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**Rep. Gary L. Ackerman, Chairman
House Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia
“Bad Company: Lashkar e-Tayyiba and the Growing Ambition of Islamist
Militancy in Pakistan”**

While U.S. attention has focused primarily on al-Qaida, and the Afghan and Pakistani Taliban, the Lashkar e-Tayyiba (LeT) and other violent, Islamist extremist groups in Pakistan have been growing in both capability and ambition. As was demonstrated in the horrific Mumbai attack of November 2008, the al-Qaida model of perpetrating highly visible, mass-casualty attacks appears to have migrated, with enormous potential consequences for the United States.

With a team of 10 well-armed terrorists, a carefully coordinated plan of attack, and a team of controllers back in Pakistan in constant communication with the terrorist attack team, the LeT in three days killed 173 innocent people, wounded 308 others, and grabbed hold of the entire world's attention. Communications intercepts that have been made public by the Government of India include an attack controller boasting about the carnage in Mumbai, "This is just the trailer. The main movie is yet to come."

We need to take this threat very, very seriously. The LeT is a deadly serious group of fanatics. They are well financed, ambitious, and most disturbingly, both tolerated by, and connected to, the Pakistani military.

The same Pakistani military to which we are selling advanced arms. The same Pakistani military that objected so bitterly to legislation this Congress passed to provide a massive \$7.5 billion plus-up in American assistance to their country, Pakistan, because our accompanying language suggests that Pakistan's military should be answerable to a democratically elected government.

Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, which means "the army of the righteous" or "the army of the pure" was set up with help from the Pakistani military as a proxy weapon for use in Jammu and Kashmir, parts of India that Pakistan has contested since partition in 1947. After 9/11, Pakistan officially banned the LeT, but the reality is that like other Islamist terrorist groups, LeT

maintains a clear public presence—and a vast recruiting network—by providing extremely useful charitable and social services to millions of impoverished people of Pakistan. Public estimates suggest LeT operates some 2,000 offices in towns and villages throughout Pakistan, as well as maintaining ties with the Pakistani military.

There is, in fact, no reason to doubt that Pakistan's military is likely paying compensation to the families of the terrorists killed in the Mumbai attacks. These are our allies in the war on terror.

Operational funding for the LeT comes from charitable fund-raising amongst the general population in Pakistan, but also depends heavily on contributions by Pakistani businessmen living abroad and other wealthy individuals from the Persian Gulf. Let us note too, these states are also our allies in the war on terror.

But it would be unfair and wrong to suggest that the LeT problem is strictly confined to Pakistan and the Middle East. In fact, one of the key facilitators of the Mumbai attack was an American of Pakistani extraction. Unfortunately, the LeT enjoys a substantial global network stretching from the Philippines to the United Kingdom.

There is a temptation to think that the LeT is really India's problem; that the LeT is really just interested in the so-called "liberation" of Jammu and Kashmir. While it's true that the primary area of operations for the LeT has historically been the Kashmir valley and the Jammu region, the LeT has also undertaken repeated and numerous mass casualty attacks throughout India and, in particular, directed at the Indian government. But the idea that this group can be appeased on the subject of Kashmir is dangerous nonsense.

The LeT's true goal is not Kashmir, it is India. And the LeT is not shy about announcing that its intention is to establish an Islamic state in all of South Asia. Neither does it hide or try to play down its declaration of war against all Hindus and Jews, who they insist are "enemies of Islam."

In the wake of the Mumbai attack, investigators uncovered in computer records and email accounts a list of 320 locations worldwide deemed by the LeT as possible targets for attack. Only 20 of the targets were locations within India.

The LeT has been attacking U.S. forces in Afghanistan almost from day one and their forces are present throughout Afghanistan. The LeT has been slaughtering Indians by the score for decades. The LeT has put the world on notice that they intend to escalate the carnage and spread it world-wide.

This group of savages needs to be crushed. Not in a month. Not in a year. Not when the situation stabilizes in Afghanistan. Not when things are under control in Pakistan. Now. Today and everyday going forward. We're not doing it, and we're not effectively leading a global effort to do it. And we're going to regret this mistake. We're going to regret it bitterly.

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