

# TWO YEARS AFTER MISSING ABDULMUTALLAB BECAUSE OF A SPELLING VARIANCE, GOVERNMENT MISSED TSARNAEV BECAUSE OF A SPELLING VARIANCE

On the Sunday shows yesterday, House Intelligence Chair Mike Rogers suggested that the government missed Tamerlan Tsarnaev's trip to Russia in 2012 because he used an alias. This morning, Lindsey Graham explained that the problem was slightly different. Tamerlan's travel documents misspelled his name.

"He went over to Russia, but apparently, when he got on the Aeroflot plane, they misspelled his name," Graham, a South Carolina Republican said on Fox television this morning. "So it never went into the system that he actually went to Russia."

Graham, a member of the Armed Services Committee, said in answer to a follow-up question that he did not know whether Tsarnaev, the 26-year-old terrorist suspect who died early Friday following a shootout with law enforcement, had misspelled his name on purpose.

The FBI "said Aeroflot gave us the information" that Tsarnaev had traveled there, Graham said, though he did not specify when that occurred.

Now, Lindsey doesn't appear to know whether misspelling was the government's or Aeroflot's fault or Tamerlan's deceit. Assuming Lindsey's

right about the larger point, whatever the source, a misspelling suggests a very different issue than an outright alibi (which would raise questions about the documents Tamerlan used, rather than the tracking of those documents).

Update: At the very end of the Senate Judiciary Committee Immigration hearing, Chuck Schumer said the error arose from Aeroflot typing in Tamerlan's name incorrectly, so it appears it was not an attempt to deceive by Tamerlan.

Two years before Tsarnaev departed for Russia in January 2012, the government spent a good deal of time reviewing what prevented the government from responding to the several warnings about Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, the UndieBomber, to prevent him from traveling to the country. One of the problems (though by no means the most serious one), was that the cable conveying warnings from Abdulmutallab's father spelled his name wrong.

As was widely reported within hours of the failed bombing attempt, Abdulmutallab's father—a former Nigerian government minister and prominent banker—went to the US embassy in Abuja in November to warn that his son was involved with radical Islamists in Yemen and had broken off contact with his family. The family said they had given US officials extensive information about their son in the expectation that they would “find and return him home.”

In his prepared statement to the House Committee on Homeland Security on January 27, State Department Under-Secretary for Management Patrick Kennedy said: “In the case of Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, on the day following his father's November 19 visit to the Embassy, we sent a cable to the Washington intelligence and law enforcement community through proper channels (the Visas Viper system) that ‘Information at post suggests [Farouk]

may be involved in Yemeni-based extremists.’”

Kennedy confirmed that all US intelligence agencies received warnings that Abdulmutallab was training with terrorists in Yemen. He noted that the initial diplomatic cable from Abuja misspelled Abdulmutallab’s name.

As I said, that was not the most important problem leading to missed warnings. But it was one identified in the lessons learned period.

Yet it appears likely that one of the potential (if Tamarlan’s trip ends up showing any contact with extremists, which it hasn’t yet) lessons learned here will be one we purportedly learned 3 years ago: that our software needs to be better at using wildcards to identify close but not exact spellings.

We’re already seeing hints that facial recognition may not have served as the miracle solution it often gets sold as. It now appears we might not even have the databases running our watchlist system working as well as it needs to.

Update: Swapped out the Politico version of this report for the BoGlo one, which was more informative and changed the language to reflect the additional information.

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## **WHERE WERE THESE DEMS ASKING ABOUT CIA-ON-THE-HUDSON**

# DURING BRENNAN'S CONFIRMATION?

I have always been a huge fan of what Thomas Perez has done in DOJ's Civil Rights Division. But this sentence, from Adam Serwer's query on what happened to DOJ's review of the CIA-on-the-Hudson, ought to give pause.

Since taking office, the special litigation section of the civil rights division has investigated more local police departments for unconstitutional policing than ever before, but never on behalf of American Muslims profiled by law enforcement.

But the rest of Serwer's piece barely touches a big missed opportunity – and, potentially, an explanation for why DOJ has slow-walked its investigation of the profiling of Muslims in NYC. Serwer notes that Brennan complimented the program, in contrast to Eric Holder's stated concerns about it.

Although Holder referred to the reports of the NYPD's actions as "disturbing," that's not the view of everyone in the Obama administration. CIA Director John Brennan, formerly a top White House counterterrorism adviser, praised the NYPD's surveillance program in April 2012. "I have full confidence that the NYPD is doing things consistent with the law, and it's something that again has been responsible for keeping this city safe over the past decade," Brennan said.

Brennan is not just the former White House counterterrorism [and homeland security] czar, but he's also the guy who, when CIA-on-the-Hudson was being set up in the days after 9/11, was in charge of logistics and personnel at the CIA. Which means there's a pretty decent chance

he had a role in dual-hatting the CIA guy who operated domestically to help NYPD spy on Americans.

But Brennan's role in finding a way to use CIA tactics domestically barely came up in his confirmation hearings. As I noted, he was asked whether he knew about the program (and acknowledged knowing about it), but he was not asked – at least not in any of the public materials – whether he had a role in setting it up.

Sort of a key question for the guy now in charge of the entire CIA, whether he thinks the CIA should find loopholes to get around prohibitions on CIA working domestically, don't you think?

Serwer names several House Democrats – Rush Holt, Mike Honda, Judy Chu – who have been asking about this investigation. Obviously, they didn't get a vote on Brennan's nomination. But it seems the nomination period would have been a very good time to ask questions about how and why, at a time when Brennan played a key role in logistics and personnel at the agency, the government decided to set up this workaround. Asking at that time might have clarified why it is that the Administration seems uninterested in investigating this program.

As it is, we're now left with a guy who publicly applauded such work-arounds – and CIA involvement through cooperation in fusion centers – in charge of the entire CIA.

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## **THE GLOBAL WAR ON WAYWARD KNUCKLEHEADS**

103 minutes into today's Global Threat Hearing in the Senate Intelligence Committee, National

Counterterrorism Center Director Matt Olsen got asked his first question, about what his agency is seeing as rising threats. As part of the discussion that ensued, he noted that homegrown Islamic terrorists continued to be a threat though, he admitted, such attacks would be “unsophisticated.”

He then admitted that those who get inspired by Al Qaeda propaganda are “wayward knuckleheads.”

The comment sure seems to confirm a key premise of Trevor Aaronson’s book, *The Terror Factory*. Our domestic war on terror – complete with FBI-concocted plots – really consists of getting wayward knuckleheads to respond to FBI incitement. “FBI’s trawling in Muslim communities has resulted largely in sting operations that target easily susceptible men on the margins of society.”

Meanwhile, Robert Mueller had a curious comment in his discussion about the ongoing al Qaeda threat. He said that airplane plots remain a threat. The individuals responsible for previous airline attempts still out there, he said.

Um, I thought we had killed at least one individual responsible for previous airline attempts in September 2011. You mean Anwar al-Awlaki wasn’t the mastermind of the UndieBomb threat?

Of course not: Ibrahim al-Asiri was the operational mastermind of it (or maybe Abu Tarak!). Which is why we had another purported attempt last year, more than six months after Awlaki died.

In any case, Mueller’s comment seems to be an at least implicit admission that the Administration oversold Awlaki’s single centrality to the first UndieBomb plot.

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# ONCE AGAIN, LYING TO COURTS TO PROTECT BANKS GOES UNPUNISHED

This story – about how Occupy Wall Street protestor Michael Premo beat an assaulting an officer charge when his lawyers found video evidence to disprove the NYPD's claims – might make you believe in justice.

Except for this. Premo's lawyers first went to the cops for video, knowing they had tons of officers deployed with cameras during the protests. They found the cop who had relevant video. And ... he apparently lied in court about whether he had that video.

Prosecutors told them that police TARU units, who filmed virtually every moment of Occupy street protests, didn't have any footage of the entire incident. But [Premo's lawyer Meghan] Maurus knew from video evidence she had received while representing another defendant arrested that day that there was at least one TARU officer with relevant footage. Reviewing video shot by a citizen-journalist livestreamer during Premo's arrest, she learned that a Democracy Nowcameraman was right in the middle of the fray, and when she tracked him down, he showed her a video that so perfectly suited her needs it brought a tear to her eye.

For one thing, the video prominently shows a TARU cop named Bosco, holding up his camera, which is on, and pointing at the action around the kettle. When Premo's lawyers subpoenaed Bosco, they were told he was on a secret mission at "an undisclosed location," and couldn't respond to the subpoena. Judge Robert

Mandelbaum didn't accept that, and Bosco ultimately had to testify **[Correction: Bosco didn't take the stand; he had to appear at the District Attorney's office for a meeting with Maurus and prosecutors. Judge Mandelbaum accepted that Bosco would likely say on the stand what he said in the meeting, and didn't require him to testify.]** Bosco claimed, straining credibility, that though the camera is clearly on and he can be seen in the video pointing it as though to frame a shot, he didn't actually shoot any video that evening.

Bosco almost certainly lied. The NYPD clearly lied, repeatedly.

And yet there's no hint they'll be charged with obstructing justice.

While you're reflecting on that, remember what the cops were doing (funded, in part, by JP Morgan Chase \$4.6 million donation to the NYPD Foundation). They were making sure that a bunch of hippies could not continue to engage in a highly visible challenge to bank power, and certainly not in the banks' turf around Wall Street.

Sure, OWS did not present as significant a financial threat as preventing banks from foreclosing on homes they did not hold the proper paperwork on – the threat that robosigners lied under oath to combat. But they did present an ideological threat to the banks.

And here we are, again finding people – cops! – lying in court to protect the banks. And here we are, once again, finding those liars go unpunished.

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# DID JOHN BRENNAN CREATE THE LOOPHOLES CIA USED TO HELP SPY ON NEW YORKERS?

There's one question I haven't seen anyone ask but which seems utterly critical to John Brennan's fitness to be CIA Director.

Back when the AP was first exposing how the CIA set up a spying program for the NYPD, they asked John Brennan about it. He professed to be "intimately familiar" with the program.

President Barack Obama's homeland security adviser, John Brennan, who was the deputy executive director the CIA when the NYPD intelligence programs began, said he was intimately familiar with the CIA-NYPD partnership. He said that agency knew what the rules were and did not cross any lines.

As the program got more attention last year, Brennan even went to NYC to personally give the domestic spying program his seal of approval.

The White House added its stamp of approval a month later when President Obama's top counterterrorism adviser John Brennan visited police headquarters.

"I have full confidence that the NYPD is doing things consistent with the law, and it's something that again has been responsible for keeping this city safe over the past decade," he said.

Remember, this program is offensive not just because it spies on so many Americans and in such incompetent fashion. It's offensive because it involved the CIA in training NY Police Officers in CIA spy techniques.

These operations have benefited from unprecedented help from the CIA, a partnership that has blurred the line between foreign and domestic spying.

[snip]

*David Cohen arrived at the New York Police Department in January 2002, just weeks after the last fires had been extinguished at the debris field that had been the twin towers. A retired 35-year veteran of the CIA, Cohen became the police department's first civilian intelligence chief.*

Cohen had an exceptional career at the CIA, rising to lead both the agency's analytical and operational divisions. He also was an extraordinarily divisive figure, a man whose sharp tongue and supreme confidence in his own abilities gave him a reputation as arrogant.

Cohen's tenure as head of CIA operations, the nation's top spy, was so contentious that in 1997, The New York Times editorial page took the unusual step of calling for his ouster.

[snip]

Among Cohen's earliest moves at the NYPD was making a request of his old colleagues at CIA headquarters in Langley, Va. He needed someone to help build this new operation, someone with experience and clout and, most important, someone who had access to the latest intelligence so the NYPD wouldn't have to rely on the FBI to dole out information.

CIA Director George Tenet responded by tapping Larry Sanchez, a respected veteran who had served as a CIA official inside the United Nations. Often, when the CIA places someone on temporary assignment, the other agency picks up the tab. In this case, three former

intelligence officials said, Tenet kept Sanchez on the CIA payroll.

When he arrived in New York in March 2002, Sanchez had offices at both the NYPD and the CIA's station in New York, one former official said. Sanchez interviewed police officers for newly defined intelligence jobs. He guided and mentored officers, schooling them in the art of gathering information. He also directed their efforts, another said.

There had never been an arrangement like it, and some senior CIA officials soon began questioning whether Tenet was allowing Sanchez to operate on both sides of the wall that's supposed to keep the CIA out of the domestic intelligence business.

[snip]

The informant division was so important to the NYPD that Cohen persuaded his former colleagues to train a detective, Steve Pinkall, at the CIA's training center at the Farm. Pinkall, who had an intelligence background as a Marine, was given an unusual temporary assignment at CIA headquarters, officials said. He took the field tradecraft course alongside future CIA spies then returned to New York to run investigations.

Even some people within CIA considered this arrangement a violation of the prohibition on CIA involvement in domestic spying. It was, at best, a big loophole the government used to use CIA methods and trainers to spy on New Yorkers.

Siobhan Gorman describes Brennan's role during the period when this loophole was set up as one "focused on administrative and workforce issues," precisely the kind of person who would orchestrate putting a CIA officer in the NYPD and an NYPD officer in CIA training.

Mind you, back in 2011, the CIA's Inspector General (not DOJ) did a month-long investigation and declared that CIA-on-the-Hudson didn't violate the letter of the law because CIA officers weren't the ones on the streets spying on Americans.

But that doesn't change that the arrangement is just a big loophole to use NYPD's multiethnic officers to conduct CIA-like infiltrations in NY's Muslim, Arab, and South Asian communities.

And it seems very likely that John Brennan—the guy who wants to be CIA Director—created that loophole.

Are we about to rubber stamp a guy who has already violated the spirit of the prohibition on CIA domestic spying to take over the CIA? Would Brennan—who has been expanding spying on Americans under Obama, too—just blow away the prohibition on spying on Americans once and for all?

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## DEAR FBI: SHOW YOUR WORK

Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> (U) [REDACTED] (UNCLASSIFIED) b7E  
<sup>2</sup> (U) [REDACTED] (UNCLASSIFIED)  
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<sup>6</sup> (U) [REDACTED] (UNCLASSIFIED)  
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<sup>8</sup> (U) [REDACTED] (UNCLASSIFIED)

While we've been celebrating with our families,

the Partnership for Civil Justice and the NYT have been reading through a set of documents showing the nationwide surveillance of Occupy Wall Street.

The documents and the FBI's defense of them exposes several long term claims by the FBI to be false. First, that their domestic mapping

program, the Domain Management Program, is not inappropriate surveillance directed at domestic politics.

An October 2011 memo from the bureau's Jacksonville, Fla., field office was titled Domain Program Management Domestic Terrorist.

The memo said agents discussed "past and upcoming meetings" of the movement, and its spread. It said agents should contact Occupy Wall Street activists to ascertain whether people who attended their events had "violent tendencies."

Domain Management also gets directed at Muslims and Latinos in the name of preparing to investigate terrorism and drugs. If it weren't already clear this is about domestic spying, the inclusion of Occupy should now make that clear.

Then there's FBI's claim that it can't investigate solely on the basis of speech or religion.

"The F.B.I. recognizes the rights of individuals and groups to engage in constitutionally protected activity," said the spokesman, Paul Bresson. "While the F.B.I. is obligated to thoroughly investigate any serious allegations involving threats of violence, we do not open investigations based solely on First Amendment activity. In fact, the Department of Justice and the F.B.I.'s own internal guidelines on domestic operations strictly forbid that."

Bresson overstates this, of course. The Domestic Investigation and Operations Guide prohibits opening an investigation solely on the basis of First Amendment activity. But it permits using such activity as part of the predicate for an investigation.

Which is why I find the FBI's redactions so

interesting.

Even the first pages of the actual documents show how FBI repeatedly acknowledged that Occupy “does not openly condone the use of violence.” But then it notes that Occupy trained for civil disobedience and its response, and from that the FBI concludes “that violence and/or illegal activity is expected by event organizers.” The FBI ascribes the violence that organizers correctly expected from cops to the organizers themselves, and used the intent to engage in civil disobedience as the means to use First Amendment activity as a predicate for investigation.

More interesting, on page 2, the FBI claims that Occupy’s website, “suggested that protestors bring ‘billy clubs and taser guns.’”

Well, that doesn’t sound like the Occupy I know (not to mention most Occupy adherents would have a tough time getting a taser gun). Luckily, the FBI included handy-dandy endnotes to show from what public sources (here, Occupy’s own website) they drew these observations.

But FBI redacted all these endnotes as a b(7)(E) exemption, which allows FBI to hide techniques used in law enforcement investigations.

These are—at least according to the claims in the document—public websites (and would have to be to be permissible under preliminary investigation rules). And yet, the FBI refuses to tell us on which public websites these claimed suggestions were made.

Probably, because that would show that FBI is using the timeworn “investigation techniques” of “drawing illogical conclusions from public claims” and “just making shit up” to invent the reason to use First Amendment activities as the predicate for an investigation.

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# IF GUN BUYERS WERE MEXICAN

The NYT has a follow-up on Charlie Savage's earlier article about all the gun safety provisions lying dormant at DOJ. It describes the gaps in the background check system due to states not sharing their data with the federal government.

Nearly two decades after lawmakers began requiring background checks for gun buyers, significant gaps in the F.B.I.'s database of criminal and mental health records allow thousands of people to buy firearms every year who should be barred from doing so.

The database is incomplete because many states have not provided federal authorities with comprehensive records of people involuntarily committed or otherwise ruled mentally ill. Records are also spotty for several other categories of prohibited buyers, including those who have tested positive for illegal drugs or have a history of domestic violence.

In the past I've drawn a comparison between our country's treatment of terrorists and gun nuts, arguing that it has prioritized the less urgent threat.

But this background check database raises interesting comparisons with DHS' Secure Communities, particularly the effort to ensure that any undocumented person arrested for a crime gets deported. Like terrorism, Secure Communities has hit a point of diminishing returns. As with terrorism, Secure Communities is built to allow for false positives.

Nevertheless, the government has prioritized getting that database completely functioning, with participation from every state.

While the law also allowed the Justice Department to withhold some general law enforcement grant money from states that did not submit their records to the system, the department has not imposed any such penalties, the G.A.O. found.

Not so with gun buyers, apparently.

And the comparison here offers one other lesson. One reason for the delay in data-sharing from the states is the difficulty in implementing an appeals process.

After the Virginia Tech shooting, Congress enacted a law designed to improve the background check system, including directing federal agencies to share relevant data with the F.B.I. and setting up a special grant program to encourage states to share more information with the federal government. But only states that also set up a system for people to petition to get their gun purchasing rights restored were eligible under the law – a key concession to the National Rifle Association – which proved to be an extra hurdle many states have not yet overcome.

Frankly, ensuring people have due process is one of the least offensive things the NRA does (would that they championed the civil rights of felons more generally).

If we demand this for gun ownership, why don't we demand it for far more damaging terrorism and deportation data mining?

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# JOHN BRENNAN: NOT ONLY DRONE ASSASSINATION CZAR, BUT ELIMINATE AMERICAN PRIVACY CZAR

The most interesting line of this WSJ article—describing the dissent to the Administration’s plan to give the National Counterterrorism Center any government database it wants for five years—is this one.

Mr. Brennan considered the arguments. And within a few days, the attorney general, Eric Holder, had signed the new guidelines.

The story suggests that the way the Administration resolved objections from people within Department of Homeland Security (as well as DOJ) to giving NCTC Americans’ flight data in ways they hadn’t been informed of when the data was collected was to have a meeting at the White House Situation Room at which John Brennan would decide whether to heed those objections.

John Brennan. Not the President, not the Attorney General, not even National Security Advisor Tom Donilon, but instead John Brennan (not coincidentally, a former contractor on data mining and before that in charge of targeting for Dick Cheney’s illegal wiretap program).

Much of the rest of the story rehearses what I reported (among other places) here and here and here and here. It describes how the NCTC will have access to any database it claims contains terrorist information.

What’s new in this story is the reason NCTC demanded a policy granting them broad access to these databases—because it had not complied with

an agreement made with DHS regarding one of its databases.

Late last year, for instance, NCTC obtained an entire database from Homeland Security for analysis, according to a person familiar with the transaction. **Homeland Security provided the disks on the condition that NCTC would remove all innocent U.S. person data after 30 days.**

**After 30 days, a Homeland Security team visited and found that the data hadn't yet been removed.** In fact, NCTC hadn't even finished uploading the files to its own computers, that person said. It can take weeks simply to upload and organize the mammoth data sets.

Homeland Security granted a 30-day extension. That deadline was missed, too. So Homeland Security revoked NCTC's access to the data.

To fix problems like these that had cropped up since the Abdulmutallab incident, NCTC proposed the major expansion of its powers that would ultimately get debated at the March meeting in the White House. [my emphasis]

And it describes how, primarily, former DHS Privacy Officer Mary Ellen Callahan fought the changes.

In May 2011, Ms. Callahan and Ms. Schlanger raised their concerns with the chief of their agency, Janet Napolitano. They fired off a memo under the longwinded title, "How Best to Express the Department's Privacy and Civil Liberties Concerns over Draft Guidelines Proposed by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and the National Counterterrorism Center," according to an email obtained through

the Freedom of Information Act. The contents of the memo, which appears to run several pages, were redacted.

The two also kept pushing the NCTC officials to justify why they couldn't search for terrorism clues less invasively, these people said.

[snip]

To resolve the issue, Homeland Security's deputy secretary, Jane Holl Lute, requested the March meeting at the White House.

[snip]

Ms. Callahan argued that the rules would constitute a "sea change" because, whenever citizens interact with the government, the first question asked will be, are they a terrorist?

It also describes how all these people who not only championed privacy, but also pointed out our targeting failures in the past came from not investigating quickly, not lacking the data to find those people.

This feels very similar to the same argument that Thomas Drake fought at NSA. He, like these former DHS and DOJ people, fought for a way to find terrorists that didn't also infringe on the privacy of Americans. And he, like these DHS people, was overruled.

The difference, of course, is that this abuse of privacy came under Barack Obama, who never seems to get criticized for showing the same disdain for privacy that Dick Cheney did.

Though, insofar as John Brennan is making all the decisions in Obama's war on terror, I'm not sure there's a real difference between the two.

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# TOM COBURN TAKES ON THE ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE



I tell you, if Tom Coburn just stuck to shutting down the most egregious Homeland Security fearmongering boondoggle abuses rather than shutting down government itself, I might grow to love

the man.

His latest effort (for which some of his staffers appear to have staged a very fun photo shoot) takes on the stupid things localities bought under the \$7.1 billion Urban Area Security Initiative, which was originally intended to help likely terrorist targets (like NYC) prepare against an attack, but which turned into a big boondoggle for towns unlikely to be targeted.

The describes how Keene, NH (home of the Free State Project) tried to use a grant to buy its 40-cop police department—which has faced just one murder in the last two years—an armored vehicle to protect its annual pumpkin festival. Keene was not alone; the report has several pages dedicated to the graft Lenco Armored Vehicles has been conducting selling governments in Waukesha, WI and Santa Barbara, Carlsbad, Escondido, and Fontana, CA BearCats they have no need for using sole source bids.

The report attacks Pittsburgh for having bought an LRAD—which it used during the G-20—as “a kinder and gentler way to get people to leave.” It also describes how San Diego County used an LRAD to protect a speaking event with Darrell Issa, Duncan Hunter, and Susan Davis.

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first responders used grant money to attend a training session in a San Diego resort at which they were entertained by a Zombie Apocalypse simulation billed as “a very real exercise, this is not some type of big costume party.”

One notable training-related event that was deemed an allowable expense by DHS was the HALO Counter-Terrorism Summit 2012. Held at the Paradise Point Resort & Spa on an island outside San Diego, the 5-day summit was deemed an allowable expense by DHS, permitting first responders to use grant funds for the \$1,000 entrance fee. Event organizers described the location for the training event as an island paradise: “the exotic beauty and lush grandeur of this unique island setting that creates a perfect backdrop for the HALO Counter-Terrorism Summit.

[snip]

The marquee event over the summit, however, was its highly-promoted “zombie apocalypse” demonstration. Strategic Operations, a tactical training firm, was hired to put on a “zombie-driven show” designed to simulate a real-life terrorism event.<sup>92</sup> The firm performed

two shows on Halloween, which featured 40 actors dressed as zombies getting gunned down by a military tactical unit. Conference attendees were invited to watch the shows as part of their education in emergency response training. Barker explained that, "the idea is to challenge authorities as they respond to extreme medical situations where people become crazed and violent, creating widespread fear and disorder."<sup>93</sup>

According to the firm's public relations manager, the exercise was brought about "utilizing Hollywood magic," and setup in a "parking lot-sized movie set [with] state-of-the-art structures, pyrotechnic battlefield effects, medical special effects, vehicles and blank-firing weapons."<sup>94</sup> Barker added, however, "'This is a very real exercise, this is not some type of big costume party."<sup>95</sup>

The report also criticizes the way cities scramble to define themselves as high risk, focusing particularly on Thousand Oaks-Oxnard, but also calling out his own state's Tulsa for its recent UASI grants.

As per usual, DHS can't justify much of this spending. Of particular interest, however, the report reveals that FEMA refused to give Coburn's staffers data on how cities were defined as risks under the Bush Administration.

A fuller explanation of the reasoning for including 14 new jurisdictions in FY2008 was not given, however, and the risk scores for the FY2004-FY2008 DHS uses to award funds is neither public nor was it made available to staff upon request.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Urban area risk scores were made available for 2009-2011. Despite the request, FEMA did not made the risk

scores available for FY 2003-2008.

And the whole report is prefaced by some very sound remarks about security.

The balancing act between liberty and security has been tenuous throughout the history of our nation, founded upon basic freedoms granted by our Creator and protected from government infringement within the Bill of Rights of our Constitution. But a new element has been added to this equation over the past decade that threatens to undermine both our liberty and security— excessive government spending and insurmountable debt.

We cannot secure liberty and guarantee security simply by spending more and more money in the name of security. Every dollar misspent in the name of security weakens our already precarious economic condition, indebts us to foreign nations, and shackles the future of our children and grandchildren.

Yeah, Coburn is being a fiscal miser. But in this case, he's absolutely right: this pork does nothing to keep us safe, it militarizes totally safe cities, and makes a bunch of corrupt contractors rich in the process.

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## **DAVID PETRAEUS' RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE: MOAR DRONZ!**

When I saw DHS is acquiring more drones this morning, I joked that the policy response of government agencies when they fail at their core

function is to ask for more drones.

Pretty sure there's direct correlation bet size of NatSec departments [sic] failures at core job—HUMINT, safety—& desire for drones—CIA, DHS.

CIA has another massive HUMINT failure. Response? Moar dronz! DHS fusion centers proven to be huge wastes. Response? Moar dronz!

After @kade\_ellis got into the fun, I pushed the idea, suggesting our country would respond to bank looting and climate change with a demand for more drones, too.

Banks looting the country? MOAR DRONZ!  
Impending climate catastrophe? MOAR DRONZ!

I swear, when I made that joke, I had not yet read how the CIA closed its climate change center because David Petraeus thought it more important to hunt terrorists with drones.

The center was designed as a small unit of senior specialists focused on the impact that environmental changes could have on political, economic and social factors in countries of concern to the United States. The analysts probed questions such as, under what scenarios might a massive drought cause large-scale migration, and when might a government's failure to respond to a devastating flood open the door for terrorist groups to win over the local populace?

Analysts at the center worked to develop warning software that combined regional climate projections with political and demographic information, and held climate war games looking at what might happen in extreme scenarios, such as if rapid glacial melt caused the ocean's



major currents to shut down.

The center didn't focus on the science behind climate change but instead relied on data from other government agencies as well as recommendations – including ones in a report released just over a week ago – from the National Academy of Sciences (*Greenwire*, Nov. 9).

But congressional Republicans skeptical of the science behind climate change sought to block the center's funding shortly after it was launched. Those efforts failed, but sources say the center received little internal support after Panetta left the CIA in 2011 to take the top job at the Defense Department. **Under his successor, David Petraeus, the agency was highly focused on terrorism, specifically targeted killings using armed drones.** [my emphasis]

The diddling Director, it seems, thought taking out an American teenager with a drone was more important than responding to a crisis that is already leading to migration and increased credibility for terrorist groups.

But it's not just the diddling Director. The CIA's statement on the closure says instead of focusing on climate change, the CIA is focusing on energy.

CIA spokesman Todd Ebitz confirmed the change.

"The CIA for several years has studied the national security implications of climate change," Ebitz said in a statement to *Greenwire*. "This work is now performed by a dedicated team in an office that looks at a variety of economic and energy security issues affecting the United States."

This parallels, as it happens, Obama's changing emphasis on gas production for energy security reasons, and only secondarily for climate change ones.

It seems our national security establishment—from the man who would turn back the oceans to the diddling Director—are more interested in replacing the Saudis as the petro-state than really preventing climate disaster in the not-too-distant future.

And if that emphasis should continue to destabilize the increasingly climate-wracked world?

MOAR DRONZ!