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RADICAL ISLAM IN BRITAIN: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE WAR ON TERRORISM

by

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ABSTRACT

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This study analyzes how the rise of radical Islam has led to a significant terrorist threat in Britain. This terrorist threat is embedded in a rapidly growing Muslim subculture that has developed throughout Britain, but especially in London. As opposed to the terrorists who attacked the United States in September 2001, the perpetrators of the London transit bombings in July 2005 were born and raised in the country which they attacked. By studying how and why this situation developed in Britain, Americans can learn lessons and take actions to ensure a similar threat does not develop within the United States. This effort must be a significant part of the Global War on Terrorism, and will require political, economic, law enforcement, and informational components applied over many years. If U.S. leaders do not take these necessary steps, they may find themselves trying to identify American-born terrorists from within Muslim communities inside the U.S. instead of focusing primarily on foreigners, thus making the Global War on Terrorism last even longer while requiring Americans to make even greater sacrifices.

RADICAL ISLAM IN BRITAIN: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE WAR ON TERRORISM

Islamic extremists have created a significant terrorist threat in Britain by successfully converting thousands of British citizens to their cause, even convincing some of them to become suicide bombers in attacks against their fellow countrymen. By studying how and why this situation developed in Britain, Americans can learn lessons and take actions to ensure a similar threat does not develop within the United States. This paper begins by analyzing how Islamic radicals have been able to establish terrorist networks within the United Kingdom (U.K.) and how the British Government is dealing with this situation following the London transit attacks in July 2005. Next, the impediments to terrorists who would like to establish similar networks in America are discussed, followed by an analysis of the current domestic terrorist situation within the United States. This paper concludes with recommended actions the U.S. should take in order to prevent Islamic extremists from establishing terrorist networks in the United States.

Domestic Terrorist Situation in Britain

Radical Islamism has been able to flourish in Britain because of (1) liberal U.K. immigration policy, (2) isolated Muslim communities throughout Britain, (3) apathy of the British government to radicalism, and (4) the predisposition of authorities to allow "safe havens" in mosques, universities, and prisons. First, because of liberal British amnesty laws and generous social policies, radical Islamic jihadists have gravitated to the United Kingdom and Gilles Kepel in his book *Jihad*, portrayed London as "...the capital of world Islamism."¹ Although U.K. immigration and asylum laws have historically been some of the most permissive in the world, they became even more so in 1997 when the British Labour government came to power and incorporated the International Human Rights Convention into English law. With these new laws in place, almost anyone who claims that his human rights will be violated if he is deported can be granted asylum.² Another tactic commonly used by illegitimate asylum-seekers is to destroy their identification papers before arriving in Britain so they can take advantage of U.K. immigration policies and secure residency on humanitarian grounds.³ In addition, asylum-seekers receive social benefits that often allow them to live in England without having to work.⁴ Consequently, hundreds of Islamic radicals have comfortably settled in England where they have protection against deportation or extradition and can establish operational networks which advance their agenda. In December 2005, the British government admitted that nearly a quarter of all terror suspects arrested in Britain in the previous four years were asylum-seekers.⁵

Upon arriving in the U.K., these radicals often find support within isolated Muslim communities in Britain. Many Muslim communities in the U.K. have not integrated into British society, but instead have established subcultures complete with their own schools, shops, newspapers, and mosques. These communities have grown rapidly since the 1980's, and the Muslim population in Britain is now approaching 2 million out of a total population of 60 million.⁶ This rapid population growth is attributed to high birth rates among British Muslims, and increasing immigration due to family unification laws and other liberal immigration statutes.⁷ Because these communities are often isolated from mainstream British society, they have not flourished, but instead have declined economically resulting in high unemployment and widespread dissatisfaction. The extremists know that many of these dissatisfied individuals are receptive to hearing that their plight is not their own fault, but instead they are the victims of racism. "There is no equity in jobs,' said Mohammed Kahn, 29, a manager of the Foot Market, a shoe store in the shadow of the Brixton mosque, who said he was unable to move up after four years at Barclays Bank despite good performance reviews."⁸ In addition, Mr. Kahn complained by stating, "Even when you know you are qualified, you don't get a job because of your skin color or your name and when you see the injustice in the country's foreign policy."⁹ These communities not only provide support for new Muslim immigrants, but also provide a large pool of potential recruits.

The apathy of the British government toward stopping radical extremists from praising terrorism and spewing hate speech against the West is a third factor that combines to make the amalgamation of these Islamic radicals with large isolated Muslim communities even more dangerous. Islamic extremists use these socially isolated British Muslim communities to proselytize and to spread odium against Christians, Jews, and Western society in general. Many Islamic groups not only condemn Western culture and preach the superiority of Islam, but advocate that the survival of Islam depends on the destruction of Western society.¹⁰ Individuals, organizations, and government elements from Saudi Arabia and Pakistan,¹¹ including Al-Qaeda, have provided funding to inundate many British Muslim communities with literature extolling their radical Islamic philosophy and preaching hatred toward anyone who disagrees with it.¹² Much of this inflammatory speech twists facts in order to blame Jews and Western governments for any suffering by Muslims worldwide.¹³ These extremists also frequently distort the teachings of the Koran to justify violence and murder against anyone who does not accept their beliefs.¹⁴ Arguably the most egregious of these radicals is Abu Hamza who exploited freedom of speech laws to develop the Finsbury Park Mosque into "a haven of radical Islam in Europe – a 'suicide factory'"¹⁵ as described by Sean O'Neil in his 2006 book *The Suicide Factory*. Hamza's hate

speech against the West went unchecked from the late 1990s until he was finally arrested in August 2004, and convicted in February 2006 on charges of soliciting murder, incitement to racial hatred, possessing threatening, abusive or insulting recordings, and having documents useful to terrorists.¹⁶ Members of Hamza's Finsbury Park Mosque included the convicted Al-Qaeda conspirator Zacarias Moussaoui, Richard Reid the infamous shoe bomber, and three of the four London suicide bombers.¹⁷ Unfortunately, light sentencing policies in the U.K. will allow Hamza to be eligible for parole in 2008.¹⁸

The predisposition of the British government to let extremists proselytize, recruit, and conduct other activities inside religious facilities with little or no limits, is a fourth factor exploited by the Islamic radicals.¹⁹ Since the extremists know their mosques are unlikely to be raided or searched, they assume they are safe havens, are used to store materials such as explosives and terrorist training manuals, raise funds to send members to terrorist training camps, as well as serve as a secure meeting place to organize terrorist attacks.²⁰

While mosques serve as safe havens, universities and prisons are allowed to be recruiting havens. The need "to belong" is a fundamental human motivation which terrorist recruiters utilize to more easily bring people into their radical religious sects, especially if the individuals are geographically separated from friends and families.²¹ For this reason, college campuses are one of the most significant targets for terrorist recruiters. By claiming to be religious organizations, these radicals are often given "prayer rooms" which are never monitored by universities. Instead of praying, these rooms are frequently used to store extremist literature, to indoctrinate recruits with anti-western rhetoric, and to justify terrorism as an act of resistance. Another reason for campus recruitment is to find future leaders for terrorist organizations. Because people are more powerfully motivated by injustice, indignity, and frustration than by poverty or ignorance, intelligent people who are recruited to a cause are more likely to be dedicated to that cause.²² The success of this campus effort is highlighted by the fact that four English suicide bombers and at least 13 other convicted Islamic terrorists were former students at British universities.²³

A second segment of British society where terrorist are recruiting individuals to their cause is in the U.K. prison system.²⁴ These prisoners often feel alone and vulnerable and find that by converting to Islam they are immediately accepted as a member of a group. The Prison Officers Association in Britain states that bureaucracy and language barriers are preventing them from adequately monitoring the approximately 4000 Muslims in British prisons, and that recruitment to extremist causes is ongoing.²⁵ The task force formed by the British government investigating the July 7, 2005 attacks concluded that "Extremist groups are operating in schools, prisons, and

universities.”²⁶ Especially troubling is that many convicted terrorists are not isolated from other prisoners due to prison overcrowding, and radical imams have been operating in British prisons.²⁷

The Islamic extremists’ efforts to establish terrorist networks in the U.K. and convince large numbers of British Muslims that their cause is justified have been extremely successful. Shortly after the London transit attacks in July 2005, a British government report published in the London Times estimated that up to 3,000 British-born or British-based individuals had passed through Al-Qaeda training camps, that approximately 16,000 individuals were either terrorists or supporters, and that hundreds were prepared to commit terrorist attacks in Britain.²⁸ Several polls conducted in the U.K. reveal other disturbing statistics. In 2001, 15 percent of British Muslims supported the 9/11 attacks and 10 percent said the 2005 London transit attacks were justified. A third poll indicated that 32 percent believed that “Western society is decadent and immoral and that Muslims should seek to bring it to an end.”²⁹ These numbers become more alarming if the percentages are converted into raw numbers. If accurate, this third poll indicates the view of over half a million British Muslims. Surprisingly, even after 9/11, British society remained relatively quiet about the rapid spread of radical Islamic ideology within the U.K. and did not believe similar attacks were likely in their country. Consequently, British society was shocked when investigators revealed that the perpetrators of the London transit bombings were British citizens who had been born in England and had become so disillusioned with Western society that they became suicide bombers and killed dozens of their fellow citizens.³⁰ Considering the extent of these terrorist networks in Britain, many may find it surprising that the July 2005 attacks stand alone as the only significant terrorist acts successfully perpetrated by radical Islamists in Britain. The reason the terrorists have been unable to use their networks to successfully carry out more attacks is primarily due to the British government’s superb ability to identify and disrupt planned attacks before they can be executed.

Although they have a monumental task in effectively monitoring what is happening within these terrorist groups, MI-5, the British organization responsible for domestic intelligence, has performed exceptionally well in tracking terror suspects and preventing attacks. As of December 2006, MI-5 has foiled five major terror plots since the London transit attacks in July 2005. In addition, MI-5 is currently tracking about 30 terrorist plots and monitoring 200 active terror cells involving 1600 people within Britain.³¹ There are several reasons for the success of MI-5. First, because Britain has a Parliamentary system instead of a Constitution, Britain does not have a published law similar to the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution that guarantees individuals freedom from unreasonable searches. As a result, MI-5 can conduct

surveillance on British citizens and collect valuable information that the FBI would not be able to collect in the United States. Secondly, since MI-5 is only a domestic intelligence service and not a law enforcement organization, they do not have conflicting interests of trying to gather information on terrorists while at the same time protecting an individual's constitutional rights. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, MI-5 has had almost a half a century of experience dealing with terrorists associated with Northern Ireland.

Impediments to Terrorists in the United States

While terrorists have found it relatively easy to recruit, fund, and establish networks in Britain, the same is not true in the United States. Before comparing the domestic terrorist situation in the U.S. to that in Britain, an analysis of impediments terrorists face within the U.S. will clarify why their efforts and successes have been different from those in the United Kingdom.

Radical Islamists face four significant barriers to establishing and operating terrorist networks in the U.S. compared to Britain. The first of these barriers is U.S. immigration policy. Although the U.S. was founded upon and grew through a liberal immigration policy up until the middle of the 20th century, following World War II immigration policies were significantly changed with the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act. This policy not only greatly reduced the number of immigrants to the U.S., but specifically limited the number of immigrants of each nationality allowed to enter the country. Despite several changes over the past 54 years, U.S. immigration policy remains stringent and became even more so after 9/11 with the establishment of the Patriot Act which implemented reforms such as the foreign student monitoring program and the integrated entry and exit data system.³² Asylum-seekers in particular face significant challenges to gaining entry into the United States. Between 1999 and 2002, approximately 350,000 individuals sought asylum in the U.S. and 85,000 of them were detained pending further investigation.³³ Consequently, unlike the U.K., known radical Islamists such as Abu Hamza do not consider seeking asylum in the United States for fear of detention.

A second obstacle to terrorists desiring to operate in the U.S. is the lack of large isolated Muslim communities willing to support them. There are numerous estimates as to the number of Muslims in the U.S. ranging up to as many as 7 million, but the most authoritative studies put the number nearer to 3 million.³⁴ Since the population of the U.S. is approximately 5 times that of the U.K. and the number of Muslims in each country is not significantly different, the density of Muslims is much less within American society. In addition, different from the U.K., Muslims in the U.S. have not typically established isolated communities outside of mainstream society with

their own schools, community centers, shops, and mosques. The most significant reason for this is the unique diversity of American Muslims. Contrasting Britain, where approximately half of all Muslims come from Pakistan and share a common culture, American Muslims come from an enormous variety of ethnicities and cultures and speak a variety of native languages.³⁵

A third impediment to Jihadists is the large number of Christian Arabs in the United States. Since three quarters of all Arab Americans are Christian, and they often live in communities with Arab Americans who are Muslim, neither group is able to dictate their religious and cultural beliefs to the whole community.³⁶ An example of this diversity is Dearborn Michigan, where ethnic Arabs comprise 30 percent of the city's population but account for less than half of the cities Muslims.³⁷ Despite this concentration, Arab culture has mixed well with American culture and Arab communities have avoided becoming isolated as they have in the Britain.³⁸ Diversity within Muslim communities across the U.S. can be judged by considering that approximately 90 percent of contemporary mosques in America have ethnically mixed congregations.³⁹ This diversity has made it more difficult for the Islamic radicals to assemble large groups of Muslims who can be recruited to their cause.

Finally, The Patriot Act has also created impediments to terrorists' efforts to operate in the United States. Specifically, the portion of the Patriot Act that now allows sharing of Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FIAS) information with FBI agents performing domestic criminal investigations has eliminated a long standing barrier to federal law enforcement officials. An example of the success of this program is the apprehension of all seven members of the Portland Seven terror cell who had planned to attack synagogues in the U.S. and then to travel to Afghanistan to fight with the Taliban against U.S. military forces. According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Charles Gorder, "...without these changes in the Patriot Act, our case would have been the 'Portland One' rather than the Portland Seven."⁴⁰

Domestic Terrorist Situation in the United States

Despite these impediments, radical Islamists have remained very committed to establishing terror networks in the U.S. and although their efforts have not been as successful as in Britain, they have made progress in several areas. There are two important reasons why the extremists have been so persistent in recruiting American citizens to their cause. The first is the propaganda gained from having U.S. citizens attacking their own country. A U.S. citizen conducting a domestic attack has more credibility in furthering the extremists' assertion that the U.S. is an imperialist, discriminatory nation set on destroying Islam, than an attack by a foreign terror cell. The second reason radical Islamists want U.S. citizens involved is that the FBI and

other Homeland Security agencies have more legal and constitutional obstacles to tracking and monitoring U.S. citizens as opposed to foreigners.

Like in the U.K., the American jihadists are conducting an information war funded primarily by Saudi Arabia that publishes literature and to support imams, teachers, and institutions promoting radical Islamic ideology.⁴¹ Across America, mosques maintain libraries containing books and pamphlets describing non-Muslims as “infidels” and endorsing intolerance against the U.S. and Western society. According to David S. Cloud of the Wall Street Journal, these materials, found in over a dozen Islamic centers and mosques in six states and Washington D.C., “...demonstrate the ongoing indoctrination of Muslims in the United States in the hostility and belligerence of Saudi Arabia’s Wahhabi sect of Islam.”⁴² The most common themes used in this literature are to blame Israel and the Jews for any and all suffering by Muslims worldwide and to accuse the U.S. of supporting Israel and opposing Muslims globally. Other easy targets for the Islamists to use in their information war against the West are the abuses of Muslims at Abu Ghraib and the numerous allegations of maltreatment of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay.⁴³

Similar to their efforts in Britain, extremists have found American universities to be productive places to recruit individuals to their ideology. The largest Muslim student organization in the U.S. is the Muslim Student’s Association (MSA) which has over 150 chapters on American college campuses. Although the MSA’s charter promotes itself as a compassionate, non-political entity devoted to helping Muslim students develop their faith, in reality it is very political and has supported numerous activities promoting anti-Semitism, espousing Wahhabism and anti-Americanism, and calling for members to Islamicize the politics of their respective universities.⁴⁴ The MSA has been very outspoken against the Patriot Act and has encouraged its members to voice their opposition. The MSA receives substantial funding from the Saudi government, and prior to September 11, 2001, was also funded by three organizations the FBI outlawed due to support for terrorism.⁴⁵ Local MSA web sites glorify terrorism, including photos of Hamas suicide bombers, and praise Hezbollah terrorists and others who attack Israel or the United States.⁴⁶ Additionally, Islamists at universities often try to intimidate and threaten campus speakers who voice opinions contrary to their beliefs as was exemplified when Brigitte Gabriel, a Middle East expert, gave a guest lecture to the Judaic Studies Program at the University of Memphis. According to Ms. Gabriel, “Nearly half of the hall was filled with Muslims with their leaders dressed Osama Bin Laden style sitting in the front two rows at eye level making ‘their point,’ that I wasn’t going to get away with speaking freely.”⁴⁷ Following the lecture, Ms. Gabriel was surrounded by police officers and whisked to a patrol car to protect her from the large crowd of intimidating and enraged Muslims.⁴⁸

Similar to Britain, U.S. prisons are another hotbed for Jihadist recruiting. Like universities, prisons contain young men who are geographically separated from friends and family. Many prisoners also feel that by converting to Islam, they are rejecting the society that landed them in jail and may even be eager to hear about ways to attack American institutions.⁴⁹ Many Muslim chaplains in U.S. prisons received their training at the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences (GSISS) or other institutions funded with Saudi money that espouse the most radical forms of Islam. A search by federal officials of GSISS offices in 2002 resulted in charges of tax evasion, money laundering, and uncovered links to individual terrorists as well as to Al-Qaeda.⁵⁰ At Folsom prison in California, a gang of prison inmates who had converted to Islam under the leadership of a GSISS trained chaplain plotted terrorist attacks against National Guard, Jewish, and Israeli facilities near Los Angeles.⁵¹ Plots like this Folsom example are expected to grow as the Muslim prison population in the U.S. continues to explode. Currently, approximately 80% of prisoners who “find faith” while in prison become Muslims, accounting for between 30,000 to 40,000 Muslim converts annually.⁵² Since few prisons in the U.S. have enough linguists to monitor what the prisoners are saying, prisoners can use Arabic or other languages to effectively communicate both inside the prison and with outside contacts in society. A study released in October 2006 revealed how three prisoners in a federal prison in Colorado had sent over 90 uncensored letters to extremists overseas because there were no linguists on staff to translate the letters to English.⁵³

In contrast to MI-5's successfully domestic surveillance program in Britain, the FBI does not have enough intelligence assets to keep watch over the Muslim community in the United States. For example, as of October 2006, out of almost 12,000 agents, the FBI only had 33 with a limited proficiency in Arabic, and not a single one was fluent.⁵⁴ In 2005, FBI director Robert S. Mueller testified to congress that he is “very concerned about what we are not seeing.”⁵⁵ Because the FBI's screening process is extremely detailed, very few Arab Americans enter the FBI as agents. As a result, the FBI has to train their current agents to speak Arabic, as well as other languages, instead of hiring people who are already fluent. Therefore, the few agents who do speak Arabic, do not have connections within Arab communities thereby reducing the FBI's ability to not only effectively work with these predominantly immigrant communities, but to gather intelligence on extremist groups.⁵⁶ Finally, the FBI cannot legally conduct certain types of surveillance operations that are available to MI-5 due to U.S. laws. Specifically the protection against unreasonable search and seizure, as well as freedom of speech laws, inhibits the FBI far more than similar British laws limit MI-5.⁵⁷

Although the success of their efforts has been much greater in the U.K., the radical Islamists have had some success in converting U.S. citizens to their cause. A recent poll revealed frightening beliefs among Muslims living in America. A survey at the Islamic Society of North America's convention in 2006 revealed that a majority of 307 American citizens questioned did not believe that Muslims were responsible for the attacks on 9/11, only a quarter believed that British Muslims planned to bomb planes headed to the U.S. in August 2006, and 39 individuals said they would not notify police if they found out about a terrorist plot against targets in the United States.⁵⁸ Fortunately, this survey was a very small sample size and may not necessarily indicate the views of a majority of American Muslims. The arrest of several American citizens on charges related to terrorism, though, indicates the Jihadists are having some success. Specific examples are Jose Padilla, "the Dirty Bomber" who was recruited to Al-Qaeda while in prison, Mark Kools, a U.S. Army soldier who killed two officers in Kuwait in 2003, and Asim Aqil who was convicted in Pakistan as part of the murder of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl.⁵⁹

Recommended Short Term Counter-Terrorism Measures

Using lessons from Britain, the short term focus in the war against domestic terrorism must be to enhance current law enforcement efforts in order to protect the American people from those who have already converted to this radical ideology and prevent the extremists from expanding their influence. Individuals who are motivated by a belief in a divine command cannot be deterred and are therefore extremely dangerous.⁶⁰ Therefore, for individuals who are already part of a terrorist cell the policy must be to kill or capture these individuals since they cannot be convinced to change their beliefs.⁶¹ Accordingly, for the remainder of the American Muslim population the goal must be to deter them from joining the radical elements of the community.

To achieve this goal the first area that must be improved is domestic intelligence. The FBI must incorporate procedures effectively used by MI-5, such as ethnic diversity, to be able to identify the extremists and monitor their activities. The FBI has expanded the number of linguists and agents who speak Arabic, but must greatly expand the number of agents who speak Arabic as well as Farsi. FBI agents who rely on translators instead of knowing a language themselves cannot work effectively with immigrant communities to gather necessary intelligence. Instead of just sending current FBI agents to language schools, the FBI should revise the screening process for hiring agents to allow U.S. citizens with significant foreign relations and contacts to be more seriously considered.

The second area requiring attention is the U.S. prison system. Although the extremists are using the British prison system to recruit followers, their efforts in U.S. prisons is on a larger scale and therefore a significant effort must be made to stop this dangerous trend. Because these individuals are prisoners, there are numerous measures that can be taken to halt this spread of extremism which are not available in free society. If prisons don't have enough linguists, either train or hire more. If a shortage of linguists delays mail correspondence for prisoners, so be it. Prison chaplains who are trained or linked to radical Islamists should not be allowed to minister within prisons. Within prisons, literature must be more closely controlled and jihadist propaganda removed. Finally, when groups of prisoners are meeting for religious or other activities, their conversations should be monitored for behaviors linked to extremists.

A third focus area for U.S. law enforcement officials must be universities campuses and specifically the MSA. In order to prevent the jihadists from having the success they have had in Britain, universities must not allow student organizations to go unchecked, and MSA web sites extolling terrorism and supporting radical Islamic organizations should be shut down.

Finally, the U.S. government must learn from what has transpired in Britain and stop the flow of propaganda and hate speech infiltrating America from overseas. One approach to halting this inflammatory proselytizing is to aggressively assisting American Muslims who are trying to rid their mosques of this influence. Moderate Muslims who want to fight the extremists are the best ally law enforcement officials can have in identifying and countering the jihadist efforts. Dr. Michael Waller, an Annenberg Professor of International Communication at The Institute of World Politics, identified in his testimony to the Senate Committee on the Judiciary that moderate Muslims often request assistance:

Many Muslims have come to me and to my colleagues with information about how their mosques, centers, and communities have been penetrated and hijacked by extreme Islamists who have politicized the faith and sought to use it as a tool of political warfare against the United States. We would not know what we already know were it not for the active collaboration of Muslims from many countries and currents who fear the political Islamists, and it is clear that federal terrorism-fighters and the nation at large have benefited likewise.⁶²

Government officials and law enforcement officials across the country must understand the criticality of assisting moderate Muslims when they request this type of help. Additionally, procedures must be in place to quickly provide the assistance requested.

Recommended Long Term Counter-Terrorism Measures

While the short term measures just discussed will begin to address the immediate problem, winning the hearts and minds of the American Muslim population is the long-term

solution. In order to achieve this goal, American leaders must conduct a strategic communications campaign that includes the following measures: (1) education of U.S. senior leaders and the American public, (2) winning the information campaign overseas including countering jihadists propaganda, and (3) embracing the Muslim community as asset to the United States. Killing terrorists will never win this war if others are willing to take their place. U.S. leaders must develop an effective strategic communications campaign to counter the Islamists and prevent this from happening.⁶³

Education at several levels is the first area that the U.S. must address as part of this information war, and it must start with senior U.S. leaders. Unlike British leaders, U.S. leaders often demonstrate a lack of understanding of the Muslim faith and culture. This was made embarrassingly clear in 2001 when President Bush announced the name for the invasion of Afghanistan would be *Operation Infinite Justice*, only to be subsequently told that the Koran states that only Allah can provide infinite justice. President Bush quickly back peddled and the invasion was renamed *Operation Enduring Freedom*, although the damage of his original blunder was already done in much of the Islamic world. Another unfortunate example was when President Bush used the term “crusade” to describe the U.S. efforts in the war on terrorism. This was immediately used by Al-Qaeda as propaganda to indicate that the U.S. was conducting a “holy war” with Islam. American leaders must learn from their British counterparts that the West will never win the ideological battle in the war on terrorism if our leaders continue to provide propaganda to the Jihadists.

The second education target must be American population. Because Muslims in the U.S. are more integrated into society than those in the U.K., efforts to enhance an understanding between cultures and values can be more effective. In social studies classes across the U.S., American children need to learn about Arab, Asian, and Muslim cultures and traditions. Currently most American students learn little if anything about the Middle East and what they do learn is heavily influenced by the Arab-Israeli conflict.⁶⁴ Many school systems are clinging to outdated curriculum which does not provide students the abilities they need to function in a global economy. The North Carolina K-12 social studies curriculum for example, has two years dedicated to North Carolina studies, but never mentions the Middle East.⁶⁵ Educators in the U.S. need to recognize the world we live in and prioritize learning so that American children gain an understanding of the economic, cultural, and governmental systems around the world instead of memorizing the names of all 100 counties in North Carolina. This expanded discussion of the Middle Eastern and other world cultures should not only discuss the history of these regions, but also the various values, religions, and traditions. Finally, students should be

taught about the threat to all cultures and religions from radical groups such as Al-Qaeda and how they call for the destruction of Western culture and death to anyone who does not subscribe to their narrow beliefs. This instruction must be taught in an appropriate context to prevent stereotypes and myths from developing, and it must discourage discrimination.

In addition to educating Americans, the U.S. needs to use an information campaign to educate and convince people around the world that the U.S. is not a discriminatory society determined to dominate the world. Explaining U.S. foreign policy is the most important part of this information campaign. The centerpiece of much jihadist propaganda focuses on how the U.S. favors Israel over Muslim countries. Because U.S. policy often is more supportive of Israel than British policy, the U.S. must make a greater effort to explain not only policy toward Israel, but to also highlight support for Muslim countries. An example of what should be highlighted is U.S. foreign aid to Muslim countries. In 2004 five of the top seven recipients of U.S. foreign aid were Muslim countries. Egypt, Jordan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan received a combined \$4.6B in U.S. foreign aid compared to \$2.6B for Israel. If the \$18.4B given to Iraq is included, the U.S. gave almost nine times as much aid to these five Muslim countries than it furnished to Israel.⁶⁶ The U.S. is also accused of bias in favor of Israel by vetoing United Nations condemnation of Israeli actions. If the U.S. feels Israeli censorship is unjustified, a detailed explanation of why should accompany the veto. When the U.S. government condemns organizations like Hamas as terrorist organizations, they need to provide concrete examples linking Hamas to specific terrorist activities. Condemnation of Al-Qaeda should include excerpts of Bin Laden's Fatwa where he declared war against the U.S. and highlight how the radical Islamists publish material calling for the destruction of Western society. Although much of this knowledge may seem obvious to U.S. leaders, it is not apparent to common people throughout the world.

In addition to addressing these educational failures, the U.S. needs to realize it is losing the information war with the Islamic radicals and make significant changes. As long as the extremists have the upper hand in the information domain, moderate Muslims will not fully participate in Western society and hesitate to condemn Islamic extremists.⁶⁷ A vital part of this information battle is to make a very clear distinction between law abiding Muslims and terrorists. Unlike the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) which tends to have in-depth reporting, U.S. media outlets often perpetuates stereotypes of Muslims by quickly covering a terrorist related story and not taking the time to specifically link the perpetrators to anything other than their Muslim faith.⁶⁸ Because many reporters, especially Americans, lack an understanding of Islamic culture, their reports are often shallow and inaccurate which perpetuates the existing stereotypes and prejudices. Often U.S. news organizations, particularly television news, do not

cover terrorist attacks overseas in enough detail to persuade skeptical Muslims as to who really carried out a particular attack. Many of the specific facts linking terrorist attacks to known extremist groups are not reported since non-Muslim Americans need much less information to be convinced that Islamic extremists carried out attacks than do Muslims in the U.S. and abroad. One method that would gain credibility for the media within Muslim communities would be to hire more Muslim reporters. In addition to being more credible to Muslims, these reporters will also bring greater insight into Islamic values and culture to news organizations.

Another information tool that is not being effectively used against the Jihadists in either the U.S. or the U.K. is the Koran and Islamic teachings. Since the Koran specifically prohibit "Hirabah" or "waging war against society," as well as suicide, murder, and almost every terrorist act, the Koran should be used against the extremists in the information war.⁶⁹ In order to use the Koran against the terrorists, the message must be delivered by a Muslim. A Christian telling a Muslim what the Koran says would not be received any better than a Muslim telling Christians what the Bible says. Finally, the media should provide more reporting on terrorist attacks that are known to be offensive to moderate Muslims. Although some Muslims believe that terrorist attacks against U.S. military forces are warranted, almost none believe that attacks against children can be justified.⁷⁰ A Muslim American reporter describing in detail how terrorists ignored the Koran and savagely attacked and killed hundreds of school children would be far more likely to turn moderate Muslims away from radical Islamists than a report by a Christian correspondent describing a terrorist attack on a military barracks in Saudi Arabia that killed American military personnel. In order to win the information war, U.S. leaders and media outlets must understand they are speaking to a global audience, recognize the differences between American and overseas audiences, and deliver the message in the most credible manner.

U.S. policies toward rendition, detainees, and torture are a final aspect of the information war that needs to be readdressed. Although there is little doubt that some valuable information has been obtained from the detainees at Guantanamo Bay, their detention has been an information disaster for the United States. The same can be said for rendition and the fallout from the events at Abu Ghraib and the subsequent torture discussion. Any information gained through these methods will only bring short term solutions at the expense of continuing to lose the information war. The U.S. needs to either put these detainees on trial or transfer custody of them to their respective governments. Because the British do not support these activities, they avert much of the animosity that the U.S. receives in the worldwide media despite their support for operations in Iraq.

The last and possibly most difficult task to accomplish in winning the hearts and minds of moderate Muslims is for Americans to truly accept and embrace Muslims as an asset to the United States. Because American Muslims are more integrated into society than British Muslims, there are more opportunities to welcome their culture. Most American Muslims live in the United States because they believe in the liberties, freedoms, and opportunities that they cannot find anywhere else in the world. The best way to fight the radical Islamists is by having the moderate Muslims do the fighting; the rest of us only need to facilitate them. By having Muslims as FBI agents, police, teachers, and news reporters, they are less likely to join the Jihadists. If they are socially accepted at work they will be less likely to look for acceptance within “Muslim only” organizations and end up being recruited by the extremists. Any organization that hires Muslim employees, and makes accommodation allowing them to practice their faith, will gain credibility with Muslim communities. Specifically the U.S. government needs to reach out to them by changing screening procedures required during the hiring process for government jobs since current restrictive background checks exclude large numbers of potential allies. Americans must also recognize that visitors to the U.S. and students from overseas who come to attend our universities learn first hand the freedoms and opportunities that are only available in the U.S., and they carry those experiences with them for life.

Conclusion

If terrorist networks similar to those in Britain are allowed to become established in the United States, the threat to American society will be intolerable, and Americans will have to sacrifice liberties and freedoms they currently enjoy to effectively deal with the associated threat. The terrorist networks in Britain required over 20 years of deliberate efforts by radical Islamists to establish themselves during a period when both the British government and citizens of the United Kingdom were not paying attention to the ends and means of these extremists. Fortunately for the British, their laws allow much more intrusive domestic surveillance on both foreigners and citizens than those in the U.S., making it easier to monitor terror suspects and uncover their plots. Because monitoring terror suspects is more difficult in the U.S., it is therefore more important that these types of terror networks are prevented from becoming established in America. Although several short term actions should be taken to prevent radical Islamic terror networks from becoming established in the U.S., the long term approach must be to win the hearts and minds of moderate Muslims. The Muslim American community is a great asset that needs to be recognized as such and be included as part of the solution to the war on terrorism, not considered part of the threat, as many of them now feel.

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