

WHY IS IT SO HARD TO SAY? – (Try “Ramutawapoejo” for short)

Stephen L. Bakke – May 10, 2010

Saturday, May 8 – Washington – Associated Press Release by Anne Flaherty – “Citing new evidence, senior White House officials said Sunday that the Pakistani Taliban was behind the failed Times Square bombing. The finding is a reversal for the Obama administration, which had downplayed potential links to overseas terrorist groups in the immediate aftermath of the attack.”

Why is it so hard to say?

New York City – Again!

Times Square – bomb scare – not a false alarm! A dangerous situation is discovered in time to prevent massive damage and loss of life. But “who dun’ it?” The always insightful NYC Mayor Michael Bloomberg initially says that if he had to bet, it would be on someone who is “homegrown, or maybe a mentally deranged person, or somebody with a political agenda that doesn’t like the health care bill or something.” Do ya’ really think that’s where his mind went – or was that just wishful thinking? But why would he be wishing the blame away from one very likely/obvious alternative?

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The Culprit

It didn’t take long to identify the perpetrator. Faisal Shahzad, a 30-year-old naturalized U.S. citizen, was taken off a plane before he could leave on the way to his native Pakistan. It was immediately discovered that he had received training for making bombs in militant strongholds in western Pakistan. Let’s see – a muslim ... Pakistan origins ... recently trained in militant bomb making in Pakistan ... immediate admission of his actions ... admits to inspiration received from radical imam Anwar al-Awlaki on the internet ... etc.

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Never-the-less

We began to hear things like:

- Constant news “sound bites” of the following nature: “Government sources are still working on the actual motives for this U.S. citizen.”
- AP speculates that it may be “foreclosure rage” due to recently losing his house.
- Pressures from family separation – isn’t that referred to as “separation anxiety”?
- CNN’s Jim Acosta reflects on the fellow’s circumstances and speculates “One would have to imagine that that brought a lot of pressure and a lot of heartache on that family.”

- MSNBC host Contessa Brewer sharing perhaps too many of her thoughts: “there was a part of me that was hoping (the Times Square bomber) was not going to be anybody with ties to any kind of Islamic country.” But why would she hope it was a “tea bagger”?
- More from Brewer: “There are a lot of people who want to use terrorist intent ... to justify writing off people who believe in a certain way ...” She is referring to associating terrorism with a Muslim jihad movement.
- Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano’s early reaction was that it was “one off.”
- Senator Chuck Schumer added: “The odds are quite high that this was a “lone wolf.”
- Very late in the game Bob Beckel, a Fox News’ liberal contributor, stated that he was still holding out to see the culprit as a “right-wing militiaman.”
- I found the following comment from Rep. Andre Carson (D-IN) trying to bring attention back to (I think) the “Tea Party”: “I worked in homeland security. I’m from intelligence, and I’ll tell you, one of the largest threats to our internal security ... I mean terrorism has an Islamic face ... but it really comes from racial supremacist groups.”

Jack Kelly reports that after Mayor Bloomberg found out the bomber was not an opponent of health care reform (as he had hoped), but rather a registered Democrat, he still fell back on the following statement which denigrates the people of New York: “We are not going to tolerate any backlash against Middle Easterners or Muslims in New York City.” That’s an insult to his constituents, but it’s consistent with the paranoid comment made by Army Chief of Staff Gen. George Casey on CNN about the Ft. Hood incident: “I’m concerned that this increased speculation (about Maj. Hasan’s motive) could cause a backlash against some of our Muslim soldiers.”

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Eventually

When it was finally obvious what was happening, the language was still couched in reluctant inference and obtuse reference:

- White House spokesman Robert Gibbs finally inserted: “I would say that was intended to terrorize, and I would say that whomever did that would be characterized as a terrorist.”
- Janet Napolitano, when faced with the obvious squeezed out the following “weenie” comment: “We’re treating it as if it could be a potential terrorist attack.”

Characterized? Could be? Potential?” ... Give me a gigantic break! And grab my oxygen bottle!

We have traveled so far in the direction of political correctness that no longer are reasonable conclusions supporting our country’s security accepted as responsible, but rather some see this type of self defense as bigotry. The bomber’s connections, intentions, and motivations were apparently a surprise to almost everyone except high government officials and those in the media. Why is there such a reluctance to call this what it really is?

Why is it so hard to say?

Denial?

Is there some denial of global radical islamization? After almost nine years and MANY acts of radical Islamic terrorism before and after 9/11, it seems many in the liberal media and liberal political camps think that coming to a critical conclusion about selected Muslims is somehow bigotry.

Remember when the current administration decided to change the terminology? Terrorist attacks were to be henceforth referred to as “man-caused disasters.” And the war on terror was to be renamed “overseas contingency operations.”

Does all this somehow make you feel like a naïve child in kindergarten? It actually makes my teeth hurt! And ...

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Let's Reflect

There are other examples of reluctance to be realistic:

- Remember Major Nidal Hasan, the mass killer of 13 of his fellow soldiers at Fort Hood, Texas? The President warned us “against jumping to conclusions.”
- The administration, the military, and the press seemed to want the public to believe ol’ Nidal was a troubled “lone wolf” whose actions had nothing to do with his increasingly (and publicly) radicalized Islamic faith.
- The New York Times raised the possibility, which lingered for a significant time, that Hasan might have acquired “post traumatic stress disorder” (PTSD) from the very act of treating patients. This after it was reported very early that Hasan jumped on a table during the attack and allegedly yelled “Allahu Akbar.”
- MSNBC’s Chris Matthews showed a lot of naiveté when he stated: “Apparently he tried to contact al-Qaida. That’s not a crime to call up al-Qaida, is it? Is it? I mean, where do you stop the guy?”
- Regarding the Christmas Day “underwear bomber,” President Obama referred to Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab as “an isolated extremist.”
- Obama also was extremely cautious in his other comments regarding ol’ Umar using terms like “suspect”, and “allegedly tried to ignite an explosive device” – this after obtaining admission of method and motive from the terrorist.
- Ms. Napolitano also is slow to realize we are sick of being patronized and treated as fragile, uninformed fools. She said on CNN: “Right now, we have no indication (that the underwear bomber’s actions were) part of anything larger.”

Jihadist is a word essentially banned from the Obama language. And not calling this a war will cause it to become something less than it is. Cal Thomas said it well: “If al-Qaida and its affiliates around the world behave as if they are at war and the United States views every attack as ‘incidents’ and not part of a larger battle, our enemies will win.”

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Consider

Maybe they should have been on this sooner. Consider the following (this information primarily from recent Byron York reports):

- The New York Times reported that in 2004, after Shahzad (the Times Square bomber) sold a condominium, agents from the government's Joint Terrorism Task Force questioned the buyer about Shazad.
- There have also been reports that Shahzad was in e-mail contact with radical Islamists abroad and was on a Department of Homeland Security travel watch list – other reports disagree with this assertion.
- In the case of the Fort Hood shooting that left 13 people dead, officials knew Maj. Nidal Hasan had exchanged e-mails with radical Yemeni cleric Anwar al Awlaki, had written internet postings justifying Muslim suicide bombings and had made troubling statements to co-workers.
- After the Christmas Day airline bombing attempt, we learned that U.S. officials had received a tip from Abdulmutallab's father about his son's extremist views, that Abdulmutallab's name had been in a terrorist database and that U.S. officials knew he had been trained in Yemen.

It would have been easier on the administration if these and other incidents were indeed “one off.” It's easy to understand and explain away isolated, disconnected, unrelated, random incidents of violence. But when “one off” becomes “five off”, it gets embarrassing and the failures point to only one thing – serious systemic intelligence failure.

Why is it so hard to say? Maybe because doing so would admit misdirected philosophy, policy and strategy.

Start saying this slowly Mr. President. Then gradually accelerate to normal teleprompter speed:

RADICAL ... MUSLIM ... TERRORIST ... ACTIVITIES ... WHICH ... ARE ... PART ... OF ... EXTREMIST ... JIHADI ... ORGANIZATIONS ... (or if you prefer “govspeak” – Try “Ramutawapoejo” for short.)