Building Bridges to Strengthen America

Forging an Effective Counterterrorism Enterprise between Muslim Americans and Law Enforcement

Muslim
Public Affairs Council

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to outline a suggested "blueprint" for how Muslim American communities can be an asset in securing our nation and preserving the rights of all Americans, as defined by a Muslim American perspective.

This condensed report focuses on two key components discussed in the full version:

- **Understanding the radicalization process**
- **A counterterrorism enterprise based on community policing.**

There are five key theories explaining why some Muslims become radicalized: 1) *"Socio-Economic Deprivation," 2) "Identity Politics," 3) "Social Affiliations," 4) "Political marginalization/grievances," 5) "Presence of radical ideology."*

While each theory makes important contributions to the study of radicalization, each theory on its own is insufficient to describe why radicalization occurs. Using the work of Quintan Wiktorowicz, an expert on radical Muslim groups, as its foundation, the report pieces together a hybrid theory of radicalization and terrorist recruitment. *Ultimately, radicalization is a complex and multi-faceted process that cannot be explained or dealt with through either simplistic analyses or uni-dimensional policy responses.*

In order to effectively deal with the challenge of radicalization and terrorist recruitment, law enforcement and Muslim American community leaders must partner together. *This report argues for a domestic counterterrorism enterprise centered on community policing.* Community policing is a proactive style of policing primarily focused on community partnerships and crime prevention.

In order to simplify explaining the nuances of radicalization and the community policing enterprise, this report uses a market analogy: *Both terrorist groups and the community policing enterprise are similar to business firms.*

A "terrorist business firm" uses recruitment "advertisements" to tap into and/or create a market of people experiencing identity crises. These identity-conflicted individuals are the labor pool or "market for martyrs" terrorist firms recruit from. Terrorists also challenge law enforcement's ability to maintain public security.

A community policing enterprise competes against terrorist firms in the "market for martyrs" and seeks to maintain public security. The enterprise is analogous to a "product-extension merger" and requires both a division of labor and cooperation between law enforcement and Muslim communities. *Law enforcement focuses*

criminal behavior while Muslim communities deal with ideological and social components to radicalization.

Law enforcement needs to make sure its actions do not undermine Muslim communities' efforts and thus end up expanding the market for martyrs. Muslim communities need to maintain their willingness to assist legitimate law enforcement efforts to clamp down on terrorist firms' ability operate within the market without impunity.

The report ends by describing the tactical advantages to community policing over other forms of information gathering, such as intelligence-led policing. Unlike intelligence-led policing, community policing's heavier reliance on community partnerships reduces minimizing negative impact on both community-police relations and democratic values. *It also gathers and contextualizes various bits of information better to construct a fuller intelligence assessment.*

Introduction

In a July 2009, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano stressed the need for greater public involvement to secure our country. The Secretary laid out her vision of success: "as a country, as a nation, we are at the point where we are at a constant state of preparedness and not a state of fear.'"[1]

The United States has not tapped into its full potential to make itself secure because government agencies have ignored an important resource: the nation's citizens. According to Secretary Napolitano, "For too long, we've treated the public as a liability to be protected rather than an asset in our nation's collective security."[2]

The goal of this report is to outline a suggested "blueprint" for how Muslim American communities can be an asset in securing our nation and preserving the rights of all Americans, as defined by a Muslim American perspective.

As American citizens, we are deeply concerned with the safety and security of our nation. Given the recent counterterrorism arrests and the horrifying events at Ft. Hood, we are releasing this report to insert a crucial perspective into the policymaking discourse. Addressed to policymakers and the public at large, this report is one part of a larger response from the Muslim American community.

Condemning and offering condolences is not enough; they are after-the-fact responses. Preventive measures which encourage a proactive community role are deeply needed. MPAC offers this policy product as a way of engaging security policy discourse through fresh and constructive ideas from Muslim Americans.

This report is a condensed version of a larger report to be released later. This version focuses on two key components:

- **A hybrid theory of radicalism.** Grounded in the latest field research, empirical studies and literature reviews, *Building Bridges* pieces together its own theory of radicalization and terrorist recruitment.
- **A counterterrorism enterprise based on community policing.** This enterprise is analogous to a "product-extension merger" that requires both a division of labor and cooperation between law enforcement and Muslim communities.

The full "Building Bridges" report will offer specific policy recommendations to these issues. A brief sample of these includes:

- **Increased funding to develop human capital with cultural competency and subject matter expertise within police and intelligence agencies**. It promotes more nuanced assessments that avoid misidentifying false threats from real ones.
- **Greater protections for civil liberties**. This includes legal remedies and strengthening audit and oversight mechanisms.
- **Increased funding for community policing**. It promotes better intelligence gathering and minimizes the negative impact on both community-police relations.
- **Long-term Muslim community investments in institution building**. This includes developing homegrown religious leadership, more policy advocacy organizations at the national, local and state levels, and expanded social service outreach to youth and at-risk populations.

Understanding the Problem: Radicalization and Terrorist Recruitment

Background on Theories of Radicalization and Terrorist Recruitment

In order to craft an effective joint counterterrorism enterprise between Muslim communities and law enforcement, it is first necessary to understand how terrorists recruit. Not knowing this process will impede the effectiveness of the enterprise. According to a University of London literature review, there are five key theories for why Western Muslims become radicalized and possibly join terrorist organizations.[3]

1. "Socio-Economic Deprivation" theory. According to this thesis, socio-economic frustration and a lack of self-fulfillment – the likely result of various forms of economic/ethnic/racial/religious discrimination – can drive someone toward terrorism.

2. "Identity Politics" theory. Many second- and third- generation Muslim youth do not connect with their parents' ethnic/cultural practices and identities because they are considered to be remote, outdated, and/or partly sacrilegious. At the same time, they may feel they are the object of hostility and humiliation by the host majority Western cultures due to local discrimination and discontent over foreign policies toward Muslim countries. Trapped between a rock and a hard place, European Muslim youth are experiencing an identity crisis that makes them more susceptible to join radical causes.

3. "Social Affiliations" theory. Supporters of this view assert that recruitment for radical and violent organizations takes place through social network ties like friendship, kinship and discipleship. For instance, a study by terrorism expert Marc Sageman found at least 80% of his 500-person dataset was recruited into terrorism by friendship or family ties.[4] In addition, a body of literature on how people join religious cults also demonstrates how social bonds are the key ingredient for successful conversions.[5]

4. "Political marginalization/grievances" theory. Some researchers argue Muslim youth feel driven to violence because they are alienated from mainstream national politics. They may also feel marginalized within their own communities by elders and elites whom believe to have little in common with. Those youth that does not become politically apathetic, may alternatively seek to have their grievances represented and addressed by more radical organizations. Adding to this

marginalization is anger at Western foreign policies toward Muslims in other countries.

5. "Presence of radical ideology" theory. Some argue the spread of violent extremist rhetoric among a select minority of preachers is mainly responsible for the radicalization of a minority of Western Muslims. It is also alleged that extremists penetrated and took over many mosques, where they seduce attendees into radical ideology and possibly violent behavior. Finally, non-violent organizations such as the conservative Tablighi Jamaat and radical Hizb-ut-Tahrir are considered to be "conveyor belts" for violent organizations.[6] They initially brainwash a Muslim into radical ideology and then make it easier for later recruitment/assignment into violent groups. Some believe the "conveyer belt" extends as far out as to the conservative, but more politically engaged group, the Muslim Brotherhood.

While each theory makes important contributions to the study of radicalization, each theory on its own is insufficient to describe why radicalization occurs.

The "socio-economic deprivation," "identity politics," and "political marginalization/grievances" theories fail to explain why radicalism and terrorism is not more widespread. For example, European Muslims face significant discrimination, high unemployment, and have little political representation at the national and EU levels.[7] Yet only a minority of European Muslims is radicalized[8] and far fewer turn to terrorism.[9] Out of 72 European Muslim terrorists studied by Dutch security expert Edwin Bakker, 33 (46%) came from middle class backgrounds or higher.[10] Sageman's 500-person study found "the vast majority of the terrorists in the sample came from the middle class."[11]

"Social affiliations" may be important, but they also deny the power and rule of a person's moral agency. Just because someone may have kinship or friendship ties to individuals with an extremist worldview does not mean they will become radicalized and take a further step by joining a terrorist organization. Also, social affiliations between radical and mainstream individuals can work in the opposite direction by disengaging at-risk individuals from extremist ideology and criminal behavior. As a recent RAND report shows, *a person with stronger connections to mainstream social networks is much less likely to adopt extremist views and activities, because such networks greatly influence an individual's behaviors and attitudes.*[12]

As for the "presence of radical ideology" theory, there are three problems. First, the takeover of mosques by extremists has not been as widespread as some claim. Extremist ideologues like Abu Hamza[13] and the "shoe bomber" Richard Reid[14] were removed or voluntarily left mosques because their violent fringe views were not accepted by the orthodox mainstream congregants.

Second, the "conveyor belt" aspect completely overlooks how most of these different radical and conservative groups have mutual disdain for one another and have significant ideological conflicts.[15] Conservative groups like the Muslim Brotherhood

pose long-term strategic threats to violent extremists by siphoning Muslims away from violent radicalism into peaceful political activism.[16] One would expect that if there was a "conveyor belt" relationship, there would be more cooperation rather than confrontation between all of these organizations. Even violent extremists are barely cohesive among themselves; internal disputes are common, creating an enormous strategic vulnerability that can be exploited by counterterrorism strategists.[17] Finally, the thesis suffers from the same pitfalls as the "socio-economic deprivation," "identity politics" and "political/marginalization grievance" theories – if the rhetoric is visible (especially on the Internet),[18] then why is there not more radicalism and terrorism?

A Hybrid Framework

Despite the shortcomings in each of the theories, each has important strengths and contributions. Furthermore, none of these explanations are completely exclusive of each other. They have several areas of overlap and when pieced together, they can collectively provide a sufficient basis for understanding radicalization and terrorist recruitment. Quintan Wiktorowicz, an expert on radical Muslim groups, maps out a path to radicalism while addressing weaknesses in other theories. Using relevant research, this section builds on his work by supplementing it in some areas and modifying it in other areas.
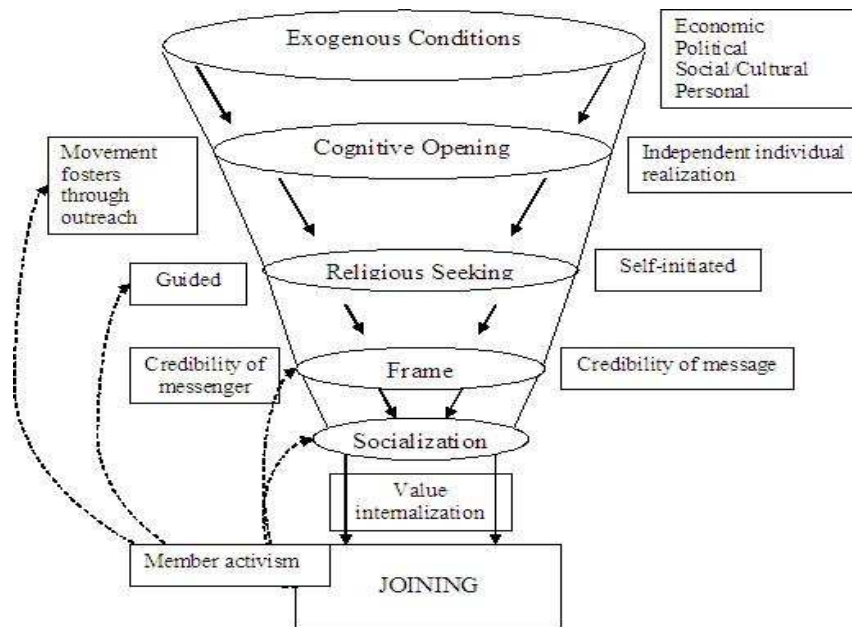

Fig. 1 – Wiktorowicz's Model for Joining Extremist and Terrorist Groups[19]

The first step to radicalization is a "**cognitive opening**," which is the first crack opening a person to extremist ideas. This can be the result of social, economic, and/or political discontent from various kinds of alienation, discrimination, and/or victimization. Wiktorowicz goes so far as to include personal issues (such as death in the family or harm from a crime). The common thread of these experiences is

they precipitate a personal crisis that "…shakes certainty in previously accepted beliefs and renders an individual more receptive to the possibility of alternative views and perspectives."[20]

Yet extremist movements do not always wait passively for a potential recruit to undergo a crisis before exploiting it; they also seek to trigger one through messaging. The objective of their outreach is to "generate a sense of moral shock… that could lead to a cognitive opening and a willingness to learn more about the crises and possible proscriptions."[21] The methods range from private and individual interactions, through pre-existing social ties or developing new personal contacts, to more public and collective events such as "demonstrations, pamphlets and pictures."[22]

Though Wiktorowicz includes personal issues as a cause for cognitive openings, field research in Europe indicates the most powerful and most common types of cognitive openings are based those on a sense of socio-political-economic discontent.[23] Furthermore, an empirical study of Osama Bin Ladin's publicly available statements found he overwhelmingly cited policy grievances (rather than the Islamic faith) to justify terrorism when addressing Muslim audiences.[24] If personal issues are an effective means of recruitment, one would expect Bin Ladin to engage his audience on such topics. However, such messages are absent from his statements.

Yet, just because the environmental conditions triggering a cognitive opening exist, this does not mean one will automatically happen. If that were automatically true, radicalism and terrorism would be more widespread. Even if one does occur, it does not automatically lead to extremism – a point which will be elaborated on shortly.

Once the person is in an identity crisis, s/he needs to seek clarity. For many Muslims, it is done through their faith, or "**religious seeking**." At this point, the individual goes through a "testing phase," acquiring knowledge from different sources and by different means. Some cases are individual-based: books, the Internet and other media. Other seekers opt for a network-based approach: discussions with friends, family and/or religious organizations. Both methods involve "a process of persuasion [that] is characterized by discussion and debate, an exchange of ideas through which the [extremist] movement members attempt to convince seekers that the movement ideology provides logical solutions to pressing concerns."[25]

However, just because someone is seeking different mediums and types of religious knowledge does not mean s/he will immediately and automatically join a radical cause. In fact, many Muslims use their religion as a catalyst for self-empowerment, greater social integration and increased engagement with civil society. As one official study in the United Kingdom of Muslim identity politics and radicalization found:[26]

> Muslim identity politics can support and encourage integration. Action around demands for the accommodation of religious needs have played an important role in the initial mobilisation of Muslim communities for civic and political engagement. These campaigns indicate affection rather than disaffection; they show a commitment to Britain and a wish, by Muslims, to make themselves more at home in Britain.
>
> Some have argued that because this mobilization is ethnically and religiously based it has perpetuated segregated identities. Recent research suggests that activism for ethnic and Islamic causes, even when it has been conflictual, have accelerated Muslim integration. Such participation provides a pathway into other forms of civic and political participation... the 2003 Home Office Citizenship Survey suggests that political activity by Muslim positively contributes to the sense of identification with Britain.

On top of the issues that lead to a person's cognitive opening, the seeker is also vulnerable to extremist indoctrination because such individuals typically lack mainstream religious knowledge. The presence of radical ideologues and social networks becomes important at this point because religion can be abused to "**reframe**" a person's worldview[27] (i.e. convert him/her to the radical ideology) and legitimate violent extremism. Thus, is it is unsurprising to find empirical studies showing most terrorists largely lack religious knowledge[28] and were secular individuals until just before joining an extremist group.[29]

This is ironic given that, in the name of faith, arguments used by recruiters to legitimate violence typically lack religious justification. In reality, such arguments are grievance-based, emphasizing a pan-nationalist Muslim *identity*, not personal piety. The premise behind this strategy is simple: Muslim recruits are typically more willing to die defending their oppressed co-religionists than for abstract political concepts like an "Islamic State" or a "Caliphate."[30]

In this context, it is no surprise to see violent extremists like Bin Ladin play on such sentiments for recruitment purposes. According to one empirical study of Bin Ladin's public statements, it found when he was addressing Muslims audience, he used policy-grievance justification words 51 times more than religious justification words.[31] In addition, both Abdullah Azzam[32] and Abu Musa'b al-Suri,[33] Bin Ladin's mentor and senior strategist, used and advocated for similar ideological framing strategies.

Finally, after a person is in agreement with the radical ideology, s/he embarks on a process of "**socialization**." The recruit moves from being a movement's student, to a committed member, by internalizing the group ideology and in the process having his/her identity reconstructed. This process is reinforced by radical social networks isolating the individual from the rest of mainstream society.[34]

Terrorism as Business Firm Activity and the "Market for Martyrs"[35]

A Terrorist "Business Firm" Model

We sum up the "hybrid theory" presented in the previous section by conceiving of a terrorist group as a business firm.[36] This firm uses grievance-themed advertisements to tap into and/or create a market of people experiencing identity crises. Such individuals constitute the labor pool or "market for martyrs," that terrorist firms seek to recruit from.

Three types of advertisements are primarily used: 1) events like handing out flyers and public demonstrations 2) media marketing in the form of TV interviews and internet-based material[37] (such as texts and videos); and 3) word-of-mouth (i.e. "social networks"). Based on field research, it appears demonstrations and media marketing tend to generate initial interest in extremist ideology and reinforce belief in the ideology after joining a group. However, it is word-of-mouth advertisement that tends to most effectively convince a person to sign up for membership with a terrorist business firm.[38]

Competition in the "Market for Martyrs"

Using the analytical framework of terrorist groups as business firms, it is important to note that terrorists also face strong competition from two other "business firms": mainstream Muslim communities and law enforcement. As noted earlier, most Muslims turn to their faith to deal with identity crises from a sense of disenfranchisement without becoming radical. As a result, extremist groups face stiff competition in the "market for martyrs" from various mainstream mosques, imams (clerics), and faith-based civil society institutions. The mainstream's presence pushes out terrorists from their labor market.[39]

Terrorist firms must first tap into the "market for martyrs" to have the necessary quantity and quality of people to run the firm's various operations. However, they do more than recruit people to their cause. Their danger lies in their additional "entrepreneurial activities" that distinguish them from extremist, but lawful non-violent entities. They seek to break the State's monopoly on the use of force by engaging in unlawful violent activities and other material support. This automatically puts them in conflict – or market "competition" – with law enforcement authorities.

In order to improve counterterrorism policy, we suggest forming stronger partnerships through community policing. In business terms, this is somewhat analogous to a product-extension merger. We elaborate on this point in the next section.

Community Policing and Counterterrorism

Introduction to Community Policing

In order to successfully compete against terrorist firms and drive them out of the market for martyrs, law enforcement and Muslim communities must partner with each other based on a community policing model. Such a model is not only more respectful of community concerns than other forms of policing and information collection – including civil liberties and civil rights – it is also more effective by filling in a critical intelligence gap that other surveillance methods are unable to fill.

Before going further, it is important to briefly describe community policing. The concept lacks a single definition and perhaps is best described as a broad philosophy. It emerged from a series of police practice innovations in the 1980s and "is primarily focused on community partnerships and crime prevention."[40] It seeks to reduce and prevent crime not only through enforcement of criminal law, but also through administrative and civil law, conflict mediation and resolution, and joint problem solving with social services groups.

Whereas traditional policing is reactive and tends to distance itself from local citizens, community policing regularly communicates with the community and partners with it to proactively tackle issues of crime, fear of crime, disorder, and quality-of-life concerns.[41] Under community policing, public attitudes toward the police are more important than in traditional policing.

According to community policing experts Matthew Scheider and Robert Chapman, community policing is based on three interrelated elements: organizational change, problem solving and external partnerships. The first element is organizational change, which requires revising internal processes "that define organizational culture and activities."[42] The two most salient revisions are a decentralization of management structure and focused geographic responsibility for patrol officers.

Decentralization of management creates a more "democratized" policing culture that allows for greater input and information sharing internally from officers of all ranks. It encourages greater innovation among beat officers to adapt to changing circumstances on the street and promotes a knowledge-building environment by critically evaluating minor mistakes rather than automatically punishing for them.[43] Externally, democratized management promotes greater institutional transparency and trust by encouraging expert advice and feedback from community members.[44]

Focused geographic responsibility for officers complements the trust-building aspects of democratized management. When assigned to fixed geographic areas of a community for an extended period of time, an officer learns the issues community members of that area are facing, develops channels of communication with residents, and enhances police accountability with the residents of that area. All of this creates the foundations of understanding and trust that eventually produce the "community intelligence" officers use to tackle various types of crime, including terrorism.[45]

The second aspect of community policing is problem solving. As a part of community policing's proactive orientation, beat officers address underlying conditions that foster crime and disorder in order to prevent future problems. This requires developing custom-made strategies for each community based on analysis from a wide variety of information sources.[46]

The third component to community policing is external partnerships. This is critical to developing the proper information about challenges facing a community and the right kind of solutions to those challenges. Partnerships involve good working relations with a wide variety of government agencies, as well as community members.[47]

Community Policing Counterterrorism as a Product Extension Merger

Returning to the market analogy, what this report proposes is akin to a product-extension merger. A product-extension is when two companies selling different and non-competing, but related products in the same market join together.[48] An example of a product-extension merger would be a car manufacturer and a tire supplier.

The nature of the merger would be based on a collaborative "courtship/just friends" relationship. Such a relationship seeks "to achieve an effective working relationship between the two companies rather than complete integration."[49] Mergers form for several reasons, two of which are relevant to this paper: synergy and increased market share.

Similarly, we propose a product-extension merger between law enforcement and Muslim communities. Each partner has a set of particular strengths that can, if combined together, minimize each other's weaknesses and create an effective synergy. This synergy would allow it to more effectively compete against terrorist firms in the "market for martyrs."

Therefore, the proposed bi-lateral approach simultaneously requires a division labor, while maintaining a collaborative relationship. We shall start with the division of labor.

Law enforcement must focus its energies on counterterrorism (i.e. criminal activities), not counterradicalization. It must ensure its efforts are precise so that limited resources are used efficiently and done in a manner respectful of civil liberties and civil rights. Mechanisms for legal redress and policy input must also be made available to correct mistakes.

Otherwise, it will create a deeper sense of grievances that terrorists can exploit by creating an easier environment to operate in – hiding within communities afraid and less willing to cooperate with law enforcement.[50] The heightened sense of fear and grievances also creates a greater pool of alienated people terrorists can tap into for recruitment.

Meanwhile, Muslim communities must do their part to reach out and continue to assist law enforcement to bring real terrorist perpetrators to justice. *The role Muslim communities should play is in counterradicalization efforts through better religious education, social programs and long-term constructive political engagement.*

These efforts would inoculate communities against radicalization by making communities religiously literate and foster strong social networks of mainstream Muslims through social services and programming, and invest in long-term growth of civil society groups. Furthermore, given their familiarity with other community members and unique cultural and linguistic competencies (which law enforcement continues to lack),[51] they assist by providing law enforcement with extra information that can lead to terrorist arrests.[52]

Law enforcement works on clamping down on terrorist firms' ability to operate within the market for martyrs – terrorists' "entrepreneurial activities" – while Muslim communities work on drying up the market itself. Law enforcement needs to make sure its actions do not undermine Muslim communities' efforts and thus end up expanding the market for martyrs. Muslim communities need to maintain their willingness to assist legitimate law enforcement efforts to clamp down on terrorist firms' ability operate within the market without impunity.

Principles of Law Enforcement Engagement to Muslim Communities

As the previous section broadly described, the relationship between law enforcement and Muslim communities is a two-way street. This section focuses on what law enforcement can do to productively engage Muslim communities. Other law enforcement challenges dealing with immigrant and minority communities, in general, are examined later in this the complete "Building Bridges" special report. The following are a list of essential principles for law enforcement to consider:

1. **Decisions and assessments of Muslim communities must be made based on credible information**. Law enforcement must make sure that whatever judgments it makes about Muslim communities must come from credible sources. There is a cottage industry of individuals who seek to distort the

image of Islam and Muslims. While everyone has the right to free speech, bigotry masquerading in scholarship without solid analysis is counterproductive when applied to counterterrorism.[53] Therefore, it is essential that law enforcement get the correct information to make the best assessments possible.

2. **Respect for communities' civil rights and civil liberties**. Many (but not all) Muslim communities – whether immigrant or indigenous African Americans – have negative perceptions of the police. The reasons for this perception vary among community and racial/ethnic group. For some, it is based on pre-existing racial issues in America, while for others the police as an institution were regarded as instruments of oppression in their homeland.[54] This creates an automatic barrier to police community outreach. Unfortunately, in the current political climate, the actions of certain law enforcement agencies – whether spying on peaceful activist groups and houses of worship without reasonable suspicion, or religious profiling – have added to difficulties. These actions are not only contrary to American political values, they are counterproductive by eliciting fear within communities and making individuals less likely to cooperate with law enforcement.

3. **Move away from a "securitized" relationship**. Muslim communities must broaden their engagement with civil society and the government beyond law enforcement. It is critical that civil society organizations provide Muslim youth and mosques with the tools needed to enter into other policy forums. Even if one were to look at this purely from a security perspective, a relationship based on fear of terrorism only adds to communities' sense of isolation and alienation. This also undermines the foundation of trust needed between law enforcement and Muslim American communities to elicit information in case a real threat exists. A community policing model uses a wide range of tools, beyond criminal law enforcement to control and prevent crime. Putting Muslim communities in touch with a variety of social services, as community policing initiatives have done with other communities, is one helpful approach.

4. **Leave the counterradicalization to Muslim communities**. As mentioned earlier, the partnership is premised on a division of labor. Law enforcement should focus on terrorists' criminal activities; Muslims have been, and must continue to be at the forefront of the ideological issues. Aside from a respect for civil rights and liberties, law enforcement must make sure its actions avoid the theological and political issues Muslim communities must deal with. Doing otherwise is a task law enforcement are ill-tasked to handle and will undermine mainstream voices.

The Role of Muslim Community Partners

Up to this point, the discussion on community policing has focused on how law enforcement can obtain information from community members to prevent a possible terrorist attack. However, communities – in this particular case, Muslim Americans – can and must play a greater role beyond being largely passive sources of information. Muslim American communities can serve an important counterradicalization role through intellectual and social service initiatives that create a hostile environment for terrorist recruitment. While law enforcement focuses on counterterrorism (criminal activity), Muslim communities can protect the nation through counterradicalization efforts.

On the ideological front, Muslim American leaders and communities have been very strong and consistent in their denunciations of terrorism since 9/11. They must continue to do so. If studies on the backgrounds of Muslim terrorists consistent show one thing, it is that they typically lack a strong background in religious knowledge. This view has not been lost on the religious leadership. Prominent traditionalist Muslim scholar Abdal Hakim Murad denounces Al-Qaeda and its ideologically like-minded ilk as those who "embrace a very secular heresy."[55] Thousands of other high-level Muslim scholars back this denunciation of Al-Qaeda and its abuse of Islamic concepts like *jihad* and *takfir* (excommunication).[56]

At the grassroots level specifically within the United States, the Muslim Public Affairs Council developed and disseminated its National Grassroots Campaign to Fight Terrorism. The Campaign was also endorsed by the Islamic Society North America, the largest Muslim umbrella organization in the United States.[57]

However, intellectual responses like denunciation and prominent legal opinions should not and cannot be the only response Muslim communities take to preventing terrorism. As our earlier analysis of terrorist recruitment highlighted, the issue is far more complex than merely the presence of radical ideologies and specific extremist personalities. Identity crises, largely based on perceptions of injustice and exclusion, and the presence of social networks are also extremely important factors leading to the radicalization of individuals.

Here, Muslim institutions and communities must also take a lead role. Muslim Americans must have the necessary social services available to them to inoculate their communities, including the most vulnerable members, against extremist ideologies. A vibrant civil society is necessary to the long-term defeat of extremist ideas. It ensures Muslims' energies are channeled into mainstream activism that secures full integration into American society through political and civic engagement rather than fostering isolation and alienation that breeds extremism. Civil society organizations must be well-resourced to engage in activities relevant to peoples' needs and maintain their credibility among communities.

Communities must expand their social service outreach by either developing their own faith-based organizations like the Islamic Social Services Association-USA or partnering with other outside private or public organizations. Attention must be

given to social programming that expands religious literacy and addresses social issues relevant to youth relevant like drug use, peer pressure and understanding one's Muslim American identity. Community and religious leaders who have the language and cultural expertise to connect to all members of their community – including youth and converts – must lead these programs. The problems of extremism among British Muslim communities serve as an example of the negative consequences of inadequate community leadership failing to effectively address relevant social issues.[58]

Furthermore, a long-term vision of Muslim institution building is necessary to develop social, political and intellectual growth of Muslim American communities. Civil liberties-focused groups have the advantage of typically being able to deal with legal issues in ways that long term policy-engagement organizations are not equipped to handle at all. Policy-oriented organizations are different in that they tackle problems in their early stages or even before they form.

If Muslim American communities seek to maximize their public policy influence and representation at local, state and federal levels, a better balance of policy and legal advocacy is needed. Their unique approaches to public policy and political influence may have their advantages and their disadvantages. They are not only complimentary, but necessary for the ongoing development and growth of Muslim American communities.

Why Community Policing and Community Intelligence?

Informants are an extremely important tool and can be used to great effectiveness in various kinds of criminal investigations, including counterterrorism ones. According to Boston College Law Professor Robert Bloom there are two types of informants: the "incidental informer" and the "confidential informer".[59] This study focuses on the confidential informant.

Modern American policing has similar examples of legitimate and illegitimate uses of informants. The FBI has successfully used them against the organized crime syndicates such as various mafia crime bosses in the 1980s.[60] Former FBI counterterrorism agent Michael German has also described firsthand how informants – employed in a Constitutionally-sound manner – were effective in bringing down domestic terrorists.[61] However it has also abused them, such as the investigation, infiltration and sabotage of radical but mostly non-violent groups under its Counterintelligence Program, or COINTELPRO.[62]

We propose an intelligence gathering model that shifts some of the emphasis away from traditional methods, such as the heavy use of informants, and towards a more community policing-based methodology.

There are three tactical reasons for this. First, intelligence-led policing models introduce a strong analytical bias that is not necessarily relevant to counterterrorism. Intelligence-led policing tends to focus on repeating criminal offenders and problems. This biases the analysis toward individuals with a pre-existing a criminal background. This bias is largely due to problems with managing extremely large volumes of information generated and seeking to identify those few nuggets of vital information that indicate a real threat in a sea of mundane data.[63]

However, many terrorists do not have a criminal background; in fact many terrorist groups seek to recruit individuals with a clean record so that they can avoid scrutiny much easier.[64] The result is that intelligence-led policing focuses mostly on repeat criminals – who are likely to make the worst terrorists largely due to their conspicuousness – while failing to identify real threats that may fly under the radar.[65]

Intelligence-led policing, particularly at the community level, also has a tendency to rely heavily on covert informants. While informants can be helpful in detecting and preventing a particular plot, they also have several limitations. By being dependent upon a few covert individuals and assuming the information they provide is accurate and truthful (which is not always the case),[66] an intelligence-led policing approach fails to provide broader contexts that allow officers and analysts to discern what a threat is and is not. Thus, given the focused nature of informants, it leaves our important context, leaving an intelligence gap. This is especially the case where communities are fragmented and no one source of information is able to

provide a full picture of the communities where terrorists operate within and/or plan to execute an attack against. Since information gathering is also done more broadly, openly and cooperatively from a wider range of contacts, it is easier to corroborate information from a number of different sources.[67]

Meanwhile, developing a particular covert human intelligence source can be extremely difficult. Given the limited resources police agencies have, it is comparatively easier to develop a network of community contacts that can provide a more contextualized and nuanced understanding of local communities and its residents.[68]

Third, informants are of limited value when dealing with cellular structures. In networked hierarchical structures, penetration of an organization by one asset is likely to yield a great deal of information on the entire group as members are more likely to be in communication with one another. However, in a "leaderless" cellular structure,[69] penetration itself is extremely difficult, as cells take steps to ensure only committed individuals join its militant cause. Furthermore, penetration of one cell does not mean much; information can not be readily developed on other cells possibly in the midst of concocting their own plots.[70]

However, with community intelligence, if there is more than one cell operating with a geographic location, the wider network of community contacts will be better positioned to provide information on suspicious activity wherever it occurs. It casts a much wider, contextualized, and nuanced intelligence net that is more likely to be corroborated by multiple sources.

Furthermore there is an important strategic reason to putting a greater emphasis on community policing, as opposed to intelligence-led policing methods like heavy use of informants. *If employed in an improper or questionable manner, it can undermine community relations needed to elicit information in an investigation.*

Muslim communities may be less willing to cooperate with law enforcement based on a sense of fear and "betrayal", especially if they perceive terrorism busts to be cases of entrapment or provocation. It also undermines the credibility of mainstream religious leaders who advocate for engagement with law enforcement. As a result, the cooperative relationship between law enforcement and Muslims is severely strained or completely undermined. Law enforcement can no longer get important information that may prevent a future terrorist attack,[71] thus leaving a critical intelligence gap that can not be filled by other means including the overuse and under-regulation of informants.[72]

Again, this paper does not deny importance or effectiveness of informants in law enforcement investigation. However there are significant costs to be considered when they are employed. A more circumspect calculation by law enforcement agents should be made when considering informant use: *Are the gains of using an informant worth it if the short-term intelligence and prosecutorial benefits are limited*

but the long-term social and intelligence gathering costs from harmed community relations are high?

In order to achieve maximum effectiveness of information gathering, they will need to be supplemented with other intelligence gathering methods, namely *community intelligence*. Furthermore legal mechanisms and internal guidelines need to be strengthened to ensure informants actually prevent real criminal activity, not spy on innocent individuals.

How Community Policing Develops Community Intelligence

Many community policing strategies have tended to rely on strong relations with a few strategic contacts as a means of "engaging with communities and obtaining information from them where historically relations may have been difficult."[73] However, such an approach is limited because it forces police to derive information from a limited number of sources even though important bits of intelligence are spread across many community residents.

A more diffuse means of community intelligence gathering, beyond a core set of "strategic contacts," is needed. In this context, research by sociologist Mark Granovetter is extremely helpful. Granovetter's research found individuals were able to collect diffuse information more effectively by relying on a network of people with loose ties, rather than relying a small number of close contacts. Granovetter referred to this social phenomenon as the "strength of weak ties."[74] A diffusion of information problem is also something seen fairly frequently in intelligence and community policing issues. According to one study on counterterrorism and community intelligence: [75]

> Applied to issues of counterterrorism, where the key pieces of intelligence may well be diffusely located among different community members, it would seem that police strategic engagements need to be supplemented with a far more extensive network of community contacts.

Therefore, an integrated approach to grassroots intelligence gathering is needed. Rather than replacing strategic contacts and intelligence-led approaches, there would be a shift toward greater emphasis on community policing. Despite a dominant role in intelligence gathering methods, it would not replace other approaches; it would complement them. The result is a combined intelligence strategy that blends the strengths of each intelligence gathering method and minimizes its weaknesses.[76]

However, eliciting community intelligence cannot be done in a haphazard way. It must be done systematically and with high precision and accuracy. Under a community policing model, this would be done by tackling community problems through a process of scanning, analysis, response and assessment. Scheider and Chapman elaborate:[77]

> Departments first identify relevant or perceived crime problems (scanning), determine the nature and underlying conditions that give rise to those problems (analysis), craft and implement interventions that are linked to that analysis (response), and evaluate its effectiveness (assessment). The process is understood as continually involving feedback among the components. For instance, through in-depth analysis, agencies may come to define problems differently, effectively returning to the scanning phase. Likewise, an assessment may determine that a response was ineffective and that the problem requires additional analysis.

In the United Kingdom, such a method for enhanced scanning, analysis and assessment (to improve responses) has been pioneered by researchers Martin Innes and Colin Roberts at the *Universities' Police Science Institute*. They used a two-pronged method of information collection and analysis. The first method involves casual individual-level street interviews with average community residents, called a "conversation with a purpose" (CWAP).

The premise behind CWAPing is "to ensure that whenever police staff interact with a member of the public who was not a victim, witness or suspect to some other incident, they saw it as an opportunity to check on any concerns that the citizen may have and if there were, to collect intelligence upon it."[78] By CWAPing with local community members, beat officers can enhance their understanding about a particular area, and the challenges it faces.[79]

CWAPing is coupled with special software running on a tablet PC to make the interview more structured and better analyze the information from the interview. The process where the information from a CWAP is interfaced and analyzed by specialized software is called "intelligence from Neighborhood Security Interviews" (i-NSI). The i-NSI begins by focusing on a general geographic location where the intelligence is being gathered.

That location is broken down into a smaller subset of equally-sized cells which "equates to a sampling frame for collecting intelligence. Individuals are then selected for interviews [CWAPs] and these interactions are conducted by local police staff..."[80] The information from all of the interviews within limited geographic confines are then processed to match a correlation between problems and specific locations where several interview community members mention the same problem(s) taking place.[81] During the course of these interviews, a systematic way of identifying and corroborating any suspicious activity seen by neighbors that might indicate a terrorist planning can be identified.

Conclusion

Radicalization is a multi-faceted process that cannot be boiled down to a single causal factor. As such, policy responses from law enforcement, the government and communities must reflect this complexity. This must include recognition from policymakers that stamping out terrorism cannot be done by enforcement actions alone without community help.

Law enforcement and Muslim communities need to strengthen their relations and recognize the separate but interrelated roles they play in safeguarding America. This relationship must be built on a firm foundation of trust and that trust must be premised on a respect for civil liberties. By involving all citizens – communities and law enforcement alike – in the effort to defeat terrorism, America can remain both safe and free.

Other critical issues that will be discussed in a future report include:

- **Demographic information and public opinion polling of Muslim Americans**. This looks into views on citizenship and national security issues.

- **An empirically-based assessment of post 9/11 US domestic terrorism**. The report uses a two-pronged analysis. First it examines databases tracking trial cases referred for prosecution and conviction rates for terror trials. Second it constructs its own original database of post-9/11 terror plots and incidents and includes a comparative analysis of Muslim and non-Muslim domestic terrorism.

- **Critique of current counterterrorism policies and tactics**. Using a case study approach, the report critically analyzes A) National Security Letters and Section 215 of the PATRIOT Act, B) NSA Domestic Wiretapping, C) Racial Profiling, and D) the Underregulation and Overuse of Informants.

- **Understanding and dealing with challenges to community policing**. Community policing is not without its difficulties, nor is it a panacea to shortcomings in intelligence gathering. These issues are addressed and make a case for why community policing should be at the center of an integrated domestic counterterrorism strategy.

- **Policy recommendations for a way forward that seeks to reconcile the separate, but interrelated interests of civil liberties and national security**.

All have significant implications for policymakers, law enforcement, legislators and grassroots community leaders.

Appendix A: The Qur'an on the Rules of the Use of Force and Sanctity of Life

Extremists selectively quote certain verses out of context in order to justify their radical ideology and violent behavior. MPAC, like all other mainstream organizations believes such interpretations profoundly misrepresent the teachings of the Qur'an and Islam.

Dr. Maher Hathout, Senior Advisor to the Muslim Public Affairs Council and a leading Muslim American thinker on topics related to Islam and Muslims, offers a brief Qur'anic commentary:[82]

According to the Qur'an, faith in God is a call to life, not to death:

- "*O you who have attained faith, respond to God and the apostle whenever he calls you unto that which gives you life…*" (8:24)

Human diversity is meant to be celebrated and reflected upon as a part of God's will, not a reason for conflict:

- "*…had your Lord so willed, he could have surely made all mankind one single community, but He willed it otherwise, and so we continue to have differences…*" (11:118-19)
- "*Oh humanity! Behold we have created you all out of a male and a female and have made you into nations and tribes, so that you may come to know one another. Verily the noblest of you in the sight of God is the most deeply conscious of Him.*" (49:13)

All human beings, regardless of background have an inherent dignity and sanctity that is not to be violated:

- "*We have bestowed dignity upon the children of Adam.*" (17:70)

Violence is permitted only against combatants and under the guide of self-defense and enforcing the rule of law to pursue justice:

- "*…take not life, which God hath made sacred, except by way of justice and law: thus doth He command you, that ye may learn wisdom.*" (6:151)
- "And *fight in God's cause against those who initially wage war against you, but do not commit aggression for verily God does not love aggressors…*"

Killing of an innocent individual disregards the sanctity and dignity of a person so much as that God considers it to be a crime against all of humanity:

- "*...because of this did we ordain onto the children of Israel that if anyone slays a human being* [in the punishment of murder or spreading corruption on Earth], *it is as though he had slain all mankind, whereas, if anyone saves a life it shall be as though he had saved the life of all mankind*..." (5:32)

Muslims must always act justly to others, regardless of the circumstances or the people:

- "*Let not the wrongdoing of others sway you into injustice.*" (5:8)
- "*Oh believers! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to God, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be rich or poor: for God can best protect both...*" (4:135)

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