



Congresswoman Stephanie Murphy
Questions as Prepared for Delivery
Full Committee Hearing on “The Evolving Threat of Terrorism and
Effective Counterterrorism Strategies”
House Armed Services Committee
February 14, 2017

Witnesses

Ambassador Michael A. Sheehan
Distinguished Chair, Combatting Terrorism Center at West Point

Professor Bruce Hoffman
Director, Center for Security Studies and Director, Security Studies Program, Georgetown University

Mr. Brian Michael Jenkins
Senior Advisor to the President, RAND Corporation

Questions

Gentlemen, thank you for your testimony. I represent a district in central Florida that was significantly impacted by terrorism. Last June, a gunman who swore allegiance to ISIL walked into the Pulse nightclub and killed and wounded over 100 people. This was the deadliest terrorist attack in the United States since September 11th. It was also the deadliest instance of violence against the LGBTQ community in our nation’s history. Unfortunately, this event serves as a tragic reminder that violence motivated by ideological extremism is an enduring threat to our security at home and abroad.

We've seen that ISIL and other groups have been able to successfully recruit and inspire adherents through the Internet. And recently, I read an Associated Press investigation into CENTCOM's program to counter ISIL's online propaganda. The investigation found that specialists hired to work on counter-propaganda efforts had little prior experience, and did not have sufficient Arabic language skills or an adequate understanding of Islam to be effective against ISIL's online recruitment efforts. What's your assessment of our cultural and linguistic capabilities and how do we ensure that the resources we invest in efforts to counter online propaganda are effective?