can spy on an incoming President of the United States, every person in America is concerned that they will spy on them. So I am glad it is being cleaned up.

I do have a question about Boogaloo. Recently, it is my understanding that 3 Americans self-identifying as members of the Boogaloo Bois were arrested for attempting to partner with Hamas due to their similar goals and missions. Have there been any arrests—how have these arrests modified the DHS and FBI approach to investigating and handling rioters and domestic terrorists?

Mr. WRAY. So I appreciate your flagging that particular case. I think it is a very revealing, interesting case. It was a Minneapolis case. Those were 2 individuals who I think associated themselves with the Boogaloos, which much like Antifa, is more of a movement or an ideology than it is a group itself. But I think one of the things a lot of people don't understand about people who subscribe to this, sort-of, Boogaloo thinking is that their main focus is just dismantling, tearing down Government. They are less clear on what it is they think they are going to replace Government with. I am not even sure they would all agree with each other, and that is why this case in Minneapolis that you highlighted is so revealing

because these two individuals decided that they were on board with providing material support to Hamas, which is not something that most people would—previously associated with the Boogaloos.

Mrs. LESKO. It is very interesting. I do have one last question, only 49 seconds left.

There have been statements by top people here. In fact, Chairman Nadler had said on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives that basically Antifa is a fantasy made up by the radical right or FOX News or something to that effect. Would you agree with that? Is Antifa a total fantasy or is it real?

Mr. WRAY. So Antifa is a real thing. It is not a group or an organization. It is a movement or an ideology may be one way of thinking of it, and we have quite a number, and I have said this consistently since my first time appearing since before this committee. We have any number of properly predicated investigations into what we would describe as violent anarchist extremists, and some of those individuals self-identify with Antifa.

Mrs. LESKO. Thank you, sir.

I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana, Mr. Richmond, for 5 minutes.

Mr. RICHMOND. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, let me just express how disappointed I am that DHS is not here, although, you know, there are real things that we need to know, especially in Louisiana, from DHS. We have wildfires. We have hurricanes. We need to know if FEMA has the funds to help our American citizens whose lives have been turned upside down. For those people in Lake Charles, Louisiana, that are in shelters in surrounding cities like New Orleans, we need to know what is FEMA's plan. Does DHS have the funds? Have the funds been moved over to build a wall?

Now, look, fortunately for New Orleans, we were escaped this time from major damage. However, because of what Congress did for us after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, we continue to pay it forward. Even though my colleagues may not—from Louisiana may not want to criticize DHS or the President, I will do it. We have people who are very vulnerable now, and we need to know what is the Federal Government's plan, the amount of money they have, and for DHS not to be here is sad.

Let me start, Director Wray, really quick. You talked about movements and ideologies, but Black Lives Matter is more of a principle and an organization. What I am trying to—what I would like to go into very quickly is that, do you all identify it as an extremist organization?

Mr. WRAY. OK. I am sorry, can you repeat the question? I am having a little bit of a hard time with the audio.

Mr. RICHMOND. I said Black Lives Matter is a principle and it is also an organization. Do you all identify Black Lives Matter as an extremist organization?

Mr. WRAY. We have not identified Black Lives Matter—

Mr. RICHMOND. Do you—OK.

Mr. WRAY [continuing]. In any way.



Mr. RICHMOND. Do you identify the organization as a violent organization or a threat to peace?

Mr. WRAY. As I said, we have not identified the organization in any way. We don't—unlike on the international terrorism side, the foreign terrorists side, there is no mechanism under U.S. law for us to, and we don't, identify domestic organizations as anything, really.

Mr. RICHMOND. Well, Director Wray, I know that you hear all the time this whole mantra of law and order, and what I am trying to do is get you to give some clarification, because things may get silly, dangerous, or foolish.

So my example would be posting on social media a comment that if armed Black people come to my city, I will drop 10 of them. That is dangerous rhetoric, especially when we see people exercising their rights to carry arms that are White and that are Black. For people to assume that the ones that are Black are a threat, that they can publicly say, I will drop 10 of you, is concerning. I know that you, as one of our top law and order officials, should have some concern about that rising level of rhetoric and agitation.

Mr. WRAY. Well, we are—I think are very concerned about violence of any kind, including violence that deprives citizens of their Constitutional rights and civil liberties. Certainly, one of the concerns that we have amidst all the current unrest is a growing trend of a protest begets counter-protests begets violence against one side against the other, and so there is sort-of this increasing phenomenon of individuals attacking each other in addition to attacking law enforcement, and that is not good for anybody.

Mr. RICHMOND. Thank you, Director Wray. Really quickly, a lot of my mayors have called me from around the country that are saying, wait, the violence in the streets, the chaos, and the destruction of property, people are assigning to Black Lives Matter. From my experience, what we are seeing is that is, in fact, not Black Lives Matter. Would you agree with that statement?

Mr. WRAY. I don't think I—I don't think I would characterize it the way you are hearing, certainly. I guess what I would say is, from one city to another, from one night to another, who is committing violence and destruction of property varies widely. Sometimes—certainly from city to city, sometimes from night to night.

I think in general, what we are seeing across the country are sort-of 3 groups, right. One is—3 categories is maybe a better way of putting it. One is peaceful protesters, lawful, peaceful protesters. A second is sort-of what I will call criminal opportunists, people engaged in kind-of State, local, you know, low-level vandalism and looting and things like that. That is criminal activity that needs to be addressed largely as a State and local matter. Then there is the third category, which is the most dangerous, and those are the people engaged in arsons of police vehicles, throwing of Molotov cocktails, you know, those kinds of things. That is the group that we, FBI, are most focused on, most concerned about, and those groups are motivated by a wide variety of ideologies and agendas.

Mr. RICHMOND. Thank you.

I see my time is up. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania for 5 minutes, Mr. Joyce.

Mr. JOYCE. Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Thank you, Director Miller and Director Wray, for this important update on world-wide threats to our homeland.

Director Wray, are you seeing a coordinated effort from radical, anarcho-left-wing organizations who are currently perhaps targeting law enforcement officers?

Mr. WRAY. Well, as I said a few minutes ago, the violence varies widely. Much of the violence that we are seeing, it does not appear to be organized or attributed to any one particular group or even movement. That doesn't make it any less serious or criminal or unacceptable.

Now, we are seeing, in certain pockets, more kind-of regionally-organized folks coalescing, often coordinating on the ground in the middle of protests, you know, in terms of tactics and things like that. That is some of the most dangerous activity, because that is often what leads to destruction of small business, destruction of Government buildings, and particularly concerning to me, you know, assaults on law enforcement and Federal law enforcement officials, in particular but not exclusively. We have got case after case of people burning, setting fire—you know, pouring gasoline and setting fire to marked police vehicles.

So this is not innocuous activity. It takes a very, very, very special person to be willing to put his or her life on the line for complete strangers every day, which is what law enforcement in this country does.

Even before all this latest activity, the rate of line-of-duty deaths was alarming. Then you add on top of that COVID, and COVID deaths for law enforcement continue because, of course, law enforcement doesn't have the ability to sit it out. Now, we have seen a significant uptick in violence against law enforcement in this country this year. It is up markedly from last year, and the reason I know that, besides just looking at the statistics, is that I made it a practice after becoming FBI director to every time there is an officer shot and killed in this country, to personally call the chief or sheriff responsible for that officer and express my condolences and support on behalf of the FBI.

I will tell you, we had a stretch just recently, late August, early September, I think it was, maybe even more recently than that, where over a 15-day stretch, I made 7 of those phone calls. That is an officer feloniously killed every other day. These are people, you know, average age is in their late 30's, had their whole lives ahead of them, they had families, and it breaks my heart.

Mr. JOYCE. I applaud you for connecting with local law enforcement when these tragedies occur. You and I realize that these men and women bravely, every day, put on the uniform to protect us.

Continuing along this line, has there been any assistance from social media companies to help weed out potential threats when these organizations are using their platforms?

Mr. WRAY. Well, somewhat like what I was describing in response to a question earlier on the election influence context or threat, we do have relationships with the social media companies in which, again, in a similar way, they will sometimes detect activ-

ity on their platforms. Working jointly with us, they will sometimes use their terms of use or terms of service to shut down or kick off those accounts and flag information for law enforcement.

So any assistance, I would say yes. Some assistance, it varies, you know, a bit from company to company. Some of them devote more resources to that kind of operation which supports law enforcement than others. But we do certainly have a number of engagements with or partnerships, almost, with some of those companies.

Mr. JOYCE. Finally, do you see any foreign governments attempting to communicate with these organizations or assist any political party within them?

Mr. WRAY. I am sorry. Which organizations are we talking about now?

Mr. JOYCE. With these left-wing organizations, which I think are behind so much of the attacks on law enforcement.

Mr. WRAY. Well, I guess I would answer that in two parts. One, we have seen some efforts by our foreign adversaries—I would mention China and Russia specifically but not exclusively—to sort-of piggyback on a lot of the unrest activity that has been occurring as part of the effort either to sow divisiveness and discord, in the case of the Russians, or to try to advance their own narratives, say, in the case of the Chinese. So there is that level of kind-of engagement.

Then I would say the second piece is maybe not the organizations you are talking about, but we have seen some engagement between racially-motivated violent extremists and like-minded individuals overseas on that front.

Mr. JOYCE. Thank you for your insights, and thank you for your update.

Chairman THOMPSON. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Payne, for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is an honor and a privilege to be here today with the committee.

Let me first say to Mr. Wray and Mr. Miller that I appreciate you understanding your obligation to show up when the committee requests your appearance as opposed to the empty chair that is there.

Let me ask Mr. Wray, is there a—so with Antifa, you are saying it is more of an ideology than an organized group, you know, which, you know, a lot of people on the other side feel it is some organized group. Is it an organized group or is it more just a notion of thought or philosophy with respect to—just because, you know, when I hear this, you know, Antifa is there or Antifa is doing this, I am still trying to figure out who and what Antifa is. Could you enlighten me?

Mr. WRAY. Well, first let me say, as I think I said in response to an earlier question, Antifa is a real thing. It is not a fiction, but it is—it is not an organization or a structure. We view it more as a—we understand it to be more of a—kind-of a movement or maybe you could call it an ideology. We certainly have, as I have said, a number of, and we have had for some time and we have opened quite a number of this year, of properly predicated investigations

into violent anarchist extremists who subscribe to self-identify with Antifa.

[Audio malfunction.]

Mr. PAYNE. Hello? We have—hello?

Mr. Chairman, I—I don't see the director anymore. Mr. Chairman?

Mr. CLEAVER. I don't know if anybody can hear. I can't get anybody except you and Bonnie. That is all I can see on my screen.

VOICE. I can hear you, but I can't hear the director at all.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Right. I can't hear the director either.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Yes, I can't hear the director or the Chairman. I can see all the people that are participating virtually, but—I can see and hear them, but I can't see the committee or the Chairman.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. We can't see them. We can't see the—

Mr. PAYNE. Yes. I don't know what happened.

Mr. CLEAVER. The Russians again?

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. The Russians.

The CLERK. Hi, everyone. This is the clerk, Ashleigh. We are waiting to work out some issues with the CAO.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. OK.

[Audio malfunction resolved.]

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentleman from New Jersey may continue.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Is there—Mr. Wray, did you finish your response?

Mr. WRAY. I finished my response, but I am not sure whether you were still on-line while I finished. I would be happy to—I would be happy to pick up where I left off, if you could tell me where you lost the contact.

Mr. PAYNE. Well, I think I got the gist of your response, so I will move on.

Mr. Miller, the past 4 years have seen the United States significantly scale back its presence and commitments around the world. Our NATO allies no longer trust us to keep our commitments, leaving the door open for other forces to step into this vacuum. As we have seen time—as we have seen time and again, instability leads to violence.

Is the National Counterterrorism Center planning for the effects of a global vacuum—a global leadership vacuum?

Mr. MILLER. Thank you, sir, for that question. I have been so impressed, I have been doing this for a few years, and the most amazing thing is the partnerships we have internationally on the counterterrorism front, and I have seen no degradation in our commitment and our partnerships in that regard. As a matter of fact, oftentimes it is almost one of those—during the Cold War, we said foreign policy ended at the water's edge. It is very much the same way with counterterrorism now.

We are obviously concerned about drawing back from our commitments overseas, but we maintain a robust, a very significant counterterrorism presence overseas, and we have the ability to generate combat power and deploy that forward if there is an enemy or terrorist group that is in a position to threaten us.

Mr. PAYNE. Do you believe that the United States is acting as a global leader should?

Mr. MILLER. As you noted, we are in a great transformation geopolitically and geostrategically from the counterterrorism aspect. I talk with all my partners regularly with our Five Eyes, and I feel very confident that we maintain a close relationship and partnership and leadership role.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentleman from New Jersey's time has expired.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Bishop.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a doggie in the background, sounds like.

First, I would note that the petty game about who from the Department of Homeland Security testifies today must be amazing to Americans outside the Beltway. This is the annual hearing on "World-wide Threats to the Homeland", and I can't, for one, imagine setting aside that priority in order to engage in a snit with the Department about whether Mr. Wolf or Mr. Cuccinelli appears, though we have neither. In light of that, I will direct questions, Director Wray, to you.

All summer and early fall, of course, we have seen numerous and on-going riots, looting, property destruction, even serious injuries and killings in cities across the United States. Minneapolis, L.A., Seattle, Charleston, Chicago, St. Louis, Washington, DC, Rochester, Lancaster, and, of course, Portland come to mind. We have seen some media characterize these events as fiery but mostly peaceful, and politicians have dismissed them occasionally as myth. But Americans have seen independent reports and shocking videos, and they keep coming.

I don't really understand the thinking of lawmakers who seek perversely to justify this criminality by pointing to the existence of other violent extremists with different ideology. I would think all elected officials would condemn violence regardless of the ideology of the perpetrators and perhaps especially for ideologies closer to their position on the spectrum. But, indeed, as Mrs. Lesko pointed out earlier, the characterization of right and left in these things is pretty hard to pin down.

In any event, some of these reports, even early on, have suggested that there were pallets of brick prepositioned in riot areas. We have seen reports of vehicles on scene to facilitate or supply rioters, coordination of activity via social media you made reference to earlier, and interstate travel of rioters to multiple venues. All of these, in turn, suggest a funding source or multiple funding sources. You have made reference, as has the attorney general, to numerous arrests having been made. Are you investigating sources of funding in support of that criminal activity?

Mr. WRAY. I appreciate the question. Certainly, we have a number of investigations and are pursuing a number of leads that do things like try to identify networks, travelers, supply sources. We look at repeat offenders. As I mentioned, I think, in response to a question from one of your colleagues, one of the things that has been so challenging about this is that an awful lot of the coordination or—coordination or organization, if you will, that occurs is happening kind-of on the ground, you know, in the dark, on the street, at a tactical level as opposed to kind-of on a more structured

or coordinated National level, and that makes it that much harder to investigate and disrupt.

But I think it is important for people to understand that although I do agree that the majority of the people out there protesting in general across the country are peaceful protesters, there is no question that the big number—the biggest number is peaceful protesters. That should not diminish, which I think is the point you are making, from the fact that even though it might numerically be a smaller group, that is very dangerous activity that that small group is engaged in. That is why the FBI is focused, much as your question was, we are focused on the violence, not the ideology.

Mr. BISHOP. To be sure—

Mr. WRAY. We don't care, left, right. Violence is wrong. We are going after the violence. We don't care what motivates.

Mr. BISHOP. To be sure, those issues ought to be irrelevant to this committee or to any law enforcement agency in the United States, that is to say, what ideology someone has or their First Amendment activity. To say so that much of that happening is, frankly, something that we should take no cognizance of.

But as to those people who are engaging in violence and destruction, and there have been many, the question becomes with its proliferation in so many places, is the FBI examining the finances underlying the people who you arrest to see what their Venmo accounts say, to see what the sources of cash are that come to them that they are buying their supplies with and their fireworks that they fire at law enforcement officers? Are you using civil forfeiture laws to disrupt those sources of funding and the like?

Mr. WRAY. Well, without reference to any specific investigation, I can tell you that there are any number of investigations in which the source of funding, the source of supply are things that are of particular interest and things that we are actively questioning and pursuing leads on.

As far as the civil forfeiture piece, I will confess that sitting here right now in the hearing, I can't off the top of my head think of a situation where we have yet been able to use that, but we will use every tool in our toolbox if we think it fits.

Mr. BISHOP. My time has expired. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you.

The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from New York for 5 minutes, Miss Rice.

Miss RICE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Miller, late last month, your boss, the Director of National Intelligence, Ratcliffe, said the Office of the Director of National Intelligence would cease in-person election security briefings to Congress. Then just yesterday, he reversed that decision and said that he will continue to brief the Senate and House Intel Committees on efforts to secure the 2020 election from foreign interference, but will no longer conduct briefings for all lawmakers, citing the need to protect intelligence sources and methods.

It is incredibly frustrating that a nonpartisan issue like the security of our elections has been so politicized that Members of Congress are now considered untrustworthy of this critical information. Also particularly alarming that this information is being withheld from Members of Congress only weeks after DHS confirmed pub-

likely that Russia was working to boost President Trump, again, by discrediting Vice President Biden's health.

Will you commit to us that the ODNI will continue to keep all Members of Congress informed on election security threats? If your answer is yes, how do you plan on doing that?

Mr. MILLER. Ma'am, with all respect, I don't do election security. I absolutely will provide any information you require, the Congress requires on terrorism matters, but that really is a decision that is being made at the DNI level. In my center, we just do counterterrorism, ma'am.

Miss RICE. Well, maybe you can take the message back to your boss, because—

Mr. MILLER. Yes, ma'am.

Miss RICE [continuing]. To say that Members of Congress are not worthy to be trusted with this information when it is actually our job to have this information and to have some level of oversight is really disturbing.

Mr. MILLER. Yes, ma'am. I would be happy to take that message back.

Miss RICE. Thank you.

Mr. Wray, recently, the Department of Justice and Federal partners conducted the largest ever seizure of terrorist organizations' cryptocurrency accounts, seizing, in total, 300 accounts allegedly used by foreign terrorist organizations like al-Qaeda, ISIS, and Hamas to fund attacks. Out of this committee, we passed a bipartisan bill that would require DHS to develop and submit a threat assessment report on the use of virtual currencies by terrorist organizations. This version of the bill was included in the NDAA and signed into law just this past December. This case demonstrates the adaptability of terrorist groups who have traditionally used unlicensed money services, businesses, or other money-laundering operations to adopt their terror finance activities to the cyber age.

In your opinion, will cryptocurrencies continue to be used by these terrorist organizations on a wider basis? What trends are you and your respective department seeing in this matter?

Mr. WRAY. Well, Congresswoman, I agree with you that cryptocurrency is a source of particular concern. It is proliferating, not just across terrorist threats, but across other kinds of criminal threats as well, and within the terrorism space, both across international terrorists and domestic, and it makes it one of the key investigative tools that we have, one of the key investigative strategies that we have in that space, much as was in the answer that I just gave to Congressman Bishop is to follow the money. It is one of our go-to moves. Of course, the ability to follow the money is critical across every threat. The cryptocurrency makes it that much harder for us to do that.

We have developed a lot of expertise on that, but each time we sort-of solve one kind of cryptocurrency, a new kind comes on the market. Part of the reason why this is such a big deal is that it fits with other technological trends which have a similar kind of effect of hiding and obstructing criminal activity from law enforcement.

So if you think about any investigation we have, you have got the stuff, the documents, the communications. You have got the people,

witnesses, the sources, human sources, and you have got the money. Well, if cryptocurrency hides the money, if default end-to-end encryption blocks us from any kind of lawful access to the stuff, and if artificial intelligence and all of the various ways in which technology makes it easier to find human sources, makes it harder for us to protect human sources, then we lose the money, people, and the stuff. That is when we are in a really bad space as a country from protecting us from terrorist threats all the way to organized criminal threats and others.

Miss RICE. Can I ask you to just talk a little bit more? You made reference earlier in response to a question about the collaboration that your agency has with social media platforms in terms of misinformation and disinformation. Can you just talk more about that? Because if people can't trust the information that they are getting, I mean, that just goes to the heart of, you know, really affecting, you know, what I think all of us on this committee want to do, which is everyone's right and ability to vote and base their decisions on facts, not misinformation and disinformation.

Mr. WRAY. So this is one of our key challenges, both for the FBI and for the interagency, and for the country. Misinformation/disinformation is not new, but what is new is the ability through social media to amplify it at scale in a much more challenging way. That is why the partnerships with the private sector, with Silicon Valley, the tech companies, et cetera, has become so critical to our efforts.

There are things that they can do, and they have resources to take responsibility for things that are happening on their own platforms much more quickly and within greater legal flexibility under their terms of use and terms of service than we could do through law enforcement means. So that is why that is part of the key effort. Now, we, the FBI, are not and can't be the truth police.

Miss RICE. No.

Mr. WRAY. A lot of people don't understand that that is not how we go about deterring misinformation efforts and malign foreign influencers. We follow the threat. So if it is the Russians, we follow the Russian actors. We identify certain accounts. We talk to the social media companies. They take action. But we don't have people sitting on social media, trying to find things that look false and then wondering who did it. We go the other way. We look at the actor and then see what they are trying to spread.

The social media companies, though, they can come at it in whatever way they want based on their terms of service, and they have resources that I envy sometimes that they can and should and are increasingly bringing to the fight. It is particularly of concern to us in the election context when Americans make the mistake of getting information about elections themselves from social media.

So it is one thing to push out misinformation about a candidate or a policy or something else. But when information gets pushed out about where you go to vote, whether your polling place is open, whether it is closed, that kind of thing, we are trying to make sure Americans know to get information about where and when and how you vote, you need to go to your local election officials website and don't take it from social media.

Miss RICE. Thank you both for being here today.



Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Crenshaw, for 5 minutes.

Mr. CRENSHAW. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for moving us into a much cooler room.

Chairman THOMPSON. Yes. Much cooler.

Mr. CRENSHAW. Yes.

All right. Thank you, Director Wray, for being here. I would like to ask you about a number of things: China, Iran, Russia. The thing is, is I think politically, there is not that much daylight between us on these issues. We largely agree on these threats, but there seems to be disagreement over, politically speaking, is the source of the domestic threats that we are facing, the vast amount of looting, rioting, and destruction that has occurred in our country over the last few months. I don't understand why we disagree on these origins, but we do.

There has been a lot of peaceful protest. That is absolutely true. There has also been more than 550 declared riots, many stoked by extremists in Antifa and the BLM organization. A recent report indicated between \$1 billion and \$2 billion of insurance claims will be paid out. That doesn't even come close to measuring the actual and true damage done to people's lives. Not even close. That is just insurance. We have heard multiple reports of small businesses without any insurance whatsoever. Some of these will never open up, even if they did get insurance payments.

I have heard many Members of this body, of this committee, question whether Antifa even exists.

Director Wray, earlier you confirmed Antifa does indeed exist, but you consider it more of an ideology than a group, correct?

Mr. WRAY. Yes. An ideology or maybe a movement.

Mr. CRENSHAW. OK. That seems, to me, to be downplaying it. This is an ideology that organizes locally. It coordinates regionally and Nationally. It wears a standardized uniform. It collects funds to buy high-powered lasers to blind Federal officers, build homemade explosive devices, feed their rioters since they clearly aren't working, and then bail out those who have been arrested. This is an ideology that has trained its members, makes shield wall phalanxes to attack Federal officers. It formed an autonomous zone in an American city and besieged a Federal courthouse in another. So, I mean, it just seems to be more than an ideology.

Do you have a way to define what you mean by it is not a group?

Mr. WRAY. So I want to be clear that by describing it as an ideology or movement, I, by no means, mean to minimize the seriousness of the violence and criminality that is going on across the country, some of which is attributable to that—people inspired by or who self-identify with that ideology and movement. We are focused on that violence, on that criminality, and some of it is extremely serious.

Mr. CRENSHAW. You mentioned before 3 categories, the criminality, the peaceful protesting, but then you didn't use these words, but I will, ideological rioting. I think that sort-of matches that third category of what you said, the people who purposefully want to instigate it, Antifa being clearly one of them.

So I want to read you the definition of domestic terrorism, section 2331. It says: Domestic terrorism has 3 components. A, involve acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State; B, appear to be intended first to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; 2, to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or 3, to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping; and C, occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States.

Does that at all match the activities of Antifa?

Mr. WRAY. Well, it certainly matches the activity of some of the individuals we are investigating and have pursued other kinds of charges against. You put your finger on a little bit of the legal predicament, which is that there is not currently in Title 18 a domestic terrorism offense or crime as such. There is a definition.

Mr. CRENSHAW. It seems pretty specific.

Mr. WRAY. Well, there is a definition, but, ironically, there is not a—unlike on the international foreign terrorist side, there is not a crime of domestic terrorism that you can charge. So, typically, we—in domestic terrorism cases, including of the sort you are describing, we are pursuing explosive charges, firearms charges, rioting charges you mentioned, or other—

Mr. CRENSHAW. Are you prevented from, say, following the money, following the websites? These groups are clearly organized. Again, it seems strange to me that we can't call it a group.

Mr. WRAY. We are not precluded from following the money. As I've said to Congressman Bishop, we have a number of investigations where—

Mr. CRENSHAW. One more—one more question before my time is out.

Mr. WRAY. There is not a material support to offense like there is—you know, we could do material support to al-Qaeda or ISIS. There is not a material support to a domestic terrorism.

Mr. CRENSHAW. One more question. If that civil rights investigation can target law enforcement officials who willfully fail to keep the public from harm in violation of the color of law statute, does that apply to mayors and city councils who have restrained their police departments, such as Mayor Wheeler in Portland, Mayor DeBlasio in New York, and the Minneapolis City Council?

Mr. WRAY. Well, respectfully, I think that is a legal question that I would want to defer to the attorney general and the Department of Justice on whether that would apply there.

Mr. CRENSHAW. Thank you. I yield my time.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California, Mr. Correa.

Mr. CORREA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank our witnesses today, Director Wray, Director Miller, for being here today. I want to thank all the good folks that work under you in your agencies for keeping us in this country safe and keeping our families safe as well.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman Thompson, also for holding this most important hearing. Your focus today is a central topic of this Homeland Security, which is keeping this country secure.

One of the purposes of this committee is to assess international as well as domestic threats to this country. One of those threats right now, biggest one I hear about much in my district, is election security. But not only are foreign actors threatening to again interfere with our election, but there is a lot of concern in my district about the transition, peaceful transition of power in this country. That has been the hallmark of our democracy, and a lot of my constituents are concerned that if President Trump loses in November, he will not relinquish power and he will try to stay in office. We are reminded of Al Gore who lost the election in the year 2000 by a ruling of 5–4, U.S. Supreme Court.

I am saddened that Mr. Wolf is not here today because I wanted to ask him a few questions, yes or no. I really—what I really wanted from Mr. Wolf was I wanted to ask him to make the same commitment as General Mark Milley, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff made. I am going to quote him, open quote, and General Milley said: I believe deeply in the principle of an apolitical U.S. military. In the event of a dispute over some aspect of the elections, by law, U.S. courts and the U.S. Congress are required to resolve any disputes, not the military, and I foresee no role for the U.S. Armed Forces in this process.

I was hoping that Mr. Wolf would also take that pledge. Mr. Chairman, since he is not here, I would like to submit for the record that—these questions in writing, and hopefully you can get them to him, and he will respond to them.

Chairman THOMPSON. Without objection.

Mr. CORREA. Gentlemen, I have a question for both of you. Sometime in mid-August, the Senate Intelligence Committee released its fifth and final version, or volume, I should say, regarding the Russian interference into the 2016 election. That Senate report found that Manafort passed sensitive campaign information to Russian intelligence officers.

My question to both of you is, are you monitoring to make sure that it is not only foreign interference into our elections but, rather, that campaigns here in the United States are not trying to ask or solicit foreign support by foreign countries of domestic campaigns? Question.

Mr. WRAY. Well, certainly, we pursue what I will call foreign influence investigations, both with respect to election interference in the sense that was described in the Senate—in the SSCI report, but also in terms of, you know, political corruption or illegal campaign financing cases and things like that. Some of those are criminal investigations. Some of those are even counterintelligence investigations in certain scenarios, I can imagine. So we certainly have a number of people working on those kinds of matters, and that is a threat that we take very seriously as part of our overall effort to protect, not just our elections, but our democracy from foreign interference and influence.

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Miller.

Mr. MILLER. Sir, in accordance with statute, that is beyond the remit of the National Counterterrorism Center. We focus on linkages of international terrorist organizations and to domestically, but I have no role in that and I am not completely familiar with all the ins and outs, sir.

Mr. CORREA. I am running out of time. Very quickly, Mr. Miller, then, under your definition of terrorism, how does the concept of foreign interference of our elections, foreign manipulation of our democracy, fit into the concept of terrorism?

Mr. MILLER. Sir, we focus on acts of violence committed against American citizens or to effect political change from an international context only. When you talk about influence and whatnot, that is a different category that doesn't fall within our remit, sir.

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Chairman, I am out of time. I yield.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey for 5 minutes, Mr. Van Drew.

Mr. VAN DREW. Thank you, Chairman. Thank you all for being here today.

Just very briefly, I wanted to go back to the Antifa issue. So if we have an organization that is able to communicate among different counties, different States, different areas, different cities, is able to organize when Black Lives Matter also organized at the same time, advertises for people to help them and they will pay them, feed them, as was said so eloquently before, and takes care of them, that, to me, would be more than just a loosely knit group of people. I mean, I guess we want to define this a little bit, that there are—in my mind, there is Antifa. There is a group or individuals that control Antifa and have some authority over it, and it is to some degree, without question, organized. Would you agree with that?

Mr. WRAY. Well, I think what I would say is that we have seen folks who subscribe to or self-identify with the Antifa movement who coalesce regionally into what we refer to or think of as more of small groups or nodes, and they are certainly organized at that level, those individuals.

Mr. VAN DREW. Not to interrupt you, but, for example—and I understand that some people self-identify as communists, yet there is a real communist organization that is organized at the same time.

Mr. WRAY. Right. I think—I am not sure I am seeing the rest of it.

Mr. VAN DREW. So what I am saying to you, maybe to clarify it a little bit more, is just because some people self-identify doesn't mean that there is more of an organizational aspect to this, that there is something out there that deserves a very thorough investigation.

Mr. WRAY. Well, on the last part, I would say we are very thoroughly investigating. As I mentioned, we have a number of, quite a number of properly predicated investigations being conducted by our joint terrorism task forces around the country into violent anarchist extremism. Any number of those involve people who are tied, either by their own admission or otherwise, to the Antifa movement. In some cases, in some cases, we see those individuals working together in a tactical, organized way. The investigation in those instances might be more of a—what we might call an enterprise investigation.

Mr. VAN DREW. Let me ask you this question. Black Lives Matters, which are good words. Black lives do matter, Black babies, Black parents, mothers and grandfathers and fathers and human

beings and human souls. So there is nothing wrong with those words, yet it is emblematic of an organization that is Marxist. If you just get your Google out and look it up, it is a Marxist organization, and it is also an organization that believes, in some degree, in overthrow and a change of the country, and also believes that the nuclear family or the traditional family that we know it has a place no more.

Is there any examples or is there any real interaction with Antifa and Black Lives Matters, or do they just happen to always be at the same place at the same time?

Mr. WRAY. I am not sure there is anything I could share on that, certainly in this kind of setting. I guess what I would say to you—and, again, it is important to understand this, not for you, but for people listening, right. We investigate the violence. We are about the violence. We are agnostic about the ideology. We don't investigate the ideology. But when the ideology inspires violence, we will investigate the violence aggressively. When I make comments about movements and ideologies, I want to be very clear that I am in no way minimizing the seriousness of the criminal conduct or the violence that we are investigating or in any way downplaying the aggressiveness or determination of the FBI to investigate those leads fully and pursue whatever charges are available to us.

Mr. VAN DREW. Because the ideology of Antifa is based on changing and breaking down the United States of America, so I think that is something that we have to all just admit. You know, kind-of—not you all, I am not saying it to you, but in a cruder way, strap them on and say, yes, this is what it is, and this is something we have to deal with.

One other quick question here too. We are seeing a lot of emerging threats as a result of evolving communication technology. I just wanted to ask you a few questions. What role have novel communication technologies played in the recent rise in domestic extremism?

Mr. WRAY. So—

Mr. VAN DREW. Are you getting the tools you need to really deal with this?

Mr. WRAY. Right. I very much appreciate the question, and actually I think it flows naturally out of the first topic that you raised, because the coordination, the communication that we are describing, and some of the frustrations that we have in really drilling into that, is in part due to terrorist actors, whether domestic or international, for that matter, relying on increasingly end-to-end encrypted messaging platforms. We are getting to a point where the technology companies are creating an entire warrant-proof world in which there are devices and communications platforms, that it doesn't matter how awful the conduct, it doesn't matter how tragic the victim, it doesn't matter how bulletproof legally our court order is to get into it; we are going to be blinded to it. That is a dangerous, dangerous world for us to be in, and it is directly relevant to some of the activity that you are describing, but lots of other threats too.

I will take, for example, the Sutherland Springs shooting. Some of the Members of the committee, you may remember, it was one of the deadliest shootings in America down in Texas. You know, the

phone that that shooter had, we have been trying for now 3 years to get into it. This is not just an FBI problem. It is not just a Federal law enforcement problem. If you talk to State and local law enforcement leaders around the country, like I do every day, you hear about this issue more and more all the time. So we have to figure out a way to deal with that or we are going to create a world where law enforcement is blind in its ability to protect kids, families, and communities.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. VAN DREW. I am sorry. Thank you very much for your time.

Chairman THOMPSON. The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from New Mexico, Ms. Torres Small.

Ms. TORRES SMALL. Thank you, Director Wray and Director Miller, for being here.

Transnational criminal organizations present a continuing threat to our homeland and our border communities. I have discussed efforts to curtail their efforts with Acting Secretary Wolf and was hoping to continue that work today. However, I look forward to working with the Department in the future to strengthen our border security.

As I have said many times, to fully understand the threats and our defense capabilities at the Southwest Border, the Department needs a mile-by-mile analysis of that border, which is why I recently introduced legislation directing the Department to conduct such an analysis and to develop a plan to meet gaps identified in that analysis. I understand CBP conducts a border security improvement plan, which is a start, albeit limited, and I request the Department provide it to the committee as soon as possible.

Moving on to cybersecurity, Director Wray, according to U.S. intelligence officials, Chinese and Russian hackers are using cyber tools to steal American biomedical research used for the development of a COVID-19 vaccine. Officials have also expressed concern about the possibility of Chinese and Russian hackers damaging American efforts to develop a vaccine.

What is the Department doing to combat foreign hackers and to work with pharmaceutical and academic institutions to strengthen their cyber defense capabilities?

Mr. WRAY. So, Congresswoman, you are correct that we are seeing efforts by our foreign adversaries to engage in cyber targeting of COVID vaccine research, testing technology, treatment technology, and efforts to disrupt our National response to the pandemic. We have recently publicly attributed some of that conduct to China's most prolific cyber actors. I know that our U.K. counterparts have publicly attributed some activity there on the same kind of front to Russian actors as well.

We have tried to be very forward-leaning in our engagement and outreach to companies, manufacturers, universities, research centers, et cetera, when we see targeting by these adversaries, cyber targeting, so that they can take appropriate steps, from a cybersecurity perspective, to harden their systems and prevent exfiltration of the information. So far, I think we have been pretty successful in getting there before valuable information has been lost. But make no mistake, this is a very, very real cyber threat that we are contending with daily.

Ms. TORRES SMALL. Thank you, Director Wray.

Congressman Higgins and you also discussed Russian disinformation related to elections. Another way that Russia in particular is seeking to undermine Americans' recovery is with COVID-19 and the public health crisis through spreading that same disinformation on the virus and on future vaccines to create distrust within the public.

Are there any distinct challenges in disrupting Russia's disinformation specifically on COVID-19 and vaccination efforts?

Mr. WRAY. Well, certainly, misinformation—we share your concerns about misinformation about COVID, whether it is misinformation about the infectiousness of the disease itself or misinformation about treatments and cures, vaccines. In some instances, we are able to and we have pursued cases for various scams and schemes, you know, essentially fraud, people pitching fraudulent tests and cures, and people claiming to have the vaccine, you know, things like that.

So when there is sort-of fraud engaged, we are able to use law enforcement tools to go after it. But as I said in the election context, and you are right to kind-of draw the analogy, we are not the truth police. Especially on something like medical issues, we defer to CDC and the medical professionals to correct misinformation there. But it is important that people get their information, in this context, from the medical professionals and not from things like social media.

Ms. TORRES SMALL. Just reclaiming my time briefly. Just to stay on Russia and making sure that Russia is not spreading disinformation on this, you mentioned that a key strategy of working to disrupt Russian voices of disinformation was stopping them before they gained credibility. So I wanted to see if in the COVID-19 space there is an extra challenge there, if, for example, Russian disinformation is gaining credibility, for example, through anti-vaxxers.

Mr. WRAY. Well, certainly, as we discussed and as you mentioned, the essence of disinformation, the only way it works is to do it through voices that are viewed as credible. So if there were—and I'm not sure that I can think of a specific example off the top of my head, but if there were a situation where a credible voice that people really paid attention to as a medical expert was pushing out under the guise of being a medical expert flawed, badly flawed and dangerous information, then that would be a source of particular concern.

Ms. TORRES SMALL. Thank you. My time has expired.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi, Mr. Guest, for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUEST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Director Wray, I want to direct these questions to you. We are here today talking about threats to the homeland, and I specifically want to discuss recent attacks on our law enforcement officials. We saw just this past weekend in California, the headlines from FOX read, "Compton ambush leaves two Los Angeles County Sheriff's deputies fighting for their lives." The story goes on to say a man-hunt is under way in California early Sunday after 2 Los Angeles

County Sheriff's deputies were shot in their patrol car by a suspect who opened fire without warning or provocation. The deputies, a 24-year-old man and 31-year-old woman, were both in critical condition at the time of this article and fighting for their lives as they underwent surgery following the attack.

A handful of antipolice protesters showed up at the hospital where the deputies were being treated. A local faith leader who came to the hospital to pray for the deputies told a reporter that some of the protesters had been shouting slogans like "death to the police." Protesters were blocking the entrance to the hospital emergency room and yelling, "we hope they die."

In June 2020, the AP reported, "California deputy shot in ambush attack at police station." A California deputy was shot in the head but survived an ambush by a gunman intent on harming or killing the police. The shooter opened fire around 3:40 a.m. on the back side of the police station.

ABC News, July 22 of this year, "Police officers killed surge 28 percent this year and some point to civil unrest and those looking to exploit it."

CNN, February 10, 2020, "Attacks on police are a cause for alarm." The article goes to say: An armed assailant approached a marked police van in the Bronx on Saturday evening and opens fire on 2 on-duty police officers. The suspect, who remained at large until the following morning. Then on Sunday, police video captures a man later identified as the same suspect strolling into NYPD's 41st Precinct before opening fire on police, wounding a lieutenant.

FOX News, June of this year, "Police under siege." They go through incident after incident of attack on police. Buffalo, New York, 2 law enforcement officers are struck by a vehicle Monday and another was run over during a demonstration in front of the Buffalo Police Department's E District. The trooper who was run over suffered a shattered pelvis and broken leg.

Cincinnati, Ohio, an officer was saved by a ballistic helmet when a bullet struck the protective covering. Chicago, police reports Monday that 132 of its officers had been injured during violent riots. Davenport, Iowa, an undercover police officer in an unmarked vehicle was struck twice by gunfire. Las Vegas, a Las Vegas police officer was on life support after being shot in the head Monday during a protest.

Minnesota: Shots were fired at law enforcement officers near a Minnesota Police Station last week. On May 28, another, which means a second, police precinct in the city was set ablaze as violent protests surged.

New York: A New York police officer was seen being struck by a vehicle in what appeared to be a deliberate hit-and-run.

Oakland, California: Several shots were fired at Oakland Police headquarters. A Federal law enforcement officer was also shot and killed Friday night.

We see story after story after story of violence against our first responders; the very men and women who put their safety in jeopardy to protect us are under attack.

So, Director, I ask you at this time, what intelligence, what information can you share about us, about these attacks? Also what can we do as Congress to better protect our first responders?



Mr. WRAY. Well, first, let me say, although I am familiar with every one of those instances you described, just hearing you go through them, again, is just yet another reminder to me about how tragic this is. I think it is important for Americans to take a deep breath for a second and think about what it means for somebody to put his or her life on the line for a complete stranger and then, after they paused and thought about that for a second, to think about what it means to get up every morning and do that day after day after day after day. As I said in response to, I think, one of their earlier questions and you have touched on through your comments, the number of officers feloniously killed in the line of duty this year is up significantly from last year. That is not even counting all the officers who were lost to COVID because they have to be out on the streets doing their jobs, and they can't stay home. That is not counting all the officers who miraculously survived an attack, but whose lives are forever altered. That is not counting the officers who died in things like vehicle incidents as they are racing to the crime scene. As I mentioned, I think, to Congressman Bishop, one of the things I started doing when I started in this job is I decided that I was going to call—every time an officer is shot and killed or killed through adversarial action in this country. I was going to call myself the chief or the sheriff and express my condolences on behalf of the FBI. Each time I do it, I ask my staff to give me a picture, a photograph of the officer, any description of, you know, their family so I know how many kids they had, how old their kids were.

I had a guy recently who was engaged to be married, and 6 months out of his wedding day, who was killed. I will never forget, for example, having to call in your home State to Brookhaven, Mississippi, where they lost 2 officers in a single incident in a department of, I want to say, less than 30 people. Think about what that means to a department like that where every single person knew those 2 officers.

So I understand people in this country are angry and upset and hurt, and I get that. There are reasons to be angry and upset and hurt. I don't mean to minimize their concern and hurt, but the law enforcement families hurt too. These people who put on the uniform and go out to protect all of us and our families every day deserve some level of appreciation, and I appreciate your comments.

Mr. GUEST. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

Director Wray, for the record, I think there is no issue around support for law enforcement on this committee. It has consistently been there.

It is only when the rules get changed is there concern. I might ask Mr. Rose to talk a little bit about the rules. After 9/11, Congress did quite a bit of [inaudible] toward supporting the men and women and their families who lost their lives, and all of a sudden, in the middle of this, New York gets penalized in terms of the resources that Congress had already approved.

So it is those kinds of things.

With that, I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. ROSE. Chairman, thank you. Director Wray, Director Miller, first of all, we have—we do not have a domestic terrorist designation in the United States of America. We have a foreign terrorist organization designation, especially designated terrorist group designation.

That is correct?

Mr. WRAY. Yes.

Mr. ROSE. Aside from a domestic terrorist designation, which is in our legislative purview, something I support, something that some Republicans do not support, some Democrats do not support. Do you need any other further resources to go after criminal organizations in the United States of America that are organizing to inflict violence on American citizens, law enforcement, especially?

Mr. WRAY. Well, I think I would put resources in, sort-of, 2 categories. One is funding, right, for data analytics, which I can explain why that is relevant, to boots on the ground, et cetera. So there is that piece of it. Then I would say there are tools—we always want more tools. I touched on one of the concerns earlier, which is this end-to-end encryption issue.

Especially when talking about organizations and people communicating with each other, if we move into a world in which bad guys have a choice between putting all of their information and their communications in platforms or devices that are—that are warrant-proof, that are utterly beyond reach of law, no matter how rock-solid legal case is, I don't think that is a judgment that those companies should be making on behalf of the American people. I think that is something that Congress—

Mr. ROSE. I most certainly agree. Can you please commit to getting us, in a memo form or a list form, the tools you think you need to keep us safe and our law enforcement officials safe and our citizens safe from violent criminal organizations in the United States of America?

Mr. WRAY. We would be happy to follow-up [inaudible]—

Mr. ROSE. Thank you. So let's see if we can unite around something here rather than what it appears that we are doing.

I want to move on to the threat of White Supremacists globally, domestically.

Director Miller, looking at the existing lists of STGs and FTOs, put that list aside, which organizations are you concerned with, particularly in the White Supremacist organization front?

Mr. MILLER. As you noted, thank you. It is nice to have an Army veteran here, by the way. Yes. Russian Imperial Movement, as you know, we designate—

Mr. ROSE. Absolutely.

Mr. MILLER [continuing]. Which was, I thought was a real strong statement in a good way. We see the other groups. You see what is going on in Germany right now.

Mr. ROSE. Which groups?

Mr. MILLER. Oh, geesh. Well, you know, they change their names so fast these days to keep ahead of us.

Mr. ROSE. Right. So things like Sonnenkrieg, Combat 18, Azov.

Mr. MILLER. Sure.

Mr. ROSE. Now, if you look at any of those global groups, do you see any connection between those groups in Germany, Central Eu-

rope, or otherwise in connections between those groups and domestic organizations?

Mr. MILLER. Nothing monolithic or—we are not picking up anything of a routine systemic connection. I think what you will see is more ad hoc because they are all sitting on-line together, chatting, but have not picked up anything deliberate.

Mr. ROSE. But you are seeing communications between them? You are seeing interactions? You are seeing physical movement of people at all?

Mr. MILLER. Other than, as you know, with Russian Imperial Movement, there have been Westerners that have gone out to some of their training.

Mr. ROSE. To Crimea as well?

Mr. MILLER. Yes.

Mr. ROSE. To fight in Crimea as well. Do we know who all those individuals are who have gone to partner with the Russian Imperial Movement or Azov and come back here?

Mr. MILLER. I can't say that we know all of them.

Mr. ROSE. You think that is a problem?

Mr. MILLER. Is it probable that we know——

Mr. ROSE. No. Is that a problem? Would you say that we know every one——

Mr. MILLER. No.

Mr. ROSE [continuing]. Or would you say that we have a system in place for those who have gone to try to work with ISIS or al-Qaeda?

Mr. MILLER. Like Director Wray noted with the communications technology, the way it is right now, I would like to say we know, but I cannot say definitively that we know everyone who has gone overseas to support foreign terrorist organizations.

Mr. ROSE. Would you support this administration looking at expanding the List of Foreign Terrorist Organizations and STG organizations so as to assist us in fighting this new terrorist threat?

Mr. MILLER. I think we have an extraordinarily robust and solid system for doing that, and we look at that regularly to see if we are aligned correctly, if there are any other organizations that should be designated.

Mr. ROSE. To include those organizations that you just referred to earlier that are not presently on the list?

Mr. MILLER. Correct.

Mr. ROSE. OK. Thank you.

Mr. THOMPSON. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California, Mr. Garcia, for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARCIA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to Ranking Member Rogers for the warm welcome. Really appreciate it. As a student of National security, as a former front-line operator, and a steward of developing National security technologies and doctrine, it really is an honor to be here, especially during this era of our Nation's history.

Director Wray, Director Miller, thank you both for being here today, taking the time to help educate us. Keep us aligned and keep both sides of the aisle informed. Really appreciate it.

Director Wray, I think your comments the single biggest threat to our Nation's security right now is our politicians and govern-

ment leaders, especially at the State and local levels and city levels, to not get their collective programs together and support law enforcement.

As my colleague from Mississippi, Mr. Guest, mentioned, it is getting ugly out there. It is getting uglier out there, and as leaders of Government, if we don't back law enforcement and if we don't make it crystal clear and unambiguously that we support those who protect us as a Nation, not just through policy but also through funding, then this will get worse. So I really appreciate your comments and commitment to that. I also appreciate your condemnation of previous abuses of power by your organization and look forward to fixing those sins of the past. I appreciate you both being here.

I would like to pivot to a slightly different conversation and topic if we can. In my district—I come from southern California. We were, unfortunately, the site of a mass casualty at a local high school where we lost 2 of our beloved teens less than a year ago. Where I come from, I was a former naval aviator, and whenever there was a mishap, whenever there was a loss of life, we would convene what was called a safety investigation board or review. This team would go away for 6 months, 9 months sometimes. They would look at every element that led to the mishap, what the pilot ate, what medications he was on, what his family life was like, what his emotional state was, what his mental health state was, and they would come back to the entire fleet and debrief us on the incident, all the lessons learned, what went wrong, what went right in some cases, how could we have avoided that situation.

In our country, we don't seem to have anything like that for what I would call mass casualty incidents. We have these fatalities at high schools. We have mass casualties in different venues, different types of weapons. We hear about it in the news. It makes front-line stories for a couple of weeks, and then it goes away.

Besides the close friends and families and the communities that are impacted, we sometimes don't remember the [inaudible] details. I guess my question is, why don't we have that? Why don't we have sort-of a mass casualties lessons-learned report that becomes public domain? We can redact things to protect anonymity and protect personal/private information, but within that, we can get lessons learned about what this kid was going through, what his parents saw, what tell-tales or issues were prevalent, and I bet you we do find common denominators in some of these cases, something that as parents we can read, something as teachers we can read. Classmates can have access to it, and we can all as a Nation really understand what led to some of these [inaudible].

Why don't we have that? What do we need to do in order to get to that and have it available to all 330 million people that live in this beautiful—

Mr. WRAY. Well, Congressman, I appreciate the question. I think we do have some of that, actually. We, at the FBI, have done a number of studies of not individual self-contained mass casualty attacks, but we have looked at the trend of them, have looked at the collection, the universe of them over a longer period of time and have generated some reports about indicators that might have tipped people off if they had known what to look for. So we have

tried to get some of that information out. A number of field offices, as I mentioned, I visited all 56 of our field offices, met with partners, law enforcement community in each place, and a number of offices are doing—FBI offices are doing outreach efforts with schools and neighborhoods in their AOR, their area of responsibility, to kind of better educate people as to what to look for.

Because one of the things that we have learned—and, frankly, the same thing applies on a lot of the terrorism incidents—is that if you look back, there is almost always someone—a classmate, a family member, a neighbor, a coworker who saw, at least with the benefit of hindsight, saw a change in behavior, a transformation.

You hear us say all the time, if you see something, say something. Most of us when we hear that, we picture, you know, the unattended backpack in the bus station. Of course, we want people, if they see something, to say something there, but we also need people if they see something about somebody to say something. So the more we can educate people as to behavioral patterns to be concerned about, a lot of this is very individualized because people are individualized. So it is the people who know the baseline of behavior of the person to know, wait a minute, this has changed now and I need—this is something I should be concerned about. I should go to the school security officer, I should contact law enforcement, et cetera.

So that is part of it. There are also lessons learned in terms of hardening our schools, and there has been a lot of work done with our State and local partners on that. So there is kind-of an infrastructure piece of it. So there is a lot of work to be done in this space, and it is going to take kind-of a collaborative law enforcement education community partnership to do it.

Mr. GARCIA. I am out of time, but I will just say that I think we need a concerted effort to try to make some of those documents and lessons learned truly accessible to every American out there so that we are actually benefiting from foresight and not just commiserating on hindsight. I think that is the path forward. So, again, gentlemen, thank you for your time.

Mr. THOMPSON. The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from Michigan, Ms. Slotkin.

Ms. SLOTKIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you to our witnesses for being here. I really appreciate it, and I know there has been back and forth on whether Acting Secretary Wolf should have been here. Whatever the reason, given that this is a world-wide threats hearing, the Secretary should have come here, and this idea that someone under Senate confirmation can't appear is actually factually incorrect.

I know that since I was under Senate confirmation when I was called to testify many times.

Let me ask about, Mr. Wray, you have been really helpful in just being straight and clear about kind-of the threats that are going on out there. Can you talk about level of effort on extremist violence, domestic extremist violence? You have talked about in this hearing how you are seeing—2019, I think you said, was one of the greatest levels of domestic violence we have seen in the country for some time since Oklahoma City.

Can you tell me how many cases you have opened, and if you don't know the exact number, just approximately, you have open on groups that are White Supremacists versus groups that are coming from the left, just level of effort that the FBI is employing right now?

Mr. WRAY. Well, trying to think what I can say certainly off the top of my head on numbers. I mean, I will say that—let me start with this: As a general rule, we have each year—lately we have been having roughly a thousand domestic terrorism investigations a year. It is higher than that this year.

Ms. SLOTKIN. Yes.

Mr. WRAY. A good bit north of a thousand this year. I know that we have had about 120 arrests for domestic terrorism this year. Now, that number of investigations, the thousand-plus and the 120 arrests, that is domestic terrorism across the board, right, everything from racially-motivated violent extremist, to violent anarchist extremist, militia types, sovereign citizens, you name it.

Of the domestic terrorism threats, we last year elevated racially-motivated violent extremism to be a National threat priority commensurate with home-grown violent extremists, that is the jihadist-inspired people here and with ISIS.

Ms. SLOTKIN. Let me, because that is important, right, that what you are saying is the level of threat from domestic terrorists across the board, regardless of ideology, is at the same level as home-grown terrorists that have connections to a foreign terrorist organization? Did I hear you correctly?

Mr. WRAY. Well, we are treating it as a commensurate priority in terms of warranting our intention and resources, yes.

Ms. SLOTKIN. But I am assuming you are giving it that attention because it deserves that attention because the threat has elevated from a time when—I am a former CIA officer, we were doing a lot of foreign terrorism nexus stuff, you know, 2005, 2006, 2007 through the last, you know, 10 years. So it is interesting, I think, that domestic terrorism has elevated in the FBI's eyes?

Mr. WRAY. Yes.

Ms. SLOTKIN. I think the thing that we are all struggling with is, you know, there are these home-grown terrorists of every flavor and type, but just in the number of either cases or arrests, how many of them are White Supremacists? What is—if not the exact number, is it the same as other types of domestic terrorism? Is it higher? Just give us a level of approximate numbers.

Mr. WRAY. Well, what I can tell you is that, within the domestic terrorism bucket, category as a whole, racially-motivated violent extremism is, I think, the biggest bucket within that larger group. Within the racially-motivated violent extremist bucket, people subscribing to some kind of White Supremacist-type ideology is certainly the biggest chunk of that.

Ms. SLOTKIN. OK. That is very helpful.

Mr. WRAY. I don't have numbers for you.

Ms. SLOTKIN. That is very helpful. The White Supremacists are the largest chunk of the racially-motivated domestic terrorists?

Mr. WRAY. Yes, but let me also say that—and I would also add to that that racially-motivated violent extremists over recent years have been responsible for the most lethal activity in the United

States. Now, this year, the lethal attacks, domestic terrorism lethal attacks we have, I think, all fit in the category of anti-Government, anti-authority, which covers everything from anarchist violent extremist to militia types. We don't really think in terms of left, right. That is not the way we look at the world.

Ms. SLOTKIN. I understand. Just in my last seconds, I will be submitting some questions for the record for Mr. Wolf commensurate with the questions that I submitted to Chairman Milley on the role of the Department of Homeland Security in and around our elections and the peaceful transition of power, but thanks very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

In line with Ms. Slotkin's questions, Mr. Wray, you know Congress passed a law, the DATA Act. It is referred to as the Domestic and International Terrorism Act that requires the production of a report identifying everything that Ms. Slotkin talked about.

Are you familiar with that?

Mr. WRAY. I am familiar with it, yes, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. THOMPSON. You know, we are 3 months late on the production of that report.

Mr. WRAY. So I am certainly aware of the report and the requirement. I will say that—and I am aware that it is delayed and behind schedule. I know that the first report of the ones that are called for, as my understanding, it is complete and that it is in the interagency approval process, so it should be forthcoming soon.

Unfortunately, with COVID—of course, when the NDAA was passed, no one anticipated the impact of COVID and the people that—and the impacts that would have on our work force. So that has been a big part of the delay, but I understand the importance of it. I know we have been engaging with you and your staff in terms of providing briefings and so forth as well, and we will get it to you just as fast as we can.

Mr. THOMPSON. Yes. I think it is important that all Members of Congress have access just to the data. If there is some follow-ups from it, it is fine, but, you know, Congress has spoken, and I hope you follow.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York, Mr. Katko, for 5 minutes.

Mr. KATKO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you both for being here today. I appreciate it very much. I spend a lot of my waking hours down here in Washington on antiterrorism matters and election security and cybersecurity. So I could talk to all of you for hours, but I do want to pause for a second, Director Wray, to just commend the work of the FBI agents on a regular basis. You don't hear that enough and you should.

For 20 years before I came to Congress, I was a Federal organized crime prosecutor, and some of the best cases I ever did had heavy involvement by the FBI, including police corruption, political corruption, gang cases, and homicides. So I just want to commend the line agents day in and day out who do all the great work, and please convey my thank you to them.

There is plenty of ways I can go here, but one thing that has been gnawing at me, and I just want to touch on real quick, if I can, for both of you because I have another question, and that is,

when the New York City Police Department was cut by one-sixth or a billion dollars of their budget and knowing that New York City is the primary target in the world for terrorists to attack, I am just curious if either one of you have had any sort of information or concerns that have risen because of the lack of funding that they now have.

We can start with Director Wray.

Mr. WRAY. Well, first, let me say I appreciate your kind words about the hardworking men and women of the FBI. Our folks had a tough job before this year and certainly COVID didn't make it any easier, and I am really proud of the hard work that has gone on in terms of keeping our people and their families safe, but not letting up on the mission and the results are pretty extraordinary, frankly.

As far as New York, as somebody who grew up in New York City and still has, you know, family there, I care deeply about the safety of that city in a very personal way. Certainly I don't think it is appropriate for the FBI director to wade into sort-of political debates, local or otherwise, but I think our police officers, including the NYPD police officers, are extraordinary public servants who have a very, very, very, very tough job to have to undertake, and I think people really ought to think carefully about the ramifications of making that job harder.

Mr. KATKO. Thank you.

Mr. Miller.

Mr. MILLER. Thank you, Congressman. Obviously, last Friday, as we recognized the 19th anniversary, our hearts went out to New York City, and we were disappointed we weren't able to go up, but, of course with COVID-19 and whatnot, we weren't able to do that. I am hopeful that, next year, at the 20th anniversary, we will be in an entirely different place in this global war against terrorism, and we will have some good news on al-Qaeda's demise.

I just wanted to highlight: We have the most unbelievable partnership with the NYPD. We have an analyst. She is magical, embedded into the National Counterterrorism Center, and we talk to NYPD probably 3 or 4 times a day. I am not familiar with—to be honest, I am not familiar with the cuts, look into that, absolutely, and if there is anything we can do to support, obviously, we will because between the Joint Terrorism Task Force and the NYPD, they are just remarkable partners, and we want to help them in any way we can.

Mr. KATKO. Thank you very much.

Director Wray, I spend a lot of time on election security. It is one of my greatest concerns, and everything from making sure that the machines don't get hacked into, and I am relatively confident on that, to the high concern I have about the possible obstruction in the process of the election by foreign actors, such as Russia and Iran and China. I am also concerned about, like in New York State, for example, there is a delay of 8 days before they start counting absentee ballots after the election which delays the results which delays individuals' belief in the results, and I am concerned about that.



But if I could just ask you this question. I know you testified on a lot of different aspects. What is your biggest concern right now about election security going forward for this long?

Mr. WRAY. You know, obviously, there is a lot of aspects of it that we are concerned about, and you touched on some of them, but I think in many ways what concerns me the most is the steady drumbeat of misinformation and sort-of amplification of small or cyber intrusions that contribute over time, I worry that they will contribute over time to a lack of confidence of American voters and citizens in the validity of their vote.

I think that would be a perception, not a reality. I think Americans can and should have confidence in our election system and certainly in our democracy, but I worry that people will take on a feeling of futility because of all of the noise and confusion that is generated. That is a very hard problem to combat.

Mr. KATKO. Thank you very much.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri, Mr. Cleaver.

Mr. Cleaver, you need to unmute yourself.

We will go to Mr. Green. We will go to Mr. Green.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Yes, Mr. Chairman. Can you hear me?

Mr. THOMPSON. Yes, we have you.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thank the witnesses for appearing, and I am especially interested in a topic related to violent activity. I have in my hand, Mr. Chairman, a story from *The Washington Post* dated September 14, 2020, and it is titled "Trump Health Appointee Michael Caputo Warns of Armed Insurrection After Election." A relevant portion of the story that is quoted reads: And when Donald Trump refuses to stand down at the inauguration, the shooting will begin. He warned in video. The drills that you have seen are nothing. If you carry guns, buy ammunition, ladies and gentlemen, because it is going to be hard to get.

Mr. Director of the FBI, you pride yourself on your independence, do you not?

Mr. WRAY. I am sorry, Congressman, I had a little bit of a hard time hearing the very end.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. I said you pride yourself on your independence, do you not?

Mr. WRAY. I do pride myself—

Mr. GREEN of Texas. And you will investigate anybody or any opportunity to prevent a crime.

Is this correct?

Mr. WRAY. We will follow the facts and the law and nothing else, and we will aggressively pursue any criminal activity.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Can you explain to me, kindly sir, why you have not pursued the facts and the law as it relates to Mr. Caputo and these statements? He appears to be warning us of some sort of impending crisis leading to violence.

Mr. WRAY. Well, I don't want, sir, try to engage in whether or not there is any particular investigative activity going on that might be somehow related to all that. What I would say is that we don't investigate rhetoric, and we will investigate when we have proper predication of a Federal, criminal violation. You can be as-

sured that, if we have a situation where we have facts and the law and the evidence, that we will pursue it without regard to any other consideration.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Permit me to ask this: Mr. Caputo is a part of—was a part of the administration. He appears to be on some sort of leave right now. He has indicated that there is going to be violence. It would seem to me that, at least, an interview would be in order. Why have you not interviewed him?

Mr. WRAY. Congressman, I am not particularly familiar with the public comments that you are referring to, but as I have said, if we see credible evidence of violent criminal activity that is a Federal crime, we will pursue that activity.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, may I kindly insert *The Washington Post* article in the record without objection.

Mr. THOMPSON. Without objection.

[The information follows:]

#### ARTICLE, WASHINGTON POST

TOP TRUMP HEALTH APPOINTEE MICHAEL CAPUTO WARNS OF ARMED INSURRECTION  
AFTER ELECTION

By Yasmeen Abutaleb, Lena H. Sun, Josh Dawsey, and Rosalind S. Helderman

September 14, 2020 at 8:20 p.m. EDT

A top communications official for the administration's coronavirus response urged President Trump's supporters to prepare for an armed insurrection after a contested election and accused government scientists of "sedition" in a Facebook Live chat that he described in detail to *The Washington Post* on Monday.

Michael Caputo, assistant secretary for public affairs at the Department of Health and Human Services, which is overseeing the coronavirus response, leveled the accusations and promoted other conspiracy theories in a Facebook Live event first reported by the *New York Times*. Caputo confirmed the authenticity of the video in comments he made to *The Post*.

"Since joining the administration my family and I have been continually threatened and in and out of criminal court dealing with harassment prosecutions," Caputo said in a statement. "This weighs heavily on us and we deeply appreciate the friendship and support of President Trump as we address these matters and keep our children safe."

Caputo's comments come as Trump administration officials say they are seeking to build public support for a coronavirus vaccine but have faced a series of disappointing setbacks, most recently the release of audio in which the president admitted that he deliberately downplayed the virus when he knew it was "deadly."

Trump installed Caputo in April after weighing whether to fire Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar over a series of damaging stories about Trump's handling of the pandemic, according to three current and former White House officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe behind-the-scenes discussions. Allies persuaded Trump to not make such a change amid a pandemic, but instead to bring in Caputo, the officials said. (Trump denied reports that he was considering firing Azar at the time.)

Almost immediately, Caputo began exerting control over officials' public appearances and statements; by early summer, he had extended that scrutiny to scientists. He and an adviser have faced mounting criticism in recent days for interfering with the work of scientists at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, seeking to change, delay, or kill weekly scientific reports they thought undermined Trump's message that the pandemic is under control. Caputo has also sought to wield influence over when government scientists appear on television, telling officials that he approves such bookings.

Caputo is viewed as a Trump loyalist, but several White House officials said his behavior has been erratic and some of his ideas have been regarded as extreme. For example, he proposed the Federal Government spend millions of dollars on a professionally directed and produced documentary about the administration's race to develop vaccines that he wanted to air at film festivals, said a senior administration official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity. The idea was rejected by White House communications aides.

In the Facebook video, Caputo criticizes government career scientists, the media and Democrats, the *Times* reported and Caputo confirmed. He said he was under attack by the media and that his “mental health has definitely failed.”

“I don’t like being alone in Washington,” Caputo said in the video, describing “shadows on the ceiling in my apartment, there alone, shadows are so long.”

Caputo also said the CDC, which is part of HHS, had a “resistance unit” that aimed to undermine Trump. Without offering any evidence, he also accused scientists “deep in the bowels of the CDC” of giving up on science and becoming “political animals.”

They “haven’t gotten out of their sweatpants except for meetings at coffee shops” to plot “how they’re going to attack Donald Trump next,” he said in the video. “There are scientists who work for this government who do not want America to get well, not until after Joe Biden is president.”

He also predicted that Trump would win the election but that Biden, the Democratic Presidential nominee, would refuse to concede. “And when Donald Trump refuses to stand down at the inauguration, the shooting will begin,” he warned in the video. “The drills that you’ve seen are nothing. If you carry guns, buy ammunition, ladies and gentlemen, because it’s going to be hard to get.”

Several Democratic lawmakers, including Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.) and Rep. Rosa L. DeLauro (D-Conn.), called late Monday for Caputo’s firing.

“Secretary Azar has a basic responsibility to ensure our public health experts are able to do their jobs, our COVID-19 response is not undermined by misinformation or conspiracy theories, and the data used to inform our efforts is free of political interference,” Murray said in a statement.

Noting that Caputo has said the president asked him to oversee a \$250 million campaign “intended to help America to get back to normal,” DeLauro said, “We now know this is a propaganda campaign that must be defunded immediately. It is not the mission of the Department of Health and Human Services to get the President reelected.”

House Democrats on the select subcommittee on the coronavirus crisis also announced that they had launched an investigation into political interference in the CDC’s science reports on the pandemic.

The White House declined to comment on the controversy Monday.

Speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss behind-the-scenes conversations, a White House official said the president was aware of Caputo’s comments but that his job appeared to be safe for now. Nonetheless, the official said, some advisers were arguing Caputo should be demoted or removed because of concern that he could damage the administration’s efforts to build public confidence in a prospective coronavirus vaccine.

The official said the White House has also recently expanded its coronavirus vaccine messaging team, detailing staffers from other agencies in an “end run” around Caputo.

Senior White House aides have previously warned Caputo that some of his public comments crossed a line. Caputo deactivated his personal Twitter and Facebook accounts on Monday.

HHS released a statement describing Caputo as “a critical, integral part of the President’s coronavirus response, leading on public messaging as Americans need public health information to defeat the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Several current and former administration officials have expressed frustration that Caputo seems more focused on the president’s political fortunes than on combating the pandemic. Caputo denied that, saying that while he cares about the president’s electoral prospects, he is most worried about the deaths and suffering caused by the pandemic. He noted he has urged friends to wear masks. “If you don’t wear a mask, you’re part of the problem,” he said in the interview.

As a former radio talk show host, Caputo said he used to host such Facebook Live events every Sunday until he took the assistant secretary job in April. Since then, he has done two or three such events to talk about the pandemic response.

He said he spoke about being in personal danger on the Facebook Live video because a car had stopped in front of his Buffalo-area home, where he was shooting the video, and a man rolled the car window down and twice yelled profanities and threatened his life.

Since Caputo has been in the HHS job, he said, his two young daughters, now 6 and 8, have been harassed constantly. One man is being prosecuted for yelling profanities at them when they were playing outside, he said. *The Post* could not immediately confirm that case.

During the video, Caputo said questioners asked whether he would stay in the job because of mounting criticism of his team’s interference in the work of CDC’s

weekly scientific missives aimed at the nation's doctors, known as the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Reports. He said he expected to remain in his post.

Caputo was an unusual choice for the top health communications job in the government, especially in the middle of the worst public health crisis in a century. A New York public relations specialist and political consultant, Caputo served as campaign manager to controversial businessman Carl Paladino in his unsuccessful bid for Governor of New York in 2010. Caputo began working with Trump in 2014, first to assist Trump's unsuccessful bid to buy the Buffalo Bills that year and then, in 2016, to assist Trump's efforts in the Republican primary for president in New York.

Caputo remained in the public eye, particularly after the appointment of special counsel Robert S. Mueller III in 2017. In frequent interviews, Caputo bemoaned the investigation and the effect it had on Trump allies who faced hefty legal bills as they received subpoenas and requests for interviews with investigators. When the investigation wrapped, Trump hosted Caputo for a meeting in the Oval Office and took pictures with his family.

Caputo himself drew the attention of Mueller's investigators in part because he had had contact with a Russian who offered damaging information about Hillary Clinton during the 2016 campaign.

In May 2016, Caputo said, a Russian man approached his then-business partner, Sergey "George" Petrushin at an art gallery opening in Florida, claiming to have information that could be helpful to Trump's campaign. Petrushin connected him with Caputo, who arranged for him to meet with political operative Roger Stone, a long-time friend.

According to the Mueller report, which described the episode, investigators found no link between the Russian man's outreach and the broader effort by Russia to interfere in the 2016 election.

As a political adviser and public relations specialist, Caputo also had lived for a time in Moscow in the 1990's, where he worked on a campaign reminiscent of "Rock the Vote" on behalf of then-Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

Returning to the United States, Caputo took a contract in 2000 working for the Russian conglomerate Gazprom Media to improve Vladimir Putin's image in the United States. He later told the *Buffalo News* that he was "not proud of the work," adding, "at the time, Putin wasn't such a bad guy."

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Thank you.

Back to you, again, Mr. Director of the FBI, my hope is that my calling this to your attention today will give you sufficient reason. You have got a Member of the U.S. Congress who is bringing to you intelligence that has been reported publicly that a member of the administration has made comments that there will be violence if there is a refusal to stand down by a person who is associated with the Presidency. My hope is that this is sufficient for you to, at least, interview someone.

Let me move to the director of national counterterrorism. Would this intelligence not seem to indicate that there may be some sort of activity that would fall under your umbrella if this is credible information, Mr. Director Miller?

Mr. MILLER. Sir, thanks for the question. My focus in remit is connections between international terrorist organizations and any U.S. domestic violent extremist or home-grown violent extremists.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. I have to ask now, rhetorically, what does it take to investigate someone who is associated with this administration who makes these kinds of comments? This seems to be fairly serious to me. I likely will be at the inauguration, and we have a person who is associated with the administration who is indicating that bullets are going to fly and shooting will begin. These are his words. It would seem to me that this should be sufficient.

So I am going to ask, as a Member of Congress, that the FBI perform its duty as an independent agent, fearing none, having favor for none, investigate this and please report to me, if you will, if the

committee does not desire to know, would you kindly report to me what your findings are to the extent that you can?

I yield back, Mr. Chair.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

The Chair recognizes Mr. Cleaver for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLEAVER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I apologize for my technological failure earlier. Let me also, first of all, say I would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your leadership. I look at leadership as being measured by how they function during a crisis, and we are in a crisis, and I think you handled it magnificently.

You know, Director Wray, let me just say, you know, polarization in our country is rising frighteningly and at least that is how I analyze it, and I think it is helping to create a new and growing and dangerous tribalism in our country now, and we are becoming a Nation where people want to live in neighborhoods that are—where people have similar ideologies, and we loathe voter [inaudible] different political posture, and we condemn lying in a small circle in which we might function, but we accept it and even praise it when it is done to achieve some political [inaudible].

Now let me just say I have to say I appreciate you and the way you have handled the Department. I can tell you I tremble at night because we have seen many of our institutions damaged over the last few years, and people in position of significance have allowed those organizations to bend to the will of politicians, and I don't—I have not seen that with the FBI. I think you have played it straight and have tried to do it today as well.

This is what I wanted to talk about when the hearing started, I would like for you to address if you can, you know, where the FBI stands in terms of the morale and whether the FBI is now in a situation where, you know, we can depend on it to continue its central objectivity. I also end by just saying that your [inaudible] presentation is something I want to express appreciation for, but where is the FBI right now in terms of the guys who are out on the streets doing all the work we need to be doing to protect the United States of America.

Mr. WRAY. Congressman, I want to tell you, I very much appreciate your kind words to our folks and the question. I will say that I could not be more proud of our people, and whenever you ask questions about something like morale, it is a hard thing sometimes to measure, but I will give you a few pieces of information that I think are extremely good news. One is that, last year, and this has been a trend over the few years of my tenure as FBI director, our attrition rate is down to 0.4, 0.5, or 0.6 percent. So well less than 1 percent. There are very few organizations in this country that have an attrition rate that low, but an even better piece of news is on the recruiting side.

Last year, we had triple, triple, the number of people in this country applying—these are qualified applicants to be special agents of the FBI of the prior years. The highest number in about a decade, and this year we are on track to be even higher. So I think that is a very positive signal about the brand of the FBI and the occurrence of the FBI all across the country and among the public.

You know, just in the middle of COVID, our folks have, you know, opened something like 750 COVID fraud investigations; 600-plus violent gang members arrested just in the course of a single month. I mentioned the terrorist attacks we thwarted. I think, in fiscal year 2020, we recovered something like 500-plus kids who were victims of human trafficking. I could go on and on and on, but they are doing all that despite the challenges of the current environment. I say I am honored, but really I am humbled to be working with them.

Mr. CLEAVER. Thank you. I would also—it would have been great if Secretary Wolf had been here. I think, unfortunately, that tragically and painfully his absence does continue to do damage to the democracy.

I like to yield back to you at this time, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from Illinois, Ms. Underwood.

Ms. UNDERWOOD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Your agencies have identified domestic violent extremism, particularly White Supremacy, as a leading threat to our homeland. Last month, a teenager from my district in Antioch, Illinois, went to Kenosha, Wisconsin, where he allegedly killed 2 people with an AR-15 style rifle amid the protests there.

We have seen too many examples of this kind of deadly violence being fueled by on-line extremism, and now combating domestic extremism requires a thoughtful approach in order to safeguard American civil liberties.

Director Wray, in explaining the FBI's approach to domestic extremism, you said, "The FBI is only concerned when responses cross from ideas and Constitutionally-protected protests to violence."

In the days before the shootings in Kenosha, the Atlantic Council Digital Forensic Research lab found that so-called militias were publicly organizing on social media for armed individuals to travel to Kenosha. A so-called militia leader wrote, "Law enforcement is outnumbered. Take up arms and defend our cities tonight from the evil thugs."

Another user wrote, "I am on the way with 75 people from Green Bay. We have lots of guns. Lots of pipe bombs. Going to cleanse the streets of rioters."

A third user wrote, "Attention, all non-Whites and degenerates of Kenosha. You have until sundown to pack up your belongings and leave the area. After that, anything that happens to you or your children will be your fault."

And a fourth quote: "Shoot to kill, folks."

Director Wray, are these ideas, or are they threats of violence?

Mr. WRAY. I am sorry, Congresswoman, the very last part, the question itself, I couldn't quite hear. I am not sure if it is the audio or—

Ms. UNDERWOOD. Director Wray, are these ideas or threats of violence?

Mr. WRAY. Without reference to any specific case, certainly language about violence can, in certain instances, be part of the of—

fense and can be threats. I mean, we pursue threats to commit violence, not just the actual commission of violence.

Ms. UNDERWOOD. To your knowledge, did Facebook at any point provide any of these Kenosha-specific threats to Federal law enforcement?

Mr. WRAY. I can't, sitting here right now, speak to any specific tips or threats. I will say that we get lots of leads and tips from Facebook and work closely with them on a lot of terrorism issues.

Ms. UNDERWOOD. In light of the violence that occurred at similar events this year, I think we can all agree that statements like these are concerning, and that is why it is so important to share this information as soon as possible with local officials like those in Kenosha, so they can make effective plans to keep their communities safe.

I want to be clear: I am speaking here about statements publicly posted on-line, often under users' real names, not about private communications.

Director Wray, what steps, if any, did the FBI take to alert State and local officials in Wisconsin about these specific threats of violent activity in their area?

Mr. WRAY. Well, Congresswoman, there are a few things that I would say on this topic. First, just to be clear, we don't have people—we, at the FBI, don't have the resources or the authority to just sit on social media and troll for—

Ms. UNDERWOOD. [Inaudible.]

Mr. WRAY. I know you are not suggesting that, but what I am just making sure that the people out there—

Ms. UNDERWOOD. Sir, we have limited time. Would you just answer the question?

Mr. WRAY. I am sorry?

Ms. UNDERWOOD. We have limited time. If you could answer the question.

Mr. WRAY. Yes. So what we do do, we have, in addition, to the relationships we have with social media companies, we have something called NTOC, which is our National Threat Operation Center, that has both call-in lines, 1-800-CALL-FBI, and then an e-mail version—

Ms. UNDERWOOD. Director Wray, excuse me, sir. I asked if you took steps to alert the local officials.

Mr. WRAY. Yes. So what I am getting to is that the National Threat Operation Center, when it gets threats and tips of this sort that you are describing, we have a mechanism by which we feed that information as quickly as possible to State and local law enforcement so they can take appropriate action. We have a system called—

Ms. UNDERWOOD. Reclaiming my time. Reclaiming my time. The director is not answering specifically whether or not this FBI alerted State and local officials in Wisconsin. I would like that noted for the record.

The day after the Kenosha shootings, I heard from a mother in the alleged shooter's home town in my district who wrote that: "There is a militia cell in Antioch that is becoming more and more emboldened to take the law into their own hands, and I am becom-

ing fearful to send my children to the same schools as White Supremacist militia members.”

Domestic extremism and White Supremacy pose critical threats to our homeland. To stop deadly extremist violence, Federal law enforcement and their partners must seize on opportunities to intervene before the violence begins. I am looking forward to working together with you, Director Wray, on improving our ability to prevent violent threats from becoming violent actions.

Thank you to our witnesses for being here. I am so disappointed that not all of our witnesses fulfilled their duty to help this committee and the American people understand the threats to our National security.

I yield back.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much. The gentlelady yields back.

The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from New York, Ms. Clarke, for 5 minutes.

Ms. CLARKE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank our Ranking Member Rogers. As our Nation faces immeasurable threats from the rise of White Supremacist terrorist groups to the risk of cyber attacks crippling our critical infrastructure, this committee has an obligation to conduct oversight and ensure that the Executive branch is doing its job, but Congress can only fulfill our Constitutional role if the Executive branch follows the law and appears before us when subpoenaed.

I would like to thank Director Wray and Director Miller for appearing before us today. I would also like to condemn in the strongest possible terms Mr. Wolf's refusal to appear before us and comply with a lawfully-issued subpoena. His refusal to testify is yet another example of the lawlessness that has infected the Department of Homeland Security. Mr. Wolf may not want to answer for his Department's actions from removing the uterus of ICE detainees to manipulating intelligence to minimize Russian meddling in our election, but when a Congressional committee subpoenas you, the law says you must show up.

With that, I turn to my questions.

My first question is actually for you, Director Wray, and it is a bit parochial. It has to do with my district. Yesterday, I joined a letter to Commissioner Shea of the New York City Police Department, signed by 2 New York State legislators, 2 Members of Congress, and members of the New York City Council regarding alleged cooperation between the FBI and the NYPD in a community in my district. Specifically, it alleged that in light of New York's new State-level bail laws, investigations that would have previously been handled by local officials, the NYPD, are now being turned into Federal cases.

Are you aware of any arrangement of this nature between the Bureau and the NYPD?

Mr. WRAY. I am not familiar with the specific issue that you are referring to, at least in New York. I will say—

Ms. CLARKE. Will you look in to it and get back to me on this?

Mr. WRAY. I would be happy to take a look. You said there was a letter that you had written—



Ms. CLARKE. Well, this was actually sent to our local police commissioner, but there was a public statement made by one of our police officials that they are working with the FBI, and so I would like to get some clarity around what this arrangement is if it exists at all.

Mr. WRAY. OK. Well, I will have my staff follow up with your staff to get a little more information about and see if there is information that we can provide that would be helpful to you.

Ms. CLARKE. Wonderful. I appreciate that. I would like to ask a question about the recent resurgence of White Supremacists against African Americans, Jewish Americans, Latinos, and so many others. *Politico* recently obtained a draft DHS 2020 homeland threat assessment which described White Supremacists as the deadliest domestic terror threat currently facing the Nation, but subsequent drafts diminish this warning.

What is your assessment of the deadliest domestic terrorist threat currently facing the Nation, and have you ever faced political pressure or been—received or have received a request from any other element of the U.S. Government to alter the assessment?

Mr. WRAY. Well, first, let me say my commitment to calling it straight extends not just to our investigations but to our intelligence assessments. That has been my commitment since Day 1, and it continues and will continue as long as I am sitting in this role. We have continued to take that approach to all of our intelligence assessments on my watch.

As far as the issue about danger and domestic terrorism threats, what I would say is that we assess that the most dangerous threat to the homeland encompasses lone actors, radicalized often on-line, with easily accessible weapons against soft targets. That includes home-grown violent extremists that are jihadist-inspired as well as domestic violent extremists of all sorts.

Now, within the domestic violent extremists, we have assessed that racially-motivated, racially- and ethnically-motivated violent extremists have been responsible for the most lethal activity over the last several years.

Ms. CLARKE. I asked specifically about White Supremacists. Are they included in that threat assessment?

Mr. WRAY. Yes. So, within the racially- and ethnically-motivated violent extremists, I would say the biggest chunk of those—I can't give you a percentage, but the biggest chunk of that are individuals who are motivated by some form of White Supremacist ideology, and that group, the racially-motivated violent extremists, has been responsible for the most lethal activity over the last few years.

I will say, just as a point of clarification this year, the lethal attacks that we have seen, I think, have all been from anti-Government or anti-authority types, but if you go back over the last few years, it has been the racially-motivated violent extremists that had the most lethal attacks in the homeland.

Ms. CLARKE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from Las Vegas, Ms. Titus, for 5 minutes.

Ms. TITUS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Can you hear me?

Mr. THOMPSON. Yes, we can.

Ms. TITUS. Thank you. I am sorry.

I, too, am sorry Mr. Wolf wasn't here because I wanted to ask him about the limitation on J1 visas, which is keeping several dozen special ed teachers from coming to Clark County, and I really don't think special ed teachers are a threat to the homeland, but nonetheless.

Director Wray, despite your protest to the contrary that the FBI is not being politicized, we have seen increasing politicization of the Justice Department under Attorney General Barr, and this has crossed a long-standing line that we don't usually expect or see or tolerate this sort of thing from our Nation's law enforcement.

Just, yesterday, the attorney general told the Nation's Federal prosecutors—this is virtually a quote—to be aggressive when charging certain demonstrators with crimes, including the crime of sedition. Now sedition, as you know, is an act of inciting revolt or violence against a lawful authority with the goal of destroying or overthrowing it. Now put that in the context of the fact that FBI officials earlier this year described the perpetrators of some of these actions at demonstrations as largely opportunistic individuals taking advantage of the protest. Then we had a report by Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project which monitors political upheaval around the world, they looked at 7,750 protests from May 26 to August 22 in 2,400 locations in all 50 States and Washington and found that 93 percent of the protests were peaceful. Third, we have seen the statement by the Federal prosecutor Federal attorney from eastern Virginia who said—of your Eastern District of Virginia, Mr. Rosenberg, who said that, if Barr is saying if you have a sedition case, then bring it, that is OK; but if he is urging people to stretch to bring one, that is deeply dangerous to our Constitution.

I wonder if, under these new directives from Attorney General Barr, who is apparently trying to shore up the President's law-and-order image, you are going to change your approach to dealing with some of the people who have been involved in these demonstrations. If you are going to look at building a case for sedition—it is difficult to prove, but maybe you will set out to do that—could you kind-of describe how this might make a difference in the crimes that you pursue against some of these people?

Mr. WRAY. Well, Congresswoman, I am not familiar with the conversation that has been attributed to the Attorney General, you know, in the press. So I can't really comment on that specifically. I will say my commitment, our commitment is to pursue justice in every investigation to follow the facts, follow the law, and follow proper predication. We have a commitment to protect the American people and uphold the Constitution, and we are going to do both in every investigation, and that includes in this context.

Ms. TITUS. Could you talk a little bit about the crime of sedition and what it would take to prove it? Do you see any cases pending out there now that might fit under this kind of charge?

Mr. WRAY. Well, I will confess that I am not a legal expert on the crime of sedition, so I am not sure. I would have to brush up on that to be able to really answer your question in the intelligent

way that I think you would expect of me. Certainly, there is dangerous, violent criminal activity that is occurring amidst some of the protests around the country, and we, I think, have a responsibility to pursue that activity aggressively but appropriately. Even if numerically it may not be the lion's share of the protesters by any stretch of the imagination, it doesn't take more than one person to engage in sometimes lethal activity against others.

So we have a responsibility to pursue that, but you can be confident that we are going to pursue that based solely on the facts and the law and the appropriate evidence and not based on any kind of improper or partisan consideration.

Ms. TITUS. Would you think that Mayor Durkan or Governor Jay Inslee are domestic terrorists because of what has happened in Seattle as has been suggested perhaps by this administration?

Mr. WRAY. I am not familiar with the particular comments that you are referring to, so I really can't comment on that.

Ms. TITUS. Well, no, I am just asking, do you think they would fit the category of domestic terrorist based on what has been happening in Seattle?

Mr. WRAY. I am sorry. Do I think who is a domestic terrorist?

Ms. TITUS. Mayor Durkan and Governor Inslee.

Mr. WRAY. I wouldn't be describing them that way, but I will say I don't tend to comment on people as—ascibe labels of terrorists or criminal activity to people except when we are speaking through our charges. That is how I would communicate about that.

Ms. TITUS. I appreciate that. I wish some other members of the administration felt the same way. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you.

The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from New Jersey, Mrs. Watson Coleman.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you to our witnesses for the service that you render, the job that you do, and your willingness to be here and have an exchange of views.

Mr. Wray, I have a series of follow-up questions. Congresswoman Underwood asked you about investigations, and you did not answer whether or not you would be pursuing those investigations at her request.

So is that a yes or a no?

Mr. WRAY. I will confess, Congressman, I was having an extremely hard time hearing Congresswoman Underwood. I don't know if it was the quality of the audio connection or perhaps because she was appropriately wearing a mask that I couldn't hear through the mask, so I will confess that I really couldn't understand the question very well. I was doing my best to answer it to the best of my ability. So it probably makes more sense for me to follow up with her staff—

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Good. OK.

Mr. WRAY [continuing]. To make sure that I actually understood the question.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Thank you.

What about Congressman Al Green's request that you investigate the statements that Mr. Caputo made while he was a spokesman

at the DHS impacting what the CDC was saying, and his notion of there would be violence and that the scientists were actually—I think the terminology is creating or were seditious in their actions? Will you be investigating that? I know you said you didn't know the comments that were made, but now that you know, will you be investigating that?

Mr. WRAY. Well, first, Congresswoman, let me say, as you may know, we don't ever confirm or deny the existence of investigations.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. OK.

Mr. WRAY. So when we get requests from Members of Congress—

Mrs. Coleman Watson. OK.

Mr. WRAY [continuing]. To investigate something, which happens all the time—

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Yes.

Mr. WRAY [continuing]. We will take evidence that is submitted.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Okeydokey.

Mr. WRAY. If somebody has credible evidence of a crime, we will review the evidence and decide what to do about it.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. OK. Then can you tell me a couple of things. No. 1 is, do you feel that voting by mail as a result of the pandemic and in anticipation of having the largest turnout in voting at a time when we have this pandemic, do you believe that there is wide-spread fraudulence and abuse historically in voting by mail? That is a yes or a no.

Mr. WRAY. Well, I think—with respect—I am not sure it easily lends itself to a yes or no question, but I will answer the question. We take all election-related crimes seriously, including voter fraud—

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Well, then, I guess my question is—my question is—it is a yes or no question. Is there this sort-of experience, historical record of wide abuse, wide-spread abuse of voting by mail, yes or no?

Mr. WRAY. We have not seen to date—

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Thank you.

Mr. WRAY [continuing]. A coordinated National voter fraud effort in a major election. We have certainly investigated—

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. OK. Then I simply—

Mr. WRAY. We have certainly investi—if I may finish. We certainly have investigated voter fraud committed by mail. It has typically been at the local level.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. In very isolated circumstances, I suspect. I'm just wondering how often you get to speak to the attorney general, and if you would use your good graces and the respect that we have for you to sort of ask him to stop spreading such misinformation about voting integrity.

I want to ask you a couple of questions about White Supremacist—White Supremacists. First of all, let me ask you about Black Lives Matter. Does Black Lives Matter represent an organization to you? Is that a yes or a no?

Mr. WRAY. I understand that there is an organization, they call themselves Black Lives Matter.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Do you have it—OK. Do you have it listed as a terrorist organization?

Mr. WRAY. No.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Do you have any reason to believe that it is a terrorist organization?

Mr. WRAY. Well, we don't categorize domestic organizations as terrorist organizations under the law because there is no—

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Have you—OK. Have you found any individuals that have aligned themselves with Black Lives Matter as the perpetrators of any of the violent actions that you have seen take place in what was peaceful demonstrations organized by Black Lives Matter allies?

Mr. WRAY. I can't, sitting here right now, speak to specific cases. I know that we have had a wide range of domestic violent extremists in midst of the current protest activity engaging in violence or destruction of property. Whether in any one of those cases somebody may have aligned themselves or associated themselves with Black Lives Matter, I don't—sitting here right now, I can't think of one, but I don't know for sure.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Thank you. Do you know whether or not they have been aligned with White Supremacists and Boogaloo, militia groups or whatever other sort of right-wing groups?

Mr. WRAY. Well, we have had a number of investigations involving some of the activity we're talking about, sort-of domestic violent extremism, that in some instances, as I have mentioned, are people who are associating themselves with various anarchist ideologies like Antifa, and in other instances, associated themselves with like the Boogaloos. The Boogaloos—

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Yes.

Mr. WRAY. For example, I mentioned the case in my exchange with Congresswoman Lesko about the Minneapolis individuals, for example, who associated themselves with the Boogaloos and ultimately were also ensnared in trying to provide material support to Hamas. Then there is some other cases that we have had involving Boogaloo activity. I believe perhaps the individuals who—or the individual who killed the FPS officer out in Oakland may have referenced Boogaloo inspiration.

Chairman THOMPSON. The gentlelady's time has expired.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman THOMPSON. Yes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from Florida, Mrs. Demings.

Mrs. DEMINGS. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to both of our witnesses for being with us today.

I do have to say that I am disappointed that Assistant Secretary Wolf did not join us today and also ignored our subpoena. I have always expected and kind-of prided the fact that the Department of Justice, Homeland Security, those in the intelligence agency, would act above the fray, act above politics, keep us safe, hold bad actors accountable, and eagerly appear to tell their own story on behalf of the men and women that they work for and the American people. So, Director Miller and Director Wray, thank you both for being with us today.

I can also say that I am grateful for the work that the men and women in law enforcement do every day. I can say that and hold them accountable when they are engaged in wrong-doing all at the same time. The men and women in law enforcement do not deserve

nor need to be used as political pawns, as I believe that we have heard too much today. I think they are clear on who they work for and that they work on behalf of the American people.

Before I get into my line of questioning for the reasons we are here today, Director Wray, following up on my colleague, Ms. Titus', line of questioning about the attorney general's agenda, you know, we are in a strange place right now. We are just hearing strange things all the time. What I did hear recently the attorney general say that really concerned me, he said, like I say to the FBI agents, whose agents do you think you are?

Now, Director Wray, as we think about law enforcement and the very nonpartisan role that law enforcement is engaged in or should be, to alleviate any confusion on behalf of your agents or the American people, how do you respond to that comment from the attorney general?

Mr. WRAY. Well, I am not familiar with that particular comment from the attorney general. I will say we, the FBI, work for the American people.

Mrs. DEMINGS. OK. Thank you so much for clearing that up.

Second, I know both of you have said that pretty much the biggest threat are these persons who we would consider as lone wolves, lone individuals, home-grown violent extremists. How much would you say that they have taken advantage—when we look at the number of protests that we have seen around the country, how much would you say—and I admit the acoustics were not the best here. How much would you say that they have taken advantage of the number of protests to really spread their own individual purpose, cause, message, and what can we anticipate as we get closer to the election from them?

Mr. WRAY. Well, certainly, we have seen amidst some of the protests in some cities at certain times dangerous, violent extremism committed by people from a variety of ideology who are hijacking those protests as cover or—best word I can use is cover for their own ability to engage in violence and dangerous criminality. I think one of the phenomenons that that lends itself to is not just dangerous to small businesses, dangerous to law enforcement who we talked about already, but, frankly, danger to the other protesters as well. The people who are there peacefully, you know, then find themselves, you know, in the line of fire. So it is activity that we need to pursue aggressively using every tool that we—lawful and appropriate tool that we have in the toolbox.

I think one of the things that we have started to see more and more of that I am concerned about—this goes to your question about what can we expect to see in the future. In addition to people committing violence against government buildings and law enforcement, which is a real problem, and people need to understand that it is really happening and having real consequences, you are also seeing, now, different violent extremist groups or individuals committing violence against each other, you know. In other words, one group shows up to pick a fight with the other group, and who knows which is chicken and which is egg, but now you have got an additional level of combustible violence. As opposed to maybe just one category of violent extremists, you know, hijacking a particular

protest, now you have both groups from opposite sides adding to the combustibility and the danger of the situation.

So we certainly have seen that in a number of cities, and that is just a—that is a force multiplier in a bad way that I am concerned about going forward.

Mrs. DEMINGS. Thank you so much.

Mr. Chairman, may I ask one more question?

Director Miller, in May, the acting director of national intelligence conducted a so-called reorganization of the National Center for Terrorism—the National Counterterrorism Center, without consulting Congress, reportedly cutting resources and staff. What is the impact of the reorganization at the NCTC's operation?

Mr. MILLER. Thank you, Congresswoman, and we owe you a briefing on that. I would be happy to do that. I have been there for 5 weeks. I thought the reorganization—we cleaned up some stuff. I have not—other than a few—we had some seats that weren't being filled for a long time, so those kind-of went away. So I have not seen a major—any major issue at all with our effectiveness or efficiency. Happy to talk to you more about that.

Mrs. DEMINGS. That would be great. So you do commit to working with Congress—

Mr. MILLER. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. DEMINGS [continuing]. To discuss the resources?

Mr. MILLER. Absolutely.

Mrs. DEMINGS. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Chairman THOMPSON. Thank you very much.

The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, thank you for your generosity. I just want to put on the record one question and introduce elements into the record.

Is the DOJ contemplating or has it contemplated opening an investigation into domestic terrorism charges against BLM? I would like to have that on the record for a response by both our witnesses today. Black Lives Matter. If so, what is the status?

*New York Times*—I am going to introduce this. The *New York Times*, "Federal Officers Deployed in Portland Didn't Have Proper Training, DHS Memo Said."

I will just do unanimous consent at the end, Mr. Chairman.

*Washington Post*, "ICE flew detainees to Virginia so the planes could transport agents to DC protests. A huge coronavirus outbreak followed."

*ABC News*, "Deaths at protests from Kenosha to Portland, but motives tell a different story." This indicates who were actually involved in that.

Finally, "Political Divides Conspiracy Theories and Divergent News Sources Heading Into 2020 Election"—Pew Research Center—43 percent of Republicans identify fraud as a major problem with voting by mail versus 11 percent of Democrats.\*

I ask unanimous consent that these be introduced into the record.

I am sorry. *NPR*, "What is QAnon? The Conspiracy Theory Tip-toeing Into the Trump World."

\*The document has been retained in committee files.

I ask unanimous consent that these periodicals be submitted into the record, along with—  
 Chairman THOMPSON. Without objection.  
 [The information referred to follows:]

## ARTICLE, NEW YORK TIMES

FEDERAL OFFICERS DEPLOYED IN PORTLAND DIDN'T HAVE PROPER TRAINING, D.H.S.  
 MEMO SAID

*Rather than tamping down persistent protests in Portland, Ore., a militarized presence from Federal officers seems to have re-energized them.*

By Sergio Olmos, Mike Baker and Zolan Kanno-Youngs

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/18/us/portland-protests.html?auth=login-email&login=email>

Published July 18, 2020. Updated July 21, 2020

PORTLAND, Ore.—The Federal agents facing a growing backlash for their militarized approach to weeks of unrest in Portland were not specifically trained in riot control or mass demonstrations, an internal Department of Homeland Security memo warned this week.

The message, dated Thursday, was prepared by the agency for Chad F. Wolf, the acting secretary of homeland security, as he arrived in Portland to view the scene in person, according to a copy of the memo obtained by *The New York Times*. It listed Federal buildings in the city and issues officers faced in protecting them.

The memo, seemingly anticipating future encounters with protesters in other cities as the department follows President Trump's guidance to crack down on unrest, warns: "Moving forward, if this type of response is going to be the norm, specialized training and standardized equipment should be deployed to responding agencies."

The tactical agents deployed by homeland security include officials from a group known as BORTAC, the Border Patrol's equivalent of a SWAT team, a highly trained group that normally is tasked with investigating drug smuggling organizations, as opposed to protesters in cities.

Alexei Woltornist, a spokesman for the Department of Homeland Security, said on Sunday that the missions of the Federal agents in Portland "aligned with their appropriate training" and that officers received "additional training for their deployment in the city" to assist the Federal Protective Service.

The statement did not specifically mention the memo that said the agents lacked sufficient training in riot control or mass demonstrations. The agency did not respond to follow-up questions about the information in the memo.

The issue is playing out as the aggressive Federal campaign to suppress protests in Portland appears to have instead rejuvenated the city's movement, as protesters gathered by the hundreds late Friday and into Saturday morning—the largest crowd in weeks.

Federal officers at times flooded street corridors with tear gas and shot projectiles from paintball guns, while demonstrators responded by shouting that the officers in fatigues were "terrorists" and chanting: "Whose streets? Our streets."

A court ruling has largely prohibited the local police from using tear gas during the recent protests, which have played out for more than 50 consecutive nights.

With one Portland protester severely injured in front of the Federal courthouse and others pulled by unidentified Federal agents into unmarked vans, the extraordinary campaign to subdue protesters has led to wide-spread condemnation of the Federal response in Portland and beyond.

While the protesters have repeatedly decried the city's own police tactics, Mayor Ted Wheeler, who also serves as police commissioner, and other leaders have united in calls for Federal agencies to stay away. Jo Ann Hardesty, a city commissioner, went to join protesters gathered outside the county Justice Center downtown, saying the city would "not allow armed military forces to attack our people."

"Today we show the country and the world that the city of Portland, even as much as we fight among ourselves, will come together to stand up for our constitutional rights," Ms. Hardesty said on Friday.

While officials from the Department of Homeland Security have described the stepped-up involvement of Federal officers as part of an effort to oppose lawlessness in the city, State and local leaders contended that the Federal officers themselves may be violating the law.



Prosecutors have opened a criminal investigation into the injury of one protester, who appeared to have been shot in the head with a less-lethal weapon outside the Federal courthouse in downtown Portland. Ellen Rosenblum, the State's attorney general, has filed a lawsuit, accusing Federal officers of unlawful tactics in how they went about detaining people by pulling them into unmarked vans.

The pushback against the militarized Federal deployment involving officers in fatigues and tactical gear has also extended to the streets, where the presence of those Federal agents has rejuvenated a movement that had shown signs of finally slowing down after weeks of protest against police violence and militarization.

Hundreds continued to demonstrate after midnight on Saturday, playing music, holding shields, tearing down temporary fences and throwing fireworks at the county's Justice Center.

Along with street medics, protesters also have the support of a snack van that offers free Gatorade and instant noodles, and a makeshift kitchen called Riot Ribs that cooks bratwursts and Beyond Meat sausage. Someone on Saturday had set up a stand selling T-shirts promoting racial equity and handwashing.

The protests have long featured a mix of tactics, with some there displaying signs to sustain a Black Lives Matter movement that emerged in the aftermath of George Floyd's death in May. Others have engaged in more unruly responses, such as graffiti or throwing objects at officers. Dozens have been arrested over the weeks, including some by Federal officers, such as a man accused of hitting an officer with a hammer last week.

Protests around the Federal courthouse—tagged with messages such as “Stop Using Violence on Us” and “History Has Its Eye on You”—have drawn the ire of Federal leaders. Mr. Wolf got a tour there this week and shared images of himself in front of graffitied walls.

The arrival of a more aggressive Federal presence came after President Trump, who at one point called on States to “dominate” protesters, directed Federal agencies to increase their presence to protect Federal properties, including statues and monuments that have at times been the target of protesters. Mr. Trump said last week that he had sent personnel to Portland because “the locals couldn't handle it.”

Gov. Kate Brown said in an interview that she believed that the protests were starting to ease before the Federal officers waded into the scene. She said that she had asked Mr. Wolf to keep Federal agents off the streets but that he rejected the suggestion.

Mayor Wheeler said he got the same response. But he said he believed that the unified local response could change the Federal tactics and keep Federal officers off the streets.

“I can't recall a single instance where we have had Federal, State and local officials all in alignment, saying the presence of Federal troops in our city is harmful to our residents,” Mr. Wheeler said.

Mr. Wheeler himself has been the target of protests, with crowds at times gathering outside of his condo. For weeks, he has called for an end to destructive demonstrations, saying he was concerned about “groups who continue to perpetrate violence and vandalism on our streets.”

Senator Jeff Merkley, Democrat of Oregon, said in a tweet that he and Oregon's other Democratic senator, Ron Wyden, next week would introduce an amendment to the defense bill to stop the Trump administration “from sending its paramilitary squads” onto America's streets.

Ms. Rosenblum said her office was working with the Multnomah County district attorney, Rod Underhill, on a criminal investigation focused on the injury of a protester on July 12. In that case, video appeared to show a man being struck in the head by an impact munition near the Federal courthouse, and his family said he subsequently needed surgery.

#### *Minneapolis Police*

The retention and recruitment problems that many police departments have experienced in recent years are especially pronounced after four Minneapolis officers were charged with Mr. Floyd's death.

The attorney general's office also filed a lawsuit late Friday accusing Federal officers of using unlawful tactics. Protesters, along with videos posted on social media, have described scenes of Federal officers seizing people and pulling them into unmarked vans.

The American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of Oregon has also filed in court to curtail the actions of Federal officers, and the group said “many” more lawsuits that would be forthcoming.

Mary B. McCord, a professor at Georgetown Law and former national security official at the U.S. Department of Justice, said the Federal tactics and use of un-

marked vehicles were reminiscent of the much-criticized Federal response to demonstrations in Washington in June.

Ms. McCord said Federal officials were on dangerous ground with the tactics they were using, including seizing and detaining protesters off the streets and seemingly portraying all protesters as part of a dangerous movement.

"It sends the message that these people are terrorists and need to be treated like terrorists," Ms. McCord said.

She added: "This is the kind of thing we see in authoritarian regimes."

*Sergio Olmos reported from Portland and Mike Baker from Seattle. Neil MacFarquhar contributed reporting.*

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#### ARTICLE, WASHINGTON POST

ICE FLEW DETAINEES TO VIRGINIA SO THE PLANES COULD TRANSPORT AGENTS TO D.C.  
PROTESTS. A HUGE CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK FOLLOWED.

*By Antonio Olivo and Nick Miroff*

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/coronavirus/ice-air-farmville-protests-covid-2020/09/11/f70ebe1e-e861-11ea-bc79-834454439a44\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/coronavirus/ice-air-farmville-protests-covid-2020/09/11/f70ebe1e-e861-11ea-bc79-834454439a44_story.html)

*September 11, 2020 at 4:07 p.m. EDT*

The Trump administration flew immigrant detainees to Virginia this summer to facilitate the rapid deployment of Homeland Security tactical teams to quell protests in Washington, circumventing restrictions on the use of charter flights for employee travel, according to a current and a former U.S. official.

After the transfer, dozens of the new arrivals tested positive for the novel coronavirus, fueling an outbreak at the Farmville, Va., immigration jail that infected more than 300 inmates, one of whom died.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement said the agency moved the detainees on "ICE Air" charter flights to avoid overcrowding at detention facilities in Arizona and Florida, a precaution they said was taken because of the pandemic.

But a Department of Homeland Security official with direct knowledge of the operation, and a former ICE official who learned about it from other personnel, said the primary reason for the June 2 transfers was to skirt rules that bar ICE employees from traveling on the charter flights unless detainees are also aboard.

The transfers took place over the objections of ICE officials in the Washington field office, according to testimony at a Farmville town council meeting in August, and at a time when immigration jails elsewhere in the country had plenty of beds available because of a dramatic decrease in border crossings and in-country arrests.

"They needed to justify the movement of SRT," said the DHS official, referring to the special response teams. The official and the former ICE official spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive internal decisions. They and another DHS official briefed on the operation characterized the tactical teams' travel on ICE Air as a misuse of the charter flights.

At a hearing in a Federal lawsuit filed on behalf of four detainees who were already at Farmville, an ICE attorney told a judge that one reason for the transfer was that "ICE has an air regulation whereby in order to move agents of ICE, they have to be moved from one location to another with detainees on the same airplane."

The lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court in Alexandria, focuses on the exposure to the coronavirus for the detainees, three of whom contracted the infection.

Asked about the primary purpose of the charter flights, ICE officials said the goal was to move detainees into facilities with more space for social distancing.

"ICE transfers detainees due to the operational demands of the detention network. The June 2 transfer of detainees to Farmville was made as part of a national effort to spread detainees across the detention network to facilitate social distancing and mitigate the spread of COVID-19," Henry Lucero, who oversees ICE enforcement operations, said in a statement.

ICE statistics show the facilities the detainees came from were not near capacity on June 1, when the transfers were arranged. CCA Florence, a jail in Arizona with beds for roughly 550 detainees, was about 35 percent full that day, records show. The facility that appeared most crowded, Eloy Detention Center in Arizona, was about 70 percent full. Farmville was 57 percent full, according to ICE.

"During COVID-19, the agency has taken steps to protect detainees in its custody and promote social distancing whenever possible," spokeswoman Danielle Bennett said in a separate statement. "This has resulted in the transfer of detainees from facilities with larger detention populations to facilities with fewer detainees. This was the reason for the transfers to Farmville."

ICE officials did not respond to requests for examples of other detainee transfers this year from Arizona or Florida to Farmville, which is the agency's closest major facility to Washington.

But publicly available flight data show the June 2 flights were highly unusual. There is no other record this year of ICE transferring detainees from Phoenix to Virginia or Miami to Virginia, according to records compiled by Witness at the Border, an immigrant advocacy group that monitors ICE Air activity.

On June 1, after two nights of mass protests outside the White House, a top DHS official said in a memo obtained by *The Washington Post* that special response teams were being sent to the District from Arizona, Florida and Texas, with plans to arrive the following day.

The move was part of a wider deployment of Border Patrol agents, U.S. Marshals, ICE tactical teams and other Federal forces in downtown Washington and around the White House. ICE teams stationed closer to the nation's capital were already in place at the protests; the additional units were flown in as reinforcements, U.S. officials said.

The teams were not responsible for guarding detainees on the flights, a role handled by private contractors and ICE enforcement officers.

Lucero was a key player in the decision to move the heavily armed teams on ICE Air flights, three officials said. He formerly ran the agency's Phoenix field office, and has a close relationship to the Phoenix tactical officers, who are considered among the agency's best-trained, the officials said.

The special response teams, based in several ICE field offices, are typically used to control riots in detention facilities, among other duties. They usually deploy locally, using ground transport. In cases where they have to fly, the teams normally use commercial airlines, which can be expensive and inconvenient because of the weapons and equipment the agents travel with.

The use of the teams was part of the Trump administration's effort to "dominate" racial equity demonstrations nation-wide. ICE special-response teams deployed to civil unrest and protests this summer in Washington, Buffalo, New York, Houston, Dallas, San Diego, San Francisco and Los Angeles, according to a GAO report published Thursday. More recently, Federal agents have been sent to Kenosha, Wis., and Portland, Ore.

D.C. Mayor Muriel E. Bowser (D) did not request special-response teams to deal with protests in the nation's capital, which were generally peaceful. City officials have criticized the Federal response to the demonstrations—including the decision to have police in riot gear forcefully scatter a crowd to clear the way for a photo op by President Trump on June 1 in front of St. John's Church near the White House—as excessive overreach.

The June 2 deployment to the District took place amid heightened concerns that immigration detention centers and prisons had become deadly incubators for COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus. There had been 5,670 cases of the virus reported inside ICE facilities as of Thursday.

ICE says it has expanded safeguards inside all its facilities—including pre-transfer medical screenings and temperature checks, and quarantining new transfers before they're moved in with the general population.

The detainees sent to Farmville were kept apart from the rest of the detainee population for 14 days, Bennett said. But at the end of that period, the number of cases at the facility exploded, with 339 inmates having tested positive by early July. That was more cases reported than at any other immigration jail until early this month, when officials said there were 366 at La Palma Correctional Center in Arizona.

Typically on ICE Air flights, agency personnel and detainees sit in different sections of the plane. ICE has said no agents who traveled on the planes appear to have been infected.

Last month, the director of Immigration Centers of America (ICA), the company that operates the Farmville detention center, said local ICE officials resisted the plan to transfer the 74 detainees into his facility because there wasn't enough room to properly quarantine them at a county jail about 100 miles away that is normally reserved for that purpose.

"This transfer that took place on June 2 was ordered by ICE headquarters," Jeffrey Crawford, the director, told Farmville's town council on Aug. 12. "I do know that the local field office pushed back and attempted to refuse the transfer, and they were overridden by officials in Washington."

Crawford said ICE officials told him that the arriving detainees were not sick. In an affidavit filed in connection with the lawsuit, which names Crawford, ICA, ICE and government officials as defendants, he said one detainee arrived with symptoms of COVID-19 and tested positive. The rest of the group was then tested; 51 had the virus, according to the affidavit.

“We were assured before they came that these folks were healthy,” Crawford told the town council, according to a video recording of the meeting. “We were told that one of the facilities where the detainees were coming from had no instances of COVID-19. In hindsight, we believe we’ve discovered information that that is not accurate. But that is what we were told at the time.”

Crawford did not respond to a request for comment made through his attorney.

Hundreds more detainees eventually tested positive, including James Thomas Hill, 72, a Canadian national who was not part of the transfer group. Hill died on Aug. 5, several weeks after being hospitalized with COVID-19.

The outbreak sparked concerns that the virus would spread into the surrounding community and prompted State officials to ask the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to intervene.

An attorney representing some of the detainees in the Federal lawsuit called the possibility that ICE transported immigrants in its custody as a means to respond to protests in Washington “chilling.”

“It was in June, when it was already perfectly clear—including in CDC guidelines—that transfers are risky and should only be undertaken when absolutely necessary,” said Sirine Shebaya, a lawyer with the National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild.

The number of detainees in ICE custody has decreased significantly during the pandemic, the result of fewer interior arrests and emergency expulsion policies at the border. The average daily detainee population was 24,208 in June, ICE statistics show, compared with 39,319 in February.

Last month, a CDC inspection found that some of Farmville’s staff members were still not properly wearing protective masks, while others continued working after showing symptoms of COVID-19.

That prompted U.S. District Judge Leonie M. Brinkema, who is overseeing the lawsuit, to order a new health inspection at the site. Two reports from that Aug. 20 inspection—one for each side in the lawsuit—showed that physical distancing measures had been implemented.

But a health expert for the defendants found some detainees were not wearing the masks they’d been given, while the plaintiffs’ expert found that at least eight detainees who had tested positive for the virus still had symptoms after being released from isolation.

During an Aug. 11 hearing, Yuri S. Fuchs, an ICE lawyer, told Brinkema the reason for the June 2 transfer was “twofold.”

First, ICE has a policy of shifting detainees between facilities to prevent overcrowding, Fuchs said. The second reason, he told the judge, was the Federal requirement to have detainees aboard any ICE Air flights used to transport agents.

“I’m sorry, explain that second one to me,” Brinkema said.

“That’s an ICE Air regulation that requires detainees and staff to be on the same flight, so they’re being moved around,” Fuchs said.

“I think what you’re saying then is when you move inmates, or detainees, you have to have ICE people with them,” Brinkema said. “That’s got to be what that means.”

Fuchs replied: “Yes.”

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#### ARTICLE, ABC NEWS VIA EVERETT POST

DEATHS AT PROTESTS FROM KENOSHA TO PORTLAND, BUT MOTIVE TELLS DIFFERENT STORY

By **BILL HUTCHINSON**, *ABC News*

<https://www.everettpost.com/national/deaths-at-protests-from-kenosha-to-portland-but-motive-tells-different-story>

*Tue, September 8*

(NEW YORK)—The images are stark—people clashing with police, buildings on fire, vandalism, shootings and even killings.

Some, including President Donald Trump, appear to have conflated some of the violence across the Nation with protests that have sprung up in the wake of the death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police.

But an ABC News examination of a string of fatal and non-fatal confrontations that have occurred amidst the unrest has found the alleged motive for most of the carnage in those incidents are not directly linked to peaceful civil disobedience.

The recent shooting deaths of two men in Kenosha, Wisconsin, during a protest over a police shooting that left Jacob Blake, a 29-year-old Black man, paralyzed, and

the death of Aaron “Jay” Danielson, a 39-year-old White man, fatally shot in Portland, Oregon, coincided with on-going demonstrations but the motives remain under investigation.

Some of the deaths have allegedly been perpetrated by suspects with their own agendas that do not include social justice; others have allegedly been carried out by agitators seeking to use the protests as cover for their own purposes, including looting and other violent acts. Some may have resulted from personal disputes.

Protests nation-wide began in the aftermath of the May 25 death of Floyd, a handcuffed Black man captured on cellphone video pleading for his life as Minneapolis police officers held him face-down on the ground, one with a knee planted on the back of Floyd’s neck.

Here are a dozen deaths examined by ABC News that have occurred during the protests in which police have either charged suspects, identified those allegedly involved, or obtained video of the crimes:

*Armed teenager arrested in Kenosha double slay*

A group of armed individuals gathered in Kenosha, claiming they were there to help police protect businesses in the city of 100,000 after buildings were set ablaze and stores were looted during protests in the wake of Blake’s shooting. Investigators say they suspect that among the group was 17-year-old Kyle Rittenhouse, who was seen in cellphone videos armed with an AR-15 style rifle.

Prosecutors allege Rittenhouse, who at one time was part of a youth public safety program run by local Illinois police, shot and killed two men, Anthony Huber, 26, and Joseph Rosenbaum, 36, and wounded a third man, during an Aug. 25 protest. Attorneys for Rittenhouse, who was arrested and charged with two counts of first-degree intentional homicide and reckless homicide, said he acted in self-defense.

Trump has declined to condemn Rittenhouse, who is being charged as an adult and has yet to enter a plea, saying at an Aug. 31 news conference that the teenager’s actions amounted to “self-defense.”

“He probably would have been killed,” Trump said at the news conference.

*Fatal shooting in Portland*

Aaron “Jay” Danielson, 39, was shot to death on Aug. 29 in Portland. Danielson, of Portland, was part of a group of people who described themselves as Trump supporters who came to Portland en masse and clashed with protesters. Friends said he was also a supporter of the right-wing group “Patriot Prayer.”

Last Thursday night, a 48-year-old Washington man wanted in Danielson’s death was fatally shot when a Federal task force comprised of FBI and U.S. Marshals attempted to arrest him. Authorities allege the suspect, Michael Reinhoehl, pulled a gun on the Federal agents as they moved in to take him into custody in Lacey, Washington.

Reinhoehl is believed to be the same man who appeared in a Vice News interview that aired Thursday night, in which he claimed he was providing security for the Black Lives Matter protests in Portland and appeared to say he shot Danielson in self-defense. Police have not commented on a motive for the shooting.

Police said Danielson was fatally shot in the chest during a confrontation around 8:46 p.m. that was caught on cellphone video by a videographer who told ABC News that Trump supporters fired paintball guns and pepper spray at protesters from the backs of pickup trucks as they rolled through the city. Police said the caravan had mostly cleared out of the downtown Portland area when the shooting occurred.

During a briefing on Aug. 31, White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany mentioned Danielson, saying, “The president believes that people of all ideologies should be able to peacefully protest and not have their lives put at risk like Aaron ‘Jay’ Danielson.”

Reading a statement at a news conference on Aug. 30, Chandler Pappas, a friend and business partner of Danielson’s, mourned him as “a good man” killed “senselessly.”

“He was Christian. He was conservative,” Pappas said.

*Protester fatally shot in Austin*

Garrett Foster, 28, was pushing his wheelchair-bound fiancée during a protest on July 25 in Austin, Texas, when police say a car drove into a crowd of demonstrators marching in a street and was quickly surrounded. Police said Foster was carrying an AK-47-type rifle when he was allegedly shot three times by the driver.

The driver was identified as Daniel Perry, an active-duty U.S. Army sergeant based at Fort Hood, by his own attorney, Clint Broden.

Perry, who was working as an Uber driver the night of the shooting to earn extra money, surrendered to police for questioning but was later released, Broden said.

Austin police have only confirmed that the person who shot Garrett was released pending further investigation.

Broden released a statement saying Perry did not know a protest was taking place when he turned down Congress Avenue in downtown Austin and found himself surrounded by demonstrators. He alleged that protesters began banging on Perry's car and that Garrett motioned for him to roll down his window before raising the barrel of his gun at him.

Broden said Perry shot Garrett in self-defense and that someone else in the crowd fired a gun at Perry's car as he drove away. Broden released photos of the damage to Perry's car that he claimed was caused by protesters, including an image of a bullet hole in the vehicle.

Austin police have not publicly confirmed Perry's account of what transpired and said the shooting remains under investigation.

#### FATAL SEATTLE HIT AND RUN

Summer Taylor, 27, died from injuries suffered when a car plowed into Black Lives Matter demonstrators on July 4 on a Seattle freeway that had been shut down for days due to the civil unrest, police said. The incident also left another protester, Diaz Love, severely injured.

Surveillance video captured the 2013 Jaguar apparently speeding down the freeway, swerving around cars supporting the protest that were blocking the lanes and striking Taylor and Love, who were walking on the shoulder, knocking them into the air, over the roof of the vehicle and onto the pavement. Police said the driver kept going but was followed by a protester in a car, who forced him to stop.

The driver, Dawit Kelete, 27—who has pleaded not guilty to charges of vehicular manslaughter, vehicular assault and reckless driving—allegedly entered the closed freeway at 1:40 a.m. by going the wrong way on an exit ramp, and drove at high speed toward a crowd of people protesting the police-involved death of Floyd, authorities said. Kelete, who is Black, was not participating in the protest.

His lawyer, John Henry Browne, called the incident a “horrible, horrible accident” and said, “there’s absolutely nothing political about this case whatsoever.” Police have not commented on whether they believe the incident was intentional.

#### FATAL SHOOTINGS AT SEATTLE’S PROTEST ZONE

Lorenzo Anderson, 19, died after being shot June 20 in an area of downtown Seattle that had been taken over by protesters and called the “Capitol Hill Occupied Protest” (CHOP) zone close to the city police department’s East Precinct. But police say Anderson’s death appears not to be related to the demonstrations over the death of Floyd.

Last month, King County prosecutors filed murder charges in the shooting against Marcel Levon Long and a \$2 million warrant was issued for his arrest. Long has yet to be located, officials said.

Long was charged after investigators reviewed surveillance video allegedly showing the suspect and Anderson arguing, prosecutors said. Security video showed Long chasing Anderson with a gun, prosecutors said. At one point, according to prosecutors, several people occupying the CHOP zone tried to stop the suspect who they say broke free and ended up allegedly shooting Anderson multiple times.

The incident appears to be unrelated to the protests, police say, adding that a witness told investigators the shooting possibly stemmed from an old dispute between the men.

Another fatal shooting occurred near the CHOP zone on June 29 in which a 16-year-old boy police identified as Antonio Mays Jr. died after being shot while driving a Jeep. Police have yet to make an arrest in Mays’ killing and have not released a motive for the shooting but said they do not suspect it was linked to the on-going protest.

The killings prompted authorities to clear the CHOP zone of camped-out protesters on July 1.

#### CALIFORNIA PROTESTER KILLED BY MOTORIST

Robert Forbes, 56, died on June 6, 3 days after he was hit by a car during a protest in Bakersfield, California, according to the coroner’s office and police. Forbes was among protesters marching in a darkened roadway when he was struck by a driver, who claimed he didn’t see the protesters in the street until it was too late to avoid striking Forbes.

Police said the driver was not charged.

“There was no report of the driver accelerating or making movements to indicate he was targeting the pedestrian,” Bakersfield police said in a statement.

The driver later posted a message on Facebook, writing that the incident was not intentional.

"I did not and would not ever run into or hit anyone with my car," he wrote.

#### RETIRED POLICE CAPTAIN FATALLY SHOT

Retired St. Louis Police Capt. David Dorn, 77, was fatally shot on June 2 in St. Louis when he went to investigate an alarm going off at a friend's pawn shop and found a group of people looting the business, police said. When Dorn approached the shop, the suspect was walking to his car and holding a gun in his hand, police said in a statement citing surveillance video.

Stephan Cannon, 24, who was convicted of felony assault and robbery in St. Louis County in 2013, was arrested and charged with first-degree murder. He has pleaded not guilty.

"At the time the shots were fired, (Cannon) was the only person standing at that corner," according to a probable cause statement filed in the case that cited the surveillance video. "Multiple plumes of smoke" were also seen coming from where Cannon was standing, the statement said, and police said they found shell casings at the spot.

Dorn's death came on a violent night in St. Louis in which numerous businesses were looted as protests over Floyd's death were simultaneously occurring. But police and prosecutors have released no evidence that Cannon participated in the protests.

Dorn's widow, Ann Dorn, a St. Louis Metropolitan Police officer, spoke at the Republican National Convention (RNC) last month in support of Trump's reelection, saying, "violence and destruction are not legitimate forms of protest. President Trump understands this."

#### FATALLY SHOT BY NATIONAL GUARD

David McAtee, 53, owner of a barbecue restaurant in Louisville, Kentucky, was shot dead by a member of the Kentucky National Guard while in his own business during a night of protests on June 1, authorities said.

McAtee, described as a "pillar of our community" by his family's attorney, was cooking in his restaurant, located miles from where protests were occurring in downtown Louisville over the death of Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old emergency medical technician fatally shot by police in her Louisville home. Police and National Guard troops responded to reports of a crowd gathering near McAtee's eatery in violation of a curfew, said J. Michael Brown, secretary of the State's executive Cabinet, who released preliminary findings of an investigation.

At least one police officer was seen on a surveillance video released by police officials shooting pepper balls at the restaurant where McAtee was inside with other people, and investigators say they suspect McAtee responded by allegedly firing a gun in the direction of police and guardsmen, Brown said. One of the guardsmen, armed with a rifle, returned fire, hitting McAtee in the chest as he stood in a doorway, Brown said.

The shooting prompted Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer to fire police Chief Steve Conrad when he learned that the two police officers involved in the incident and who also returned fire failed to activate their body cameras.

No charges have been filed in the case, which remains under investigation.

#### AIR FORCE SERGEANT CHARGED IN FED AGENT'S DEATH

Federal agent Dave Patrick Underwood, 53, was killed and his partner was wounded during an ambush shooting on May 29 as he guarded a Federal building in Oakland, California, during protests that erupted over Floyd's death, officials said.

Steven Carrillo, 32, an active-duty Air Force sergeant, and Richard Justus, 30, were arrested and charged with one count of Federal murder and attempted murder, authorities said. Carrillo was also charged with murder in the June 6 shooting death of Santa Cruz County, California, Sheriff's Sgt. Damon Gutzwiller, 38.

Federal prosecutors allege Carrillo and Justus are linked to an emerging movement called "boogaloo," a term used by far-right extremists to signify a coming civil war and/or fall of civilization, according to Federal court documents.

Carrillo and Justus have pleaded not guilty to the charges.

During a speech at the RNC, Vice President Mike Pence invoked Underwood's name, saying the Federal agent "was shot and killed during the riots in Oakland" without mentioning Carrillo and Justus' alleged involvement.

Prosecutors said Carrillo and Justus were not involved in the protests.

## ALLEGEDLY SHOT DEAD BY ONE-TIME FAMILY FRIEND

Italia Kelly was hanging out of a car window chanting for justice along with other protesters on May 31 in Davenport, Iowa, when a man fatally shot her, police said. The 22-year-old woman's family said they initially thought she was the target of a random shooting and her sister, Jasmine, said in a Facebook Live video shortly after the shooting, "A protester shot my sister."

But when police arrested Parker Beltz, 21, and charged him with first-degree murder, Kelly's family said they immediately recognized him.

"We were surprised. My other daughter, Italia's sister, was best friends with him in middle school," Kelly's mother, Sharon Kelly, told ABC affiliate station WQAD-TV in Moline, Illinois. "We have a lot of photos of him with Italia, with other members of the family, with friends that we consider family."

In a criminal complaint, Davenport police alleged Beltz committed the shooting "with premeditation, malice aforethought and intent to kill" and Kelly's mother said Italia had been in a dispute with Beltz over Facebook posts. Beltz has yet to enter a plea.

## RUN OVER BY FEDEX TRUCK AT FREEWAY PROTEST

Barry Perkins was among a crowd of protesters who blocked a freeway in St. Louis, Missouri, on May 30 in a demonstration over George Floyd's death when some people who appeared to be involved in the civil unrest were recorded on cell-phone video looting a FedEx tractor-trailer rig bogged down in traffic, according to the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department.

Perkins, 29, was killed by the truck when the driver suddenly accelerated, dragging Perkins underneath his rig, according to police. The driver told police he was unaware he struck someone and police ruled the incident an accident.

An attorney for Perkins' family released a statement claiming Perkins was "peacefully protesting the death of George Floyd and was not looting when he was dragged" by the truck.

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## ARTICLE, NPR

## WHAT IS QANON? THE CONSPIRACY THEORY TIPTOEING INTO TRUMP WORLD

<https://www.npr.org/2018/08/02/634749387/what-is-qanon-the-conspiracy-theory-tiptoeing-into-trump-world>

August 2, 2018 5 o'clock AM ET

As the cameras rolled on President Trump's campaign rally for GOP Rep. Ron DeSantis in Florida on Tuesday night, a peculiar sign appeared in view.

"We are Q."

Journalists at the event noted multiple attendees carrying signs and wearing T-shirts emblazoned with the name "QAnon."

The shirts and signs are references to a conspiracy theory growing increasingly popular among those on the far-right—and a conspiracy theory about which the White House fielded a question from the media on Wednesday.

*What is QAnon?*

The conspiracy theory centers on a mysterious and anonymous on-line figure—"Q." According to The *Daily Beast*, "Q" began posting on anonymous Internet message boards in October 2017. The person or persons behind the "Q" persona claim to possess a top-level security clearance and evidence of a world-wide criminal conspiracy.

*What's the conspiracy theory?*

It goes like this: Special counsel Robert Mueller isn't actually investigating Trump and his 2016 campaign for their possible ties to Russia, and he's not really looking into Russian interference in the 2016 Presidential election.

Rather, Mueller was appointed by Trump to investigate Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama and other top Democrats, like former Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta. According to posts written by "Q"—dubbed "breadcrumbs" by the theory's followers—even Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., is a target of Mueller's so-called investigation.

What are these foes of Trump being "investigated" for? There are numerous accusations floating around the QAnon world. Some suggest Clinton and Obama are in cahoots with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Others suggest they, along with



Hollywood figures and other world leaders, are participants in a global pedophile ring.

“Q” suggests all these figures are secretly wearing location-tracking ankle monitors, so their whereabouts can be monitored at all times, and that they’ll all be sent to prison very soon in an event the theory’s followers call “the storm.”

That’s a reference to Trump’s remarks last year, where he warned of “the calm before the storm” during a meeting with military leaders. (The military is also involved in the QAnon theory—according to “Q,” the military persuaded Trump to run for president in order to clean up the vast criminal network.)

“Q” has dropped “breadcrumbs” about coming events in the supposed investigation on a regular basis. The hints reference current political events, including the release of the Justice Department’s Office of the Inspector General report in June.

It should be noted that no part of the QAnon conspiracy theory has proved to be true, and multiple media outlets have debunked the theory’s allegations.

*Who believes in the conspiracy theory?*

For a while, QAnon posts were mostly limited to anonymous Internet message boards, like 4chan and 8chan. But over the past year, “Q” has gained a host of new believers and followers. A popular YouTube video explaining QAnon has racked up nearly 200,000 views, and according to *NBC News*, a mobile phone application related to the conspiracy theory climbed near the top of the Apple App Store rankings earlier this year.

“Q” also counts several celebrities as followers and fans. Roseanne Barr has frequently tweeted about QAnon and has expressed a desire to meet “Q.” And in June, the sitcom star took to Twitter to share a phrase common among QAnon supporters—“wmg1wga,” short for “where we go one, we go all.”

Former Boston Red Sox pitcher Curt Schilling has also tweeted about the conspiracy theory and has shared QAnon videos on his Facebook page, according to *The Daily Beast*.



*Why does it matter?*

QAnon may seem on its face like a fringe Internet conspiracy theory, but its explosion in popularity has led to several real-world incidents.

In April, a group of QAnon believers took to the streets in Washington, DC, in support of “Q” and demanding answers from the Justice Department.

And in June, a man driving an armored vehicle and carrying two firearms shut down a highway near the Hoover Dam while holding a sign reading “Release the OIG report.”

That appeared to be a reference to the Justice Department’s Office of the Inspector General report that criticized the actions of former FBI Director James Comey for his handling of the Hillary Clinton email investigation. “Q” has hinted to followers on multiple occasions that Trump possesses a second IG report that would detail the criminal activities undertaken by Democrats.

The man, Matthew Wright, was arrested after the incident and now faces terrorism charges. Last month, it was revealed that Wright penned letters to Trump and other government officials from jail bearing the “where we go one, we go all” slogan.

Even Michael Avenatti, the lawyer representing adult film actress Stormy Daniels, made an appearance in a series of QAnon posts earlier this week, which included images of his office building followed by an image of a man reportedly standing outside Avenatti’s office. “Q” later posted that a “message” had been sent to Avenatti.

In a tweet Wednesday, Avenatti appeared to respond, writing: “The more conspiracy theorists attack me, the more confident I become. It shows they see me as a significant threat to Mr. Trump and his continuation in office.”



**Curt Schilling** ✓  
@gehrig38



@MediaMattersZA I think it's fantastic that your only attack is "baseless" without ever actually pointing to a 'lie'. It has to suck to know the Q has reported more accurate news in the past 14 days than your rag in its entire existence!

...also known as Q, who is a mysterious anonymous inside leaker of deep state activities and counter activities by President Trump. This is all a bit cryptic and hard to follow for the average person, but it is...



**Q Anon for Beginners**

In this video, I review the history of Qanon, explain the basic terms he uses and lay out some of Q's posts. My goal is to help you decide for yourself wheth...

[youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

8:00 AM - 4 Jul 2018

A GOP Twitter account is helping spread the baseless internet conspiracy theory QAnon

[mediamatters.org](https://www.mediamatters.org)

11:13 AM · Jul 16, 2018



4 18 Copy link to Tweet

And following Trump's rally in Florida, QAnon made its way into the White House briefing room Wednesday, when a reporter asked White House press secretary Sarah Sanders if Trump "encouraged the support" of rallygoers wearing "Q" shirts.

"The president condemns and denounces any group that would incite violence against another individual and certainly doesn't support groups that would promote that type of behavior," Sanders said.

QAnon isn't the first conspiracy theory to make the jump from the Internet to the real world. In December 2016, a man fired a rifle inside Washington, DC's Comet Ping Pong pizzeria, citing the baseless "Pizzagate" conspiracy theory that maintains that the restaurant is the center of a child sex ring involving top Democrats, including Clinton and Podesta.

The "Pizzagate" conspiracy theory originated on fringe Internet sites before emerging in the mainstream. With the ever-increasing appearances of "Q"-branded gear at Trump rallies, QAnon may be following the same path.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the Chairman.

Chairman THOMPSON. So ordered.

I thank the witnesses for their valuable testimony and the Members for their questions. The Members of the committee may have additional questions for the witnesses and we ask that you respond expeditiously in writing to those questions.

Hearing no further business, the committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:18 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

## APPENDIX

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### QUESTIONS FROM CHAIRMAN BENNIE G. THOMPSON FOR CHRISTOPHER MILLER

*Question 1.* Last year, reporting by media discussed NCTC's expansion of "its focus on domestic terrorism." Please provide the committee with an update as to what work NCTC is doing today on domestic terrorism, including violent White Supremacist extremist violence.

To what extent has NCTC staffed and funded its work on domestic terrorism?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 2.* Al-Shaabab recently claimed responsibility for numerous attacks in East Africa, including an attack on a U.S. base as recently as September 2020 that injured a U.S. service member.

Please describe the current threat posed by al-Shabaab to U.S. interests and U.S. service members and law enforcement agents posted overseas.

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 3.* According to analysis by the Congressional Research Service, al-Qaeda has welcomed the U.S.-Taliban agreement, "celebrating it as a victory for the Taliban's cause and thus for global militancy." Recent reporting states that "two senior Trump administration officials indicated . . . that the Taliban has yet to fully cut ties with al-Qaeda."<sup>1</sup>

Given that the U.S.-Taliban agreement requires the Taliban to prevent any group, including al-Qaeda, from using Afghan soil to threaten the security of the United States or its allies, what mechanisms are in place or need to be in place to verify the Taliban's compliance with the February 2020 U.S.-Taliban agreement?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 4a.* Politico recently reported that your predecessor, Former Director Travers, stated that NCTC's "information technology system is woefully underfunded."<sup>2</sup>

Is NCTC's information technology system underfunded?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 4b.* What does the agency need to do its job, and do its job well in this increasingly diverse and fluid threat environment?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 5.* Earlier this year, the State Department and Treasury Department labeled the Russian Imperial Movement (RIM) a Specially-Designated Global Terrorist group.

Since this designation, have you seen an increase in watch list nominations of individuals with links to White Supremacist Extremists? Please provide details and explain.

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 6.* The Chief of U.S. Central Command has said that displaced persons in camps in the Middle East may be radicalized and susceptible to influence later by ISIS. He went on to say that dealing with refugees and displaced persons is one of very highest priorities, while noting that victory against ISIS has not yet been achieved.

How are you working with the Department of Defense to achieve these objectives in contributing to the defeat of ISIS?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

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<sup>1</sup> Trump Administration Admits Taliban Still Hasn't Cut Ties with Al-Qaida, YAHOO! NEWS, Sept. 22, 2020, <https://news.yahoo.com/trump-administration-admits-taliban-still-hasnt-cut-ties-with-al-qaida-233256439.html>.

<sup>2</sup> A top terrorism fighter's dire warning, POLITICO, July, 9, 2020, <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/07/09/travers-terrorism-warning-355734>.

*Question 7.* According to recent reporting,<sup>3</sup> an August 17, 2020, DHS and National Counterterrorism Center intelligence product warned of possible election-related attacks both before and after the election. The report went on to voice grave concern about the threat from lone offender White Supremacist extremists.

How does NCTC view the threat from right-wing, including White Supremacist, extremists surrounding the election?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 8.* We know that foreign actors, mainly from Russia but others as well, took advantage of our open society by sowing dissent and misinformation via social media platforms like Facebook in the lead up to the 2016 election.

To what extent and with what level of success have nations like Russia and others engaged in disinformation campaigns that target domestic extremist movements vulnerable to exploitation?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 9.* Law enforcement targeted various members of the accelerationist, neo-Nazi group, The Base, earlier this year.<sup>4</sup> Reporting has suggested that the group's leader, Rinaldo Nazario, is living in Russia.

Is there any indication of whether or not his actions and leadership of this violent White Supremacist group are approved of, supported by, or otherwise given safe haven by the Russian government?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 10.* In the course of their investigations, what similarities do your agents or analysts find between international violent White Supremacists and Salafist-jihadi extremists like those in al-Qaeda or ISIS?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 11a.* Women "immigrants" to the Islamic State have been fleeing the Caliphate by the hundreds, eventually returning to their native countries. Some appear to have embraced the group's ideology and remain committed to its goals.<sup>5</sup>

How is the United States addressing what may be a growing threat of attempted radicalization of women by ISIS and other terrorist organizations?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 11b.* Are there any programs or strategies targeting this specific concern?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 12a.* In February 2020, the U.N. Secretary-General reported that "foreign terrorist fighters and adherents of ISIS will continue to pose short-, medium- and long-term terrorist threats on a scale many times greater than was the case with [AQ] from 2002 onwards, based on the much greater numbers involved."<sup>6</sup> Moreover, U.N. member states report that "as many as 1,000 foreign terrorist fighters imprisoned on return to Europe prior to 2015 are expected to be released in Europe in 2020," and many are assessed "as still dangerous."<sup>7</sup>

How are FBI and NCTC coordinating with our partners overseas to prepare for the threat posed by those that are still assessed to be dangerous?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 12b.* What does the future look like for the release of convicted Islamic State supporters in the United States and are we equipped to deal with individuals that are assessed to still be dangerous here at home?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 12c.* How are your agencies coordinating with the Bureau of Prisons and other Federal, State, local, Tribal, and territorial partners on this matter?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

<sup>3</sup>Former counterterrorism chief: Trump defeat may prompt right-wing terror attacks, YAHOO NEWS, Aug. 18, 2020, <https://news.yahoo.com/former-counterterror-chief-trump-defeat-may-prompt-right-wing-terror-attacks-190913288.html>.

<sup>4</sup>In January, 7 different members of The Base were arrested across 3 States. This included the arrest of the former Canadian Army reservist Cpl. Patrik Mathews who had been missing and presumed to be hiding out in the United States since August after his car was found near the U.S.-Canadian border.

<sup>5</sup>Elena Pokalova, Pay More Attention to the Women of ISIS, DEFENSE ONE, Oct. 31, 2019, <https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2019/10/pay-more-attention-women-isis/161012/>.

<sup>6</sup>Tenth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of member states in countering the threat, U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL, Feb. 4, 2020, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/document/s-2020-95.php>.

<sup>7</sup>Id. Note: Factors cited as challenges to monitoring, interdicting, prosecuting, and/or rehabilitating foreign terrorist fighters in different regions include porous maritime borders, on-arrival visas, evidentiary quality and admissibility standards, due process concerns, capacity constraints, and recidivism.

*Question 12d.* Furthermore, what new or emerging trends have you observed in home-grown violent extremists (HVEs) seeking to travel overseas and how have your respective agencies adapted?<sup>8</sup>

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 13a.* What controls are in place at FBI and NCTC to ensure objective and timely releases of intelligence assessments of threats to the homeland?

What, if any, challenges do FBI and NCTC face in producing these assessments and what specific actions are planned to mitigate such challenges?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 13b.* Has anyone in the Executive Office of the President or the Office of the Director of National Intelligence requested that you edit, block, or change a piece of intelligence or limit the production of intelligence on particular topics?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

#### QUESTIONS FROM CHAIRMAN BENNIE G. THOMPSON FOR CHRISTOPHER A. WRAY

*Question 1.* At our World-wide Threats hearing last year, you stated that in 2019 the FBI arrested 107 domestic terrorism-related suspects and roughly 121 international terrorism suspects.

What are the current numbers for 2020?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 2a.* After an investigation by an FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force, an “involuntary celibate”—or incel—was recently arrested after harassing and threatening a Long Island couple for a year for reportedly “rejecting and depriving him of sex to which he believed he was entitled.”<sup>1</sup>

What do you assess the overall threat of the violent fringes of this movement or ideology to be?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 2b.* How do you classify this type of violence and how do you plan to counter it?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 2c.* Given the JTTF’s involvement do you believe this to be a terrorism threat?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 3.* Last year during our world-wide threats hearing you stated that, “the FBI has over 1,000 investigations involving attempted theft of U.S.-based technology that lead back to China, involving nearly all 56 field offices and almost every industry and sector.” Please provide the committee with an updated assessment of this threat and its impact on the homeland.

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 4.* Are you in favor of creating a Counterintelligence watch list and sharing information on individuals associated with counterintelligence threats with other agencies like DHS?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 5.* What do you assess the current status of the violent neo-Nazi group Atomwaffen to be, given recent law enforcement actions against various members of the group and its reported dissolution earlier this year?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 6.* How does FBI collaborate with DHS on targeted violence and terrorism prevention or related efforts? The CVE Task Force ended in 2017. Does the Government need a similar coordinating body or something different? Please explain.

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 7.* We know that foreign actors, mainly from Russia but others as well, took advantage of our open society by sowing dissent and misinformation via social media platforms like Facebook in the lead up to the 2016 election.

To what extent and with what level of success have nations like Russia and others engaged in disinformation campaigns that target domestic extremist movements vulnerable to exploitation?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

<sup>8</sup>For example, according to one report, a research coordinator at a Minnesota medical clinic seeking to join ISIS and an Arizona woman who planned to join al-Qaeda exhibited an “increased level of determination in finding new ways around coronavirus-related travel restrictions.” See: How the Coronavirus is Affecting American Jihadist Travelers, LAWFARE, Aug. 31, 2020, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/how-coronavirus-affecting-american-jihadist-travelers>.

<sup>1</sup>FBI’s Terror Hunters Turn to a Different Threat, DAILY BEAST, Sept. 9, 2020, <https://www.thedailybeast.com/fbis-terror-hunters-turn-to-a-different-threat-incels>.

*Question 8.* Law enforcement targeted various members of the accelerationist, neo-Nazi group, The Base, earlier this year.<sup>2</sup> Reporting has suggested that the group's leader, Rinaldo Nazzaro, is living in Russia.

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Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 9.* In the course of their investigations, what similarities do your agents or analysts find between international violent White Supremacists and Salafist-jihadi extremists like those in al-Qaeda or ISIS?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 10a.* Women "immigrants" to the Islamic State have been fleeing the Caliphate by the hundreds, eventually returning to their native countries. Some appear to have embraced the group's ideology and remain committed to its goals.<sup>3</sup>

How is the United States addressing what may be a growing threat of attempted radicalization of women by ISIS and other terrorist organizations?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 10b.* Are there any programs or strategies targeting this specific concern?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 11a.* In February 2020, the U.N. Secretary-General reported that "foreign terrorist fighters and adherents of ISIS will continue to pose short-, medium- and long-term terrorist threats on a scale many times greater than was the case with [AQ] from 2002 onwards, based on the much greater numbers involved."<sup>4</sup> Moreover, U.N. member-states report that "as many as 1,000 foreign terrorist fighters imprisoned on return to Europe prior to 2015 are expected to be released in Europe in 2020," and many are assessed "as still dangerous."<sup>5</sup>

How are FBI and NCTC coordinating with our partners overseas to prepare for the threat posed by those that are still assessed to be dangerous?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 11b.* What does the future look like for the release of convicted Islamic State supporters in the United States and are we equipped to deal with individuals that are assessed to still be dangerous here at home?

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<sup>3</sup>Elena Pokalova, Pay More Attention to the Women of ISIS, DEFENSE ONE, Oct. 31, 2019, <https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2019/10/pay-more-attention-women-isis/161012/>.

<sup>4</sup>Tenth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat, U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL, Feb. 4, 2020, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/document/s-2020-95.php>.

<sup>5</sup>Id. Note: Factors cited as challenges to monitoring, interdicting, prosecuting, and/or rehabilitating foreign terrorist fighters in different regions include porous maritime borders, on-arrival visas, evidentiary quality and admissibility standards, due process concerns, capacity constraints, and recidivism.

<sup>6</sup>For example, according to one report, a research coordinator at a Minnesota medical clinic seeking to join ISIS and an Arizona woman who planned to join al-Qaeda exhibited an "increased level of determination in finding new ways around coronavirus-related travel restrictions." See: How the Coronavirus is Affecting American Jihadist Travelers, LAWFARE, Aug. 31, 2020, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/how-coronavirus-affecting-american-jihadist-travelers>.



## QUESTIONS FROM HONORABLE LAUREN UNDERWOOD FOR CHRISTOPHER A. WRAY

*Question 1.* What steps, if any, did the FBI take to alert State and local officials in Wisconsin about specific threats of violent activity in their area leading up to last month's protests in Kenosha? To clarify, I am asking about statements posted publicly on-line, often under users' real names, not about private communications. Examples of the types of specific threats of violent activity I mean include comments made on social media such as "I am on the way with 75 people from Green Bay We have lots of guns. Lots of pipe bombs. Going to cleanse the streets of rioters" and "Shoot to kill folks."<sup>7</sup>

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 2a.* The day after the Kenosha shootings, I heard from a mother in the alleged shooter's hometown in my district. She wrote, "There is a militia cell in Antioch that is becoming more and more emboldened to take the law into their own hands. I am becoming fearful to send my children to the same schools as White Supremacist militia members."

How would you recommend local law enforcement in Antioch engage with the community to defuse these tensions and prevent any violence?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 2b.* What is the Federal Government doing to help them do so? Please send my office a complete list of available resources.

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 3a.* The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) has full-time staff whose job is to monitor domestic extremist activity in public on-line forums and alert the FBI when they identify an imminent threat of violence. After the Unite the Right Rally in 2017 where a protester was murdered by a White Supremacist, one ADL staffer was able to identify over 300 individuals in photographs of the rally that law enforcement officers had tried and failed to ID, because she recognized them from on-line extremist activity she was monitoring.<sup>8</sup> Clearly, monitoring these public websites can be a very helpful resource for investigating and preventing domestic extremist violence.

How many FBI agents are assigned to monitor this type of domestic extremist activity that is posted publicly on-line?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 3b.* What exactly are these agents doing to maintain the agency's awareness of the threat environment and share relevant findings with State and local partners?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

## QUESTIONS FROM HONORABLE LAUREN UNDERWOOD FOR CHAD WOLF

*Question 1a.* Part of the DHS mission is to assess threats to National security and inform State and local law enforcement partners about those threats.

How many DHS employees are assigned to monitor domestic extremist activity in public on-line forums and share relevant information with State and local law enforcement?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 1b.* What exactly do these employees do to maintain an awareness of the domestic violent extremist threat environment?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 1c.* How do they determine when an actionable threat of violence emerges, and what steps are taken in that case?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

*Question 2.* DHS recently released a Public Action Plan for implementing the Strategic Framework for Countering Terrorism and Targeted Violence. Although the Framework states that "White Supremacist violent extremism . . . is one of the most potent forces driving domestic terrorism,"<sup>1</sup> the Public Action Plan does not mention White Supremacy even once.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Atlantic Council blog post (Aug. 26): <https://medium.com/dfrlab/armed-militias-mobilize-on-social-media-hours-before-deadly-kenosha-shooting-1ee5925a035f>.

<sup>8</sup> Cosmopolitan article (Aug. 7): <https://www.cosmopolitan.com/politics/a28483247/is-it-possible-to-stop-a-mass-shooting-before-it-happens/>.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/19\\_0920\\_plcy\\_strategic-framework-countering-terrorism-targeted-violence.pdf](https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/19_0920_plcy_strategic-framework-countering-terrorism-targeted-violence.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/cttv\\_action\\_plan.pdf](https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/cttv_action_plan.pdf).

What is DHS doing to specifically address White Supremacist violent extremism?  
Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

