



One Hundred Twelfth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20515

May 13, 2011

The Honorable Janet Napolitano
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Napolitano:

I am writing to inquire about the role that you and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) are playing in the analysis and appropriate distribution and response to the cache of information that was collected from Osama bin Laden's compound after U.S. Special Forces so successfully completed their mission.

According to open source reporting, a tremendous amount of intelligence described as a "treasure trove" was collected from the Abbottabad compound, including information that referenced an al Qaeda plot from February 2010 to derail a U.S. passenger train. National Security Advisor Thomas Donilon stated that the data collected at bin Laden's compound represents the "largest cache of intelligence gotten from a senior terrorist that we know of." According to open source reporting, the amount of intelligence collected during the raid was estimated to be 2.7 terabytes of data, the equivalent of 220 million pages of text. Such information was substantive enough to prompt the distribution several days later of a Joint Intelligence Bulletin from the FBI and DHS advising that intelligence collected from Osama bin Laden's compound confirmed that al Qaeda considered targeting mass transit for attacks in the U.S. on the upcoming 10th anniversary of 9/11.

While I am aware that the bulk of the information yet to be translated and analyzed is classified, I also understand that it has critical homeland security implications. It is imperative that we ensure that such information is being effectively disseminated both within the Department of Homeland Security and to its external stakeholders, to ensure that all such stakeholders are prepared for the latest terrorist threat.

Moreover, in light of fears of retribution against the U.S. homeland, it is essential that all homeland security stakeholders be made aware of and prepared for the current

threat. This is especially pertinent in light of the statement disseminated to jihadist forums on May 9th by Al-Fajr Media Center, the exclusive online distributor of al-Qaeda propaganda, which incited Muslims to take revenge for the killing of bin Laden.

DHS must play a role in not only disseminating the information across the Department, but also in synthesizing the intelligence gathered and ensuring that our current security and counterterrorism policies are adequately adapted to reflect the current threat.

I respectfully request that you provide to me a written answer to the following questions:

- Based on the information we have gained so far, what can and should Congress do to adjust our homeland security and counterterrorism policies?
- Are the baseline assessments made prior to the acquisition of this new data still intact? What has been confirmed, refuted, dispelled as it applies to al Qaeda's capabilities and intentions?
- In light of the 2.7 terabytes of data recovered during the raid, does DHS and the Intelligence Community have the tools it needs to identify and flag the most time-sensitive threat streams that may indicate an imminent attack on the homeland and disseminate that intelligence to our operators on the front lines?
- Do you assess that DHS or the Intelligence Community needs new legislative authorities to ensure timely and accurate dissemination and analysis of the intelligence?
- Are there any federal, state, local, or tribal regulations that prevent the Department from ensuring timely and accurate dissemination and analysis of the intelligence?
- Are DHS analysts participating in the exploitation of documents recovered at Osama bin Laden's compound? If so, how? If not, why not?
- Are there sufficient Arabic linguists available to work on the documents at the Department and across the Intelligence Community? Are Pashto or Urdu linguists needed, as well, due to the Pakistani nexus?
- In the event that new translators need to be hired, what processes are in place for expedited security clearance investigations?
- How many Intelligence Information Reports (IIR) has DHS received from members of the Intelligence Community pertaining to the data collected from the raid on bin Laden's compound?

- Is DHS able to repackage the intelligence so that it can be disseminated effectively to the Fusion Centers and State and Local Law Enforcement partners?
- What is the process for identifying and disseminating time sensitive intelligence to DHS so that it can inform state and local partners? Is dissemination in a broadcast manner or is it provided to select agencies? Who decides what is the criteria for dissemination?
- Have we seen a rise in the number of investigative leads being generated as the data analysis effort picks up speed? Is the intelligence available to line investigators or analysts on the Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs) across the country? If so, how? Is the bulk of material contained on JWICS or on SIPR? How many JWICS and SIPR terminals are available at, for example, the New York City and Philadelphia JTTFs?
- How can the Committee on Homeland Security assist the Department in ensuring that pertinent information is passed along to our police departments and first responders in the most prompt and efficacious way possible?

The death of Osama bin Laden was a great victory for the U.S. Intelligence Community, the U.S. military and Special Forces. It was the result of almost two decades of work and illustrates everything that is great about the United States of America. As President Obama rightly said, "We've got a chance to ... deliver a fatal blow to [al Qaeda] if we follow through aggressively in the months to come." It follows that by mobilizing and utilizing the full resources of the Department of Homeland Security and our state and local partners we can continue to put the pressure on al Qaeda and its worldwide affiliates.

I look forward to working with you to move forward in this critical endeavor.

Sincerely,



PATRICK MEEHAN

Chairman

Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence