Mr. President, most of the activity with regard to the

terrorist plot in Great Britain occurred while we were on our breaks

back home. I wanted to briefly discuss that today.

It seems to me that the terror plots in Great Britain must serve as a

wake-up call to those of us in the United States who perhaps have been

too complacent about the terrorist threat. These plots remind us of the

dangers we really face each and every day, and we need to employ all

possible intelligence and follow-up action in order to stop the attacks

and roll back these terrorist groups.

The war against terrorists and on the radical ideologies that drive

terrorism will go on and is going to go on for a long time, and attacks

will not occur every day. So we have to remain resolute in the face of

this long-term threat, never allowing temporary respites from violence

to tempt us into thinking the terrorists have stopped recruiting and

plotting.

Abroad we must confront the challenges not just of terrorist networks

but of states like Iran and Syria that provide funds and equipment for

the terrorists. At home we have to have adequate intelligence to find,

monitor, and disrupt terrorist cells that could strike at any time. It

requires vigilance and cooperation among many enforcement entities and,

importantly, the support of the American people. Against this threat,

to say ``out of sight, out of mind'' can have no place.

Now, the first point I would like to make today is that as the plot

in Great Britain revealed, this is not about grievances. This is about

ideology.

There are those at home who are members of what is called the Blame

America First crowd, which was a term coined by my friend, the late

Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, who say the Islamists hate us because of

what we do. They allegedly hate us because we don't do enough to fight

poverty, because of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, because of Iraq,

or because of the latest Danish cartoon, or whatever. Of course, this

is nonsense.

The radical ideology that spawns this terrorism has nothing to do

with such grievances or poverty. The perpetrators of the plots in Great

Britain were doctors, not individuals radicalized by unemployment or

poverty-stricken slums. These plots certainly were not the result of

British policy. They unfolded on the very day that Gordon Brown, a

critic of Britain's roles in the 2003 invasion of Iraq, took office.

Nor did they have anything to do with American policy. From what we

know of the individuals involved, it appears the motivation was the

same as all of the other acts of terrorism in the name of militant

Islam.

This radical doctrine had its roots in the early 20th century and

gained momentum through the writings of radical Islamists such as

Sayyid Qutb in the 1950s and 1960s, long before the Iraq war. It has

everything to do with the hatred of our values, our freedoms, all that

we stand for, and we see the hatred in attacks that go back several

decades.

Review them: The 1979 takeover of our Embassy in Tehran; the 1983

Hezbollah bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut; the 1993 bombing of

the World Trade Center; the 1996 bombing of Khobar Towers; the 1998

Embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania; the 2000 attack on the USS

Cole; September 11, 2001, and all of the attacks since then, including

Beslan, Madrid, London, and elsewhere. In every case, the rationale was

the same--advancement of the radical ideology of militant Islam; a

perversion of the faith, to be sure, but based on their concept of the

faith nonetheless.

The sheer evil of the acts and the perpetrators shocks our souls,

especially because it is allegedly grounded in religion. People trained

as doctors--those who are supposed to value and preserve life--were at

the center of the plot in Great Britain to destroy innocent life.

We in the West, who believe in reason and rationality, have trouble

comprehending the mentality of radical Islam and those who subscribe to

it. But we need to understand it, to call it what it is, and not too

shrink from this honesty because the terrorists and their sympathizers

hide behind a great religion. Importantly, we must not seek to

rationalize and explain the views and the behavior of our enemies

through our values and experiences. Militant Islam seeks not to change

our policies but to destroy our very way of life and replace it with a

Taliban-like society ruled by Sharia law and its enforcers. Militant

Islam has declared war on the West--be very clear about it. It is

fundamentally at odds with freedom, with democracy, with the inherent

humanity of the individual, with critical thinking, and rational

decision making, not to mention all other religious beliefs.

While it might be fueled by grievances, it is not caused by the West

but, rather, by the very backwardness and ideological rigidity that

they would impose on others.

The second point is this: We should be clear that militant Islam,

though bound together by common ideology, comes in various stripes,

including al-Qaida, responsible for 9/11 and which may have inspired

the recent terror plots in Great Britain; Iran's radical regime, whose

leader promises to and envisions a

and which is speeding toward the development of

nuclear weapons; the Wahabbism of Saudi Arabia, which is funding

radical ideology in mosques and madrassas all over the world, including

here at home; groups like the Muslim Brotherhood, which cloaks its

radical ideology in a new veneer of tolerance while its activities

support terrorist groups like Hamas and many others.

But state-sponsored testing of the United States and the West is also

in full force. Iran is testing our resolve in Iraq where it is using

its Revolutionary Guard and its terrorist client, Hezbollah, to train

and arm those who are fighting our soldiers. Iran is testing the

resolve of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan where it is providing

support to al-Qaida. Syria is testing our resolve in Lebanon, where it

is assassinating anti-Syrian officeholders while serving as a conduit

for the weapons that are rearming Hezbollah. Hamas is testing our

resolve in Gaza where it launched a successful coup against the

Palestinian Authority of Mahmoud Abbas.

Third, successful American response depends on resolve and support of

the American people. We must understand the nature of our enemy and its

ideology, confronting them head-on, with full confidence in the

rightness of our cause. This is not a matter of moral relativism. We

must not allow ourselves to be gagged by faux political correctness. We

can say that these terrorists were bound together and motivated by a

hateful ideology grounded in their interpretation of Islam without

condemning any other Muslims. We must not embrace groups who tell us

they stand for peace without renouncing violence in the name of Islam.

We must not reward evil with retreat from any of the battlefields where

the fight is raging, including Iraq and Afghanistan. And we must be

willing to support intelligence and enforcement activities, including

incarcerating those who have plotted against or attacked us.

As we celebrate the success of protecting our homeland since 9/11 and

preventing loss of life from the attempted attacks in Great Britain,

let our words and actions prove that we have not forgotten the resolve

that we displayed six years ago today, and let us not fall into the

temptation of blaming ourselves for the actions of those who, inspired

by hatred, have declared war on us. It is not grievances which have

spawned this hatred and these attacks but, rather, the hateful ideology

of militant Islam.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed at this point in the record a

New York Post op-ed by Irshad Manji, dated July 9, 2007.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in

the Record, as follows:

Last week, two very different Brits had their say about the

latest terrorist plots in their country. Prime Minister

Gordon Brown told the nation that

By contrast, a former jihadist from Manchester

wrote that the

Months ago, this young man informed me that as a militant

he raised most of his war chest not from obscenely rich

Saudis, but from middle-class Muslim dentists living in the

United Kingdom. There's sobering lesson here for the new

prime minister.

So far, those arrested in connection to the car bombs are,

by and large, medical professionals. The seeming paradox of

the privileged seeking to avenge grievance has many champions

of compassion scratching their heads. Aren't Muslim martyrs

supposed to be poor, disenfranchised, and resentful about

both?

We should have been stripped of that breezy simplification

by now. The 9/11 hijackers came from means. Mohamed Atta,

their ringleader, earned an engineering degree. He then moved

to the West, pursuing his post-graduate studies in Germany.

No servile goat-herder, that one.

In 2003, I interviewed Mohammad Al Hindi, the political

leader of Islamic Jihad in Gaza. A physician himself, Dr. Al

Hindi explained the difference between suicide and martyrdom.

'' the good doctor

diagnosed.

In short, it's not what the material world fails to deliver

that drives suicide bombers. It's something else. And, time

and again, the very people committing these acts have

articulated what that something else is: their religion.

Consider Mohammad Sidique Khan, the teaching assistant who

master minded the July 7, 2005 transit bombings in London.

In a taped testimony, Khan railed against British foreign

policy. But before bringing up Western imperialism, he

emphasized that and ``the Prophet

is our role model.'' Khan gave priority to God, not to Iraq.

Now take Mohammed Bouyeri, the Dutch-born Moroccan Muslim

who murdered Amsterdam film director Theo van Gogh. Bouyeri

pumped several bullets into van Gogh's body. Knowing that

multiple shots would finish off his victim, why didn't

Bouyeri stop there? Why did he pull out a blade to decapitate

van Gogh?

Again, we must confront religious symbolism. The blade is

an implement associated with 7th-century tribal conflict.

Wielding it as a sword becomes a tribute to the founding

moment of Islam. Even the note stabbed into van Gogh's

corpse, although written in Dutch, had the unmistakable

rhythms of Arabic poetry .

Let's credit Bouyeri with honesty: At his trial he proudly

acknowledged acting from Despite integrating Muslims far more adroitly than most of

Europe, North America isn't immune. Last year in Toronto,

police nabbed 17 young Muslim men allegedly plotting to blow

up Canada's parliament buildings and behead the prime

minister. They called their campaign ``Operation Badr,'' a

reference to the Battle of Badr, the first decisive military

triumph achieved by the Prophet Mohammed. Clearly, the

Toronto 17 drew inspiration from religious history.

For people with big hearts and good will, this has to be

uncomfortable to hear. But they can take solace that the law-

and-order types have a hard time with it, too. After rounding

up the Toronto suspects, police held a press conference and

didn't once mention Islam or Muslims. At their second press

conference, police boasted about avoiding those words.

If the guardians of public safety intended their silence to

be a form of sensitivity, they instead accomplished a form of

artistry, airbrushing the role that religion plays in the

violence carried out under its banner.

They're in fine company: Moderate Muslims do the same.

While the vast majority of Muslims aren't extremists, a

more important distinction must start being made--the

distinction between moderate Muslims and reform-minded ones.

Moderate Muslims denounce violence in the name of Islam--but

deny that Islam has anything to do with it.

By their denial, moderates abandon the ground of

theological interpretation to those with malignant

intentions--effectively telling would-be terrorists that they

can get away with abuses of power because mainstream Muslims

won't challenge the fanatics with bold, competing

interpretations.

To do so would be to admit that religion is a factor.

Moderate Muslims can't go there.

Reform-minded Muslims say it's time to admit that Islam's

scripture and history are being exploited. They argue for re-

interpretation precisely to put the would-be terrorists on

notice that their monopoly is over. Re-interpreting doesn't

mean re-writing. It means re-thinking words and practices

that already exist--removing them from a seventh-century

tribal time warp and introducing them to a twenty first-

century pluralistic context.

Un-Islamic? God no. The Koran contains three times as many

verses calling on Muslims to think, analyze, and reflect than

passages that dictate what's absolutely right or wrong. In

that sense, reform minded Muslims are as authentic as

moderates, and quite possibly more constructive.