

ROBERT MUELLER: ANNA CHAPMAN AND MOHAMED MOHAMUD ARE BIGGER THREATS THAN LLOYD BLANKFEIN

As part of Robert Mueller's reconfirmation hearing, he stated—and then was repeatedly asked—what threats face our country. Here's how he described these threats in his hearing statement:

The FBI has never faced a more complex threat environment than it does today. Over the past year, we have seen an extraordinary array of national security and criminal threats, from terrorism and espionage to cyber attacks and traditional crimes. These threats have ranged from attempts by Al Qaeda and its affiliates to **place bombs on airplanes bound for the United States to lone actors seeking to detonate IEDs in public squares** and subways, intent on mass murder.

A month ago, the successful operation in Pakistan leading to Usama bin Laden's death created new urgency for this threat picture. While we continue to exploit the materials seized from bin Laden's compound, one of the early assessments from this intelligence is that Al Qaeda remains committed to attacking the United States. In addition, we are focused on the new information about the homeland threat gained from this operation.

We also continue to face the threat from adversaries, like **Anwar Alaqi, who are engaged in efforts to radicalize people in the United States to commit acts of**

terrorism. In the age of the Internet, these radicalizing figures no longer need to meet or speak personally with those they seek to influence. Instead, they conduct their media campaigns from remote regions of the world, intent on fostering terrorism by lone actors here in the United States.

Alongside these ever-evolving terrorism plots, the espionage threat persists as well. Last summer, **there were the arrests of 10 Russian spies**, known as “illegals,” who secretly blended into American society in order to clandestinely gather information for Russia. And we continue to make significant arrests for economic espionage as foreign interests seek to steal controlled technologies.

The **cyber intrusion at Google** last year highlights the ever-present danger from a sophisticated Internet-attack. Along with countless other cyber incidents, these attacks threaten to undermine the integrity of the Internet and to victimize the businesses and people who rely on it.

In our criminal investigations, the **FBI continues to uncover massive corporate and mortgage frauds that weaken the financial system and victimize investors, homeowners, and ultimately taxpayers.** We are also rooting out insidious **health care scams** involving false billings and fake treatments that endanger patients and fleece government health care programs.

The **violence in Mexico** remains a threat for the United States, as we saw with the murder of three individuals connected to the U.S. Consulate in Ciudad Juarez in March 2010 and the shooting earlier this year of two DHS Immigration and Customs Enforcement

agents in Mexico.

And throughout, we are confronted with **instances of corruption** that undermine the public trust and violent gangs that continue to take innocent lives. [my emphasis]

So Mueller's list, in order, is:

- Al Qaeda-launched attack like the Undie-bomber
- Self-radicalized attacks like Mohamed Osman Mohamud
- Spies like Anna Chapman
- Cyber attacks allegedly launched by China
- Massive corporate fraud committed by people like Lloyd Blankfein that weakens our financial system
- Health care scams
- Drug cartel violence
- Public corruption

Now, I take the order here as some sort of prioritization. And that view is born out by Mueller's answers to several questions about the threats facing the US. He always mentioned terrorism, including terrorism committed by people self-radicalized via the Internet. He mentioned cyber attacks. He raised the risk of drug cartel violence again.

But unless I missed it, in his extemporaneous descriptions of the threats facing our nation, Mueller did not again mention financial fraud. Update: In a response to Amy Klobuchar's version of this he said FBI had a,

backlog of mortgage fraud and white collar criminal cases that we are assiduously working through.

So maybe that includes Blankfein (though mortgage fraud usually means garden variety local fraud).

In other words, in spite of his concession that the banksters' "massive corporate frauds ... weaken the financial system and victimize investors, homeowners, and ultimately taxpayers," Mueller seems to think that a hapless teenager framed by the FBI represents a bigger threat to our country than Goldman Sachs crashing our entire economy.

Too bad for the American people that Congress is falling all over itself rushing to reconfirm Mueller.