

**PROFESSOR:** There can be a temptation, a tendency for technical people, for scientists and engineers, to constrict their definition of a problem. So they redefine a problem around what can be solved technically. So first, they determine what they, as technicians, can solve. And then having done that, they define that as the problem that has to be solved.

So it's tempting to define this particular problem left behind by the attacks of September the 11th as a technical problem. And then, you can start to talk about some of the things that [INAUDIBLE] was talking about just now, increasing security at airports, increasing surveillance of people's email messages, making sure cockpit doors are much harder to break down, putting surveillance cameras inside planes, giving pilots their own weapons technology so that they could potentially subdue hijackers and so on.

And I want to point out that while these changes would not be useless, there are two problems. First of all, they don't address the root causes of terrorism itself, which are political, not technical. And second, they may raise the obstacles. But you can never raise the obstacles to such a height that people can't jump over them or work around them.

So the problem for terrorists will be like the problem for burglars. Every time there's a new car burglar alarm or a new alarm system in homes, they just have to figure out a new way around it. But eventually, they do. So you can use technical fixes to minimize the danger, but never to eliminate it.