



# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

## THESIS

**WINNING THE HEARTS AND MINDS: IMPROVING U.S.  
COUNTER-RADICALIZATION EFFORTS THROUGH A  
STUDY OF THE UNITED KINGDOM'S PREVENT  
STRATEGY**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

Warfare in the 21st century has matured to the point where military technology and force are no longer the keys to victory. Today's warfare has become a war of ideas. Success in war now means winning the "hearts and minds" of citizens to prevent them from becoming radicalized. The research question posed is how can the United States effectively fight the "war of ideas," and can it develop its own counter-strategic strategy? Utilizing the case study method aspects of the United Kingdom's counter radicalization PREVENT strategy were examined. Based on this research, a U.S. policy model is proposed where the United States develops its own counter-radicalization strategy. The findings of this research show that a U.S. counter-radicalization strategy should be implemented. However, it would be carried out at the local level(i.e., mayor's offices and/or governor's offices). It will require the coordinated effort of several federal agencies to establish programs to address radicalization factors. The findings propose that this coordination be carried out by an appointed "Counter radicalization Czar" through the Department of Homeland Security. The "Czar" would have intra-departmental authority to coordinate federal agencies to promote and provide programs that address counter radicalization factors that make individuals susceptible to the terrorist message.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AQI	al-Qa'ida in Iraq
CHDS	Center for Homeland Defense and Security
CONTEST	counter-terrorism strategy
CSCC	Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications
CVE	countering violent extremism
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOD	Department of State
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
JTTF	Joint Terrorism Task Force
MUJAO	Movement for Oneness, Jihad in West Africa
NCTC	National Counterterrorism Center
OSCT	Office of Security and Counter Terrorism
RICU	Research Information and Communications Unit
ROOCC	Regional Outreach and Operational Coordination Centers
SES	socioeconomic status
SIA	security and intelligence
U.S.	United States
UK	United Kingdom
USCS	U.S. National Strategy for Counterterrorism
USIA	United States Information Agency
USIS	United States Information Service
VOA	Voice of America

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Warfare in the 21st century has matured to the point where military technology and force are no longer the keys to victory. Parties in conflict during the twentieth century had begun to realize that success in war meant winning the “hearts and minds” of the people and, to an extent, the enemy forces. Today’s warfare has become a war of ideas.

Faced with this unique type of threat, the United States lacks a coherent domestic counter-radicalization strategy to fight this new type of warfare. In order to neutralize it, the United States must develop a counter-messaging strategy to “reinforce, integrate, and complement public communication efforts” that focuses on countering the rhetoric of al-Qa’ida, its affiliates and adherents, other international terrorist organizations and violent extremists overseas.

Thus, the problem statement involves communication efforts: how can the United States effectively fight the “war of ideas,” and can it develop its own counter-strategic strategy in order to address al-Qa’ida’s rhetoric? A possible solution would be for the United States to engage in counter radicalization through creating counter-terrorist messaging and providing programs that target those individuals who may be susceptible to the terrorist message. To begin, the United States would benefit from examining a current national counter-radicalization strategy that has proven to be successful and to utilize that strategy and techniques within its own. One such national strategy that has been successful is the United Kingdom’s (UK) counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST), specifically the PREVENT element. This research studied the PREVENT element in detail and determined that some aspects of it are applicable to the U.S. counterterrorism efforts.

The UK’s PREVENT program in 2006 was a commendable effort in that it sought to address and prevent radicalization at a grassroots level. The United Kingdom recognized that in addition to the battlefields their military was fighting

on in the Middle East, they also recognized there was a battlefield at home as well. However, much like the first radical action taken in any effort, it was viewed as a good attempt, but its practical effect was negligible. It resulted in revisions. The result of these revisions led to the creation of PREVENT 2011 that addressed the limitations of PREVENT 2006 that (1) had focused too narrowly on the Muslim community, (2) was accused of being a vehicle for spying on communities, (3) misallocated funding, (4) lacked an effective integration strategy, and (5) failed to address radicalization overseas, especially in North and West Africa.

A U.S. PREVENT Strategy begins with the realization that the United States, like the UK, faces a range of terrorist threats both domestic and internationally. The most serious threat is from al-Qa'ida, its affiliates, and likeminded organizations. These groups also seek to radicalize and recruit people within America to their cause. While the percentage of Americans who are prepared to support violent extremism in the United States is small, it is significantly higher among young people. During the last decade, the United States has acquired knowledge about radicalization. It has gained experience regarding the factors that encourage people to support terrorism, and then for those radicalized individuals to carry out the terrorism-related activity. Therefore, it becomes imperative to understand these factors to prevent radicalization in order to minimize the risks it poses to U.S. national security. Based on this understanding, the United States can develop the basis of the U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy.

The U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy must be guided by principles that are consistent with U.S. domestic policy. The principles selected must be of a domestic nature and applicable to the proposed method that will carry it out. They must also be understood at a local level.

The following principles are proposed to frame the U.S. domestic counter-radicalization strategy:

- The U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy should be an equal, if not, greater part of the overall U.S. counterterrorism strategy, with the number one aim to stop U.S. citizens from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.
- The U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy should address the threat of radicalization from environmental groups to international groups.
- The U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy effort will require the balancing of privacy rights, civil liberties, and civil rights versus countering the terrorist messaging that seeks to radicalize individuals.
- The U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy will depend on a successful integration strategy.
- The U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy will be built on a commitment to localism, where communities and local authorities will have a key part in this strategy.
- The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will fund the U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy.
- The U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy must be aligned with domestic priorities and avoid being involved in overseas counterterrorism efforts.

The U.S. counter radicalization strategy should address objectives that,

- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat the United States faces from those who promote it;
- Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support; and
- Work with sectors and institutions that are familiar with the risks of radicalization that need to be addressed.

In order for the U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy to be successful, it must be placed within the DHS to ensure effective coordination, oversight, and accountability. Using a well-thought-out and well-monitored grants program, the DHS would support those local communities who wish to address counter radicalization in their communities.

One of the critical criteria of the funding would be that while the role of policing is critical to the U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy, it must not become a police program. Funding, therefore, can be divided between two key areas: local authority work in association with communities, and policing. Through the grant program, local communities must be able to implement local initiatives to manage local radicalization.

The U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy must develop, maintain, and utilize performance measures. Essentially, the strategy must develop an endgame to what the strategy is to achieve and by what means it will accomplish its objectives and goals. This will require an examination of other similar domestic social programs as well as those outside of the United States. Once established, the performance standards can be included as a condition of their counter radicalization grants program.

The United States must implement support systems to those key priority areas of education, health, economics, criminal justice, faith, charities, and the Internet that all play a role in the cure of U.S. domestic radicalization. Support of these key sectors would be those federal agencies, such as the Department of Education, the Department of Health & Human Services, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Justice. Leading the strategy would be the Department of Homeland Security and the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC) to coordinate counter messaging that can be modified for local communities.

However, since the U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy involves efforts from a variety of different departments, the appointment of a *Counter-Radicalization Czar* in the DHS would be appropriate. The *CR Czar* would have the authority to cross departmental jurisdictions and mandate cooperation and support from these departments in support of U.S. counter-radicalization efforts. To avoid accusations that the strategy is a masquerade to spy on vulnerable groups, the czar must not be connected with law enforcement. The czar should

have a varied professional background in government and/or business, and possibly be a member of one of the vulnerable groups.

The United States has not truly developed and/or implemented a counter-radicalization plan to handle a new kind of domestic enemy. This is an enemy that may not be seen until it is far too late. However, all the signs of radicalism may have been obvious in retrospect, becoming sympathetic to terrorist ideology over a period of time, the radicalized U.S. citizen. Therefore, the United States needs to develop a counter radicalization strategy similar to the one developed by the United Kingdom that is implementable at the local level, supported at the federal level and targets those groups that terrorists seek to persuade to join and support their cause.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

I say to you: that we are in a battle, and more than half of this battle is in the battlefield of the media. And that we are in a media battle in a race for the hearts and minds of our Umma. And that however far our capabilities reach, they will never be equal to one thousandth of the capabilities of the kingdom of Satan that is waging war on us.<sup>1</sup>

–Letter from Ayman al-Zawahari (then 2nd in command of al-Qa’ida) to Abu Musab al Zarqawi (then in command of al-Qa’ida in Iraq) in 2005

Warfare in the 21st century has matured to the point where military technology and force are no longer the keys to victory. Parties in conflict during the twentieth century had begun to realize that success in war meant winning the “hearts and minds” of the people and, to an extent, the enemy forces. Today’s warfare has become a war of ideas. The results of this have led to an increasing awareness of the value and utility of media and marketing efforts in the terrorism and homeland security-related war of ideas and the role of the Internet to help transmit those ideas. However, al-Qa’ida has taken the lead in the use of the media and Internet to help justify its cause, solicit support, and radicalize others to help mobilize and carry out its mission against the United States (U.S.). Al-Qa’ida proved to be insightful in effectively segmenting the world into international and domestic audiences, knowing that messages must be pertinent to people in those respective environments, and then utilizing a variety of media to convince these segmented audiences of their legitimacy and to justify the actions they have taken.

The role of “soft power” is critical at this stage in the war on terror since al-Qa’ida has not been completely defeated or eradicated. They had proven to be a different and unique enemy to the U.S. military. According to Hoffman, “al-Qa’ida has declared a war of ideas against the United States and we must engage in the

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<sup>1</sup> Seth Jones, “How Al’Qaida Ends: Lessons Since 9/11” (lecture, Naval Postgraduate School, Shepherdstown, WV, July 11, 2012).

same battlefield. Refusing to engage in the war of ideas is akin to surrendering this central element of the struggle.”<sup>2</sup>

Faced with this unique type of threat, the United States lacks a coherent domestic counter-radicalization strategy to fight this new type of warfare. In order to neutralize it, the United States must develop a counter-messaging strategy to “reinforce, integrate, and complement public communication efforts that focuses on countering the rhetoric of al-Qa’ida, its affiliates and adherents, other international terrorist organizations and violent extremists overseas. The United States must then confront the al-Qa’ida rhetoric by providing tools, techniques, and methods for all U.S. government communicators, both domestic and international to advance the U.S. message.”<sup>3</sup> However, U.S. messaging efforts are challenged by the variety of al-Qa’ida’s rhetoric. Their rhetoric often involves the seven major “sources of tension that ranges from violent extremism, the situation between the Israelis, Palestinians, and the Arab world, the rights and responsibilities of nations on nuclear weapons, democracy, religious freedom, women’s rights and economic opportunity.”<sup>4</sup>

Thus, the problem statement involves communication efforts: how can the United States effectively fight the “war of ideas,” and can it develop its own counter-strategic strategy in order to address al-Qa’ida’s rhetoric? A possible solution would be for the United States to engage in counter radicalization through creating counter-terrorist messaging and providing programs that target those individuals who may be susceptible to the terrorist message. To begin, the United States would benefit from examining a current national counter-radicalization strategy that has proven to be successful and to utilize that strategy and techniques within its own. One such national strategy that has been successful is the United Kingdom’s (UK) counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST),

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<sup>2</sup> Robert B. Deardorff, “Countering Violent Extremism: The Challenge and the Opportunity” (master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2010).

<sup>3</sup>“Organization Description,” January 27, 2012, <http://www.state.gov/r/csccl/>.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. President Barack Obama, “Prepared Remarks to the Muslim World” (speech, Cairo, June 4, 2009).

specifically the PREVENT element. “The PREVENT element strategy seeks to actively counter the rhetoric that seeks to influence individuals in the United Kingdom from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.”<sup>5</sup>This thesis will study the PREVENT element in detail and determine if some aspects of it are applicable to the U.S. counterterrorism efforts.

## **A. RESEARCH QUESTION**

“Changing language changes minds”

–A Report for the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office<sup>6</sup>

What aspects of the UK’s PREVENT strategy can the United States utilize to develop its own counter-radicalization strategy?

## **B. ARGUMENT**

“Propaganda grants authority to its makers.”<sup>7</sup>

–1991 RAND Study

While it is obvious that the United States has deployed its “hard power” tactics since 2001 by committing military resources in the War on Terror, it has woefully failed in providing the “soft power” tactics needed to win the hearts and minds of the people. This was verified in 2006, when then Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said,

If I were grading I would say we probably deserve a ‘D’ or a ‘D-plus’ as a country as to how well we’re doing in the battle of ideas that’s taking place in the world today.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> UK Home Office, *Protecting the UK Against Terrorism* (London: UK Home Office, 2012), <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/protecting-the-uk-against-terrorism>.

<sup>6</sup> Jim Armstrong, Candace J. Chin, and Uri Leventer, *The Language of Counter-Terrorism: When Message Received Is Not Message Intended* (Cambridge, MA: Report for Harvard Kennedy School of Government, 2008), 1–85, [http://belfercenter.hks.harvard.edu/publication/18459/language\\_of\\_counterterrorism.html](http://belfercenter.hks.harvard.edu/publication/18459/language_of_counterterrorism.html).

<sup>7</sup> Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 198.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 23.

As stated earlier, the role of soft power is critical at this stage in the War on Terror since al-Qa'ida has not been completely destroyed. Their efforts have established and proven them to be a different and unique enemy to the U.S. military. Their uniqueness at that time was exceptional and was best described by Bobbitt in 2007 when he stated that,

al-Qaeda today is a sophisticated operation— with a sophisticated propaganda machine based in Pakistan, a secondary but independent base in Iraq, and an expanding reach in Europe. Its leadership is intact. Its decentralized command control structure has allowed it to survive the loss of key operatives, such as Zarqawi. Its Taliban allies are making a comeback in Afghanistan, and it is certain to get a big boost there if NATO pulls out. It will also claim victory when U.S. forces start withdrawing from Iraq.<sup>9</sup>

Fast forward to 2013, and Bobbitt's statement has proven to be true. Even after the U.S. withdrawal of troops from the Middle East and the death of Osama bin Laden, al-Qa'ida is still operational and spreading to other parts of the world. Its message is still to attack America and its interests. Radicalization remains a threat, as evidenced most recently by the April 15, 2013, Boston bombings and the May 22, 2013, broad daylight and public killing of Fusilier Lee Rigby outside the Royal Artillery Barracks in Woolwich, UK.

The challenge, therefore, requires that the United States identify, develop, and aggressively utilize something more than military might on a completely different battlefield. This would require greater collaboration among the different U.S. government agencies. Hoffman aptly describes the dilemma that the United States finds itself in at this time. He maintains that,

while the United States has been “tactically successful in killing or capturing key al-Qaeda leaders, their key lieutenants and many of their foot soldiers, it has been less successful in strategically countering al-Qaeda's ideological appeal, its ability to radicalize

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<sup>9</sup> Philip Bobbitt, *Terror and Consent: The Wars for the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Random House, 2008), 15.

sympathizers, and its continued capacity to energize supporters and attract recruits and money and thereby sustain its struggle.<sup>10</sup>

Therefore, the United States must turn to a greater power in this struggle with al-Qa'ida: the power of language.<sup>11</sup>“The rationale for this is that people in modern times process the events in their lives through language—verbally and via text, email, and social media. People process their understanding of ideas through language in many ways. People base their decision of whether to fight and die for these ideas through language. Therefore, the power rests in how speakers control the context of their messages. The context (or framing) impacts how listeners interpret what speakers are saying and shapes listeners’ opinions.”<sup>12</sup>“Framing is what influences peoples’ perceptions of events abroad, because they help the public process the myriad of events taking place in the vast foreign policy arena.”<sup>13</sup> Former General Petraeus narrowed this point in his counterinsurgency campaign where one of its core principles was to “Fight the Information war relentlessly.” When in command of Afghanistan, he implored his military audience to,

realize that we are in a struggle for legitimacy that will be won or lost in the perception of the Iraqi people. Every action taken by the enemy and our forces has implications in the public arena. Develop and sustain a narrative that works and continually drive the themes home through all forms of media.<sup>14</sup>

In essence, the United States and al-Qa'ida are fighting for the hearts and minds of those listeners exposed to the rhetoric provided by both. The targeted audience is that portion of the American population that identifies with al-Qa'ida and has proven to be susceptible to their message. Looking in the American

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<sup>10</sup> Bruce Hoffman, “A Counterterrorism Strategy for the Obama Administration,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 21 (2009): 360.

<sup>11</sup> Armstrong, Chin, and Leventer, *The Language of Counter-Terrorism: When Message Received is Not Message Intended*, 1–85.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Hoffman, “A Counterterrorism Strategy for the Obama Administration,” 368.

communities, it could be those who feel disenfranchised from society (loners), the mentally ill, or Muslims who truly believe violence is the way to advance the Islamic religion. The Muslim community at large can be divided between domestic (in the United States) and international. The targets in this community are the domestic and international Muslim community, specifically from those born and reared into the Muslim community and those who may seek to become Muslims and come from other countries, religions, or walks of life. Regardless of the origin, the United States and al-Qa'ida are seeking that sliver of the community that could be prone to commit terrorist acts from the messages to which they are exposed, whether true or contrived.

### **C. LITERATURE REVIEW**

“Too easily, words of war become acts of war.”<sup>15</sup>

–*Game of Thrones*, “The Kingsroad”

“Winning the Hearts and Minds”

–The Role of Propaganda in Conflicts

One common theme in all of world history that is hardly ever examined is how easily people can be led through words (i.e., propaganda). This powerful subject has many other names, such as “spin, spin doctoring, brainwashing, mind control, indoctrination, belief manipulation, impression management, information control, mass persuasion, the engineering of consent, manufacturing consent, compliance-gaining strategies, agitprop, media bias, ideology, campaign rhetoric, political advertising, advocacy advertising, public relations, news management, corporate image advertising”<sup>16</sup> Regardless of what word is used to describe propaganda, “its effective use has made people fall for conquerors, applaud genocide, uphold persecution, and condone exploitation.

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<sup>15</sup> *Game of Thrones*, Episode 2 (“The Kingsroad”), first broadcast April 17, 2011 on HBO Cable Network, directed by Timothy Van Patten and written by David Benioff and D. B. Weiss.

<sup>16</sup> Stanley B. Cunningham, *The Idea of Propaganda: A Reconstruction* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2002), 1.

Religions have taken it further and made people worship false deities, fear strange hells, bless human sacrifice and torture, admire self-mortification, and obey the oddest of moral codes.”<sup>17</sup>

The study of the role of propaganda in historical conflicts can be in and of itself a separate study given its prolific use, whether intentional or not. For the purposes of this research, the literature review will frame a narrow focus of propaganda, rather than cover its use in history or the business, marketing, and public relations field as it is commonly utilized, or cover propaganda’s use by U.S. agencies, such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Department of State (DOD), State Department, all four military branches, and state and local governments and agencies. The researcher’s primary reason for this approach is because “propaganda is dispersed among many disciplines and lacks a basic body of literature, a shared set of techniques, rules for evaluating its quality, and a channel of communication between scholars doing such research.”<sup>18</sup>Therefore, this review will look at sources that describe propaganda’s military use from World War I to its present use by terrorist groups and counter efforts of terrorist propaganda by the United States and the United Kingdom. The rationale for this is based on propaganda’s deliberate and successful use as an effective means of winning support from both sides: domestic and international. Propaganda is widely and simply used because, “it exploits information; it poses as knowledge; it generates belief systems and tenacious convictions; it skews perceptions; it systematically disregards superior epistemic values, such as truth and understanding; it corrupts reasoning and the respect for evidence, rigor and procedural safeguards.”<sup>19</sup>

For research purposes, “winning the hearts and minds” will refer to a concept in conflicts where “one side seeks to persuade the population to support

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<sup>17</sup> Oliver Thomas, *Easily Led: A History of Propaganda* (United Kingdom, Sutton Publishing, 1999), preface.

<sup>18</sup> Brett Silverstein, “Toward a Science of Propaganda,” *Political Psychology*, 8, no. 1 (March 1987): 49.

<sup>19</sup> Cunningham, *The Idea of Propaganda: A Reconstruction*, 4.

the government and reject the insurgents, emotionally and intellectually.” The reference was first used in the Malayan Emergency involving Britain (1948–1960).<sup>20</sup> Edward Bernays, the author of the book *Propaganda*, was one of the earliest U.S. writers on the subject. Bernays stated that propaganda was not active in use until World War I when “governments systematically deployed the entire range of modern media to rouse their populations to fanatical assent.”<sup>21</sup> Bernays expounded further on who the propagandists were. He wrote the following:

We are governed, our minds molded, our tastes formed, our ideas suggested, largely by men we have never heard of.” These “invisible governors” are a heroic [sic] elite, who coolly keep it all together, thereby “organizing chaos,” as God did in the Beginning. “It is they who pull the wires which control the public mind, who harness old social forces and contrive new ways to bind and guide the world.”<sup>22</sup>

Obviously, Bernays did not consider the use of propaganda to support terrorist ideology nor that propaganda’s use was not limited to just these “invisible Governors.” Or, maybe Osama bin Laden read Bernays’ work and believed al-Qa’ida to be the “invisible Governors.” Regardless, Bernays’ writing did reflect the original purpose of the United States Office of War Information under George Creel during World War I. The significance of this organization was that it symbolized the U.S.’s first official use of propaganda to generate U.S. enthusiasm for a war effort.

Another significant writing on propaganda’s military use is the history of *The United States Information Agency* written by William Chodkowski in 2012. His work describes the full-scale U.S. governmental support of the use of propaganda in conflict under the United States Information Agency (USIA) during

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<sup>20</sup> William E. Rieper, *Irregular Forces in Counterinsurgency Operations: Their Roles and Considerations* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: School of Advanced Studies, United States Army Command and General Staff College, 2010), 14.

<sup>21</sup> Edward Bernays, *Propaganda* (New York: Ig Publishing, 1928), 11.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

the Cold War. “At the height of the Cold War, the USIA presided over U.S. information to over 150 populations internationally and had an annual budget of \$1 billion in the years directly after the fall of the Berlin Wall.”<sup>23</sup>“The USIA was created in 1953 under President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Its origin can be traced back to Congress’s acknowledgement of the federal government’s need to communicate with foreign populations, continuing the wartime exchange of information into a permanent, peacetime practice.”<sup>24</sup> Its official mission was “to understand, inform and influence foreign policies in promotion of the national interest, and to broaden the dialogue between Americans and the U.S. institutions and their counterparts abroad.”<sup>25</sup>“It carried its mission through four distinct functions: (1) explain and advocate U.S. policies in terms that are credible and meaningful in foreign cultures; (2) provide information about the official policies of the United States and about the people, values, and institutions which influence those policies; (3) bring the benefits of international engagement to American citizens and institutions by helping them build strong long-term relationships with their counterparts overseas; and (4) advise the President and U.S. government policymakers on the ways in which foreign attitudes will have a direct bearing on the effectiveness of U.S. policies.”<sup>26</sup>

The USIA had its roots in World War II, a declared war. “Subsequently the USIA was active during the Cold War, acting as if the United States was “at war” with the USSR and was quite successful in making many believe that the United States was at war. The USIA was abolished effective 1999 under the passage of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act that divided the USIA’s duties between the Under Secretary for Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy within the State Department (information and exchange functions) and the Broadcasting

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<sup>23</sup> William M. Chodkowski, *American Security Project Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: The United States Information Agency, 2012).

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

Board of Governors (broadcasting function).”<sup>27</sup> Even though the USIA was abolished, the role of propaganda was maintained, and USIA’s mission is currently in effect through the two previously mentioned organizations, and is still fully federally funded today.

Another critical piece describing the USIA’s eventual demise is Cull’s book, *The Decline and Fall of the United States Information Agency*. With its motto of “Telling America’s Story to the World,” the USIA was the core agency of public diplomacy.<sup>28</sup>“Its strength was the United States Information Service (USIS), a global network of posts that collected and disseminated information vital to the capital and corps of ambassadors. The USIS also was staffed with a large and experienced staff armed with an array of resources at its disposal.”<sup>29</sup> The following are a range of offices they produced:

The short wave radio station Voice of America (VOA), wartime cultural centers and libraries, documentary and television film units, Marshall Plan information offices, the *Amerika Hauser* created from the reeducation of Germany, embassy press specialists, magazines, speakers, and exhibition programs.<sup>30</sup>

While the USIA conducted its mission successfully, it never was made part of assisting in the making of U.S. foreign policy. In fact, Ed Murrow, the prominent journalist who was the USIA director, was not part of Kennedy’s Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961, yet part of its failure may have been unfairly placed on the USIA. Unfortunately, the USIA, like any federal agency, was subject to the typical justification of its budget and was part of the “spoils of the winning administration” in placing of cronies. Be that as it may, the USIA functioned quite effectively by expanding its resources and efforts throughout the world. However, having sold

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<sup>27</sup>Chodkowski, *American Security Project Fact Sheet*, 6.

<sup>28</sup> Nicholas J. Cull, *The Decline and Fall of the United States Information Agency: American Public Diplomacy, 1989–2001* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), 2.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

itself as a necessity of the Cold War, the end of the Cold War called its place and function in government into question.

According to Dizard in *Inventing Public Diplomacy: The Story of the U.S. Information Agency*, the USIA's role was to "portray the United States through the prism of national strategic interests. In a phrase, the agency was a propaganda operation, replicating similar programs of other governments, both friendly and hostile."<sup>31</sup> Dizard states that "through the USIA's numerous posts (more than 300 worldwide, which were the largest of any federal agency to date), U.S. private interests were able to expand their presence worldwide. One such private interest was U.S. commercial media corporations that brought massive amounts of commercial media and cultured goods and services."<sup>32</sup> However, even Dizard would agree with the researcher that after 9/11, a new communications environment has been created through the Internet that is forming "a different set of global relationships that take into account the ideas and perceptions of ordinary human beings."<sup>33</sup> It is the radicalization of ordinary human beings into committing terrorist acts that symbolizes the recognition of the need for policies that can "respect the world's many cultures with a practical recognition of the crosscutting influences created by the information age."<sup>34</sup>

Aside from the literature previously discussed and the myriad of U.S. strategic plans dealing with the U.S. response to terrorism, the subject of this research centers on the UK's counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST), specifically the PREVENT element of it. There have been three versions of the UK CONTEST: 2006, 2009, and 2011. The United Kingdom recognized the effective radicalization of individuals towards supporting terrorist groups and, in extreme cases, actually carrying out terrorist acts on behalf of those groups. "The

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<sup>31</sup> Wilson P. Dizard Jr., *Inventing Public Diplomacy: The Story of the U.S. Information Agency*, (Colorado: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 2004), xiv.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., xv.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

PREVENT element strategy specifically explores, discusses, and recommends key actions to counter the terrorist rhetoric that influences individuals in supporting terrorism or even becoming terrorists. However, based on the Coalition government taking office in 2010, an official review of the PREVENT strategy was conducted. The review was in response to the July 7, 2005, attacks.”<sup>35</sup> Based on their research, the PREVENT strategy should continue to “focus on radicalization linked to the main terrorist threat facing the United Kingdom, from groups that are usually collectively referred to as Islamic fundamentalist, Al Qa’ida-related, or Islamist terrorists.”<sup>36</sup>“Yet it also must be flexible enough to address terrorism from Northern Ireland and right-wing terrorist groups and individuals.”<sup>37</sup>

However noble their intent was, there have been criticisms of the PREVENT strategy that warrant a review in order to gauge its effectiveness in elements of it being recommended as part of the U.S. counterterrorism communications strategy. In the article, “The Impact of UK Anti-Terror Laws on Freedom of Expression” by Article 19 (an international human rights organization that defends and promotes freedom of expression and freedom of information around the world), the authors claim that the adoption of

a vague and wide definition of ‘terrorism’ and an increase in the use of anti-terror laws stifles legitimate political and social protest. In addition, recent laws and policies outlaw not just acts of terrorism, or their direct incitement, but also the “indirect encouragement” or “other inducement” of terrorism, including its glorification.<sup>38</sup>

In essence, CONTEST and the PREVENT phase of it seemed entirely targeted at the UK Muslim community and the Muslim religion, thus causing

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<sup>35</sup> Home Affairs Committee, *Roots of Violent Radicalization* (London: U.K. Parliament, 2013).

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>“The Impact of UK Anti-Terror Laws on Freedom of Expression,”2006, <http://www.article19.org/data/files/pdfs/analysis/terrorism-submission-to-icj-panel.pdf>.

further alienation. According to detractors, it resulted in Islamophobia and a broader view that the West was at war with Islam itself.

In addition, two articles from the Pew Research Center also will be included in this research. The Pew Research Center is a nonpartisan fact tank that informs the public about the issues, attitudes, and trends shaping America and the world. Through public opinion polling, demographic research, media content analysis, and other empirical social science research methods, Pew Research provides data that can help explain what is currently happening in the world and assist in predicting what policies should be in place to account for future trends. What makes Pew Research attractive is that it does not take policy positions. It also should be mentioned that it is a subsidiary of The Pew Charitable Trusts. The two articles that will be discussed in this thesis will be *The Future of the Global Muslim Population: Projections for 2010–2030*, created by Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion and Public Life, and the Pew Research *Global Attitudes Project* that discusses Muslims' and Christians' attitudes towards each other.

According to the 2011 Pew Research Global Attitudes Project,

majorities in the UK (64%) and the U.S. (57%) express favorable views of Muslims, claiming that Muslims are honest and generous. Yet, many attribute negative characteristics, particularly violence and fanaticism, to Muslims, with some stating that few Muslims are tolerant or respectful of women.<sup>39</sup>

In addition, majorities in the U.S. (54%) and the UK (52%) believe that some religions are more prone to violence than others, and when asked which religion they think is the most violent, large majorities in each of these countries, the UK (74%) and the U.S. (70%), select Islam.<sup>40</sup>

However, the U.S. and the UK are the only two countries in the survey where fewer than half of non-Muslims attribute each of the

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<sup>39</sup>Andrew Kohut, "Muslim-Western Tensions Persist, Pew Research Center Global Attitudes Project," July 21, 2011, <http://pewglobal.org/files/2011/07/Pew-Global-Attitudes-Muslim-Western-Relations-FINAL-FOR-PRINT-July-21-2011.pdf>.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

six negative traits (selfish, violent, greedy, immoral, arrogant, and fanatical) tested to Muslims, but even in these countries there still are many negative views.<sup>41</sup>

For instance, when asked whether Muslims are violent, “45 percent of those surveyed in the U.S. said yes while 46 percent said they are not. The UK, when asked if Muslims are fanatical or not, is evenly divided: 43 percent said yes and 42 percent said no.”<sup>42</sup>

When asked whether they associate a series of four positive traits (generous, honest, tolerant, and respectful to women) and six negative traits (selfish, violent, greedy, immoral, arrogant, and fanatical) with people in Western countries, nearly every Muslim surveyed (majorities of Muslims in Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Indonesia, Pakistan, and the Palestinian territories) said that Westerners primarily are made up of those negative traits.<sup>43</sup> The Pew Study also interestingly noted that “Muslims identified themselves primarily with their religion versus being citizens of their country,”<sup>44</sup> as opposed to Westerners who identified themselves primarily with their country versus their religion.

Finally, there will be several news articles specifically from the UK press, such as the *Times*, *Daily Telegraph*, and *Guardian*. The daily coverage they provide will lend to the research topic and help provide more timely information on current happenings on terrorism and its impact on the United Kingdom and the world.

The research conducted here is similar to thesis work conducted by Kirk J. Sampson’s and Brad Deardorff’s at the Naval Postgraduate School Center for Homeland Defense and Security. Sampson’s thesis entitled, “Winning the Battle of Ideas Through Individual Resiliency: A Multi-Dimensional Approach for Countering Radicalization in the Homeland,” proposed disrupting the

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<sup>41</sup>Kohut, “Muslim-Western Tensions Persist, Pew Research Center Global Attitudes Project.”

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

radicalization process by implementing counter-radicalization strategy into existing strategies. Using policy analysis methodology, he examined both U.S. and UK approaches for countering radicalization.<sup>45</sup> The research proposed in this thesis is additive because it takes Sampson's work and examines the UK's PREVENT strategy much more in depth than he did, and makes recommendations that are operational versus Sampson's broad recommendations.

In Deardorff's thesis titled "Countering Violent Extremism: The Challenge and the Opportunity" used comparative policy analysis between the United Kingdom and the Netherlands and proposes a U.S. regional approach to counter radicalization through Regional Outreach and Operational Coordination Centers (ROOCC).<sup>46</sup> However, the research proposed here suggests that counter-radicalization efforts should be approached at the local level. Local jurisdictions would assess their own environment and decide on what strategies to use in countering radicalization against groups that are unique to them.

The research discussed is necessary because it extends Sampson's and Deardorff's insightful and groundbreaking analysis to actual implementation. The research essentially goes from Sampson's national strategy recommendations, to Deardorff's regional strategy recommendations down to local strategy recommendations where the U.S. counter-radicalization strategy is actually discussed in an operational context. At the very least, the work conducted on all three theses might possibly lead to either further extended thesis research by future students to build upon or further examination at the different government levels for possible implementation.

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<sup>45</sup> Kirk J. Sampson, "Winning the Battle of Ideas Through Individual Resiliency: A Multi-Dimensional Approach for Countering Radicalization in the Homeland" (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2009).

<sup>46</sup>Deardorff, "Countering Violent Extremism: The Challenge and the Opportunity."

## D. MEDIA AND TERRORISM

“Without communication there can be no terrorism.”<sup>47</sup>

–Bruce Hoffman quoting Schmid and de Graaf

Much like a marriage, media and terrorism always have been interdependent; for each one needs the other to help advance its own self-interests. In order for terrorists to make their position known to all and garner support, they need the media to publicize their actions. The media must report on terrorist actions for ratings and market share. Both are able to enhance each one’s needs and purposes. However, while it may be perceived that they “work” together to meet their own needs, the relationship can be uncertain. Neither side can be completely confident that what they seek from the other will satisfy their needs. Terrorists have to consider if the media will get their message “right” in order to highlight their goals and win over sympathizers/followers. Likewise, the media must consider if they are being given accurate information, showing unintended support for them, or if they themselves could become victims of these terrorist acts.

UchennaEkwo with the Center for Media & Peace Initiatives indirectly provided a very accurate description of the relationship between the media and terrorism. His description of the media and the democratization of Africa could be applied also to terrorism. By substituting the word democratization with terrorist, the following aptly describes their relationship: “Media and terrorism are clearly inseparable bedfellows. The relationship between the two is complex at worst and interwoven at best and can be aptly described as mutual political bedfellows or implacable arch-foes. It is therefore safe to say that media and terrorism are close cousins that can relate or deflate at different times.”<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*.

<sup>48</sup>UchennaEkwo, “Center for Media & Peace Initiatives,” 2013, <http://webtv.un.org/watch/uchenna-ekwo-center-for-media-and-peace-initiatives-global-connections-television/2291683184001>.

Rogan proposes, “with the development of mass media, modern terrorism has been portrayed as an act of communication and has been named “mass mediated terrorism,” indicating an existential link between terrorism and publicity via the mass media.”<sup>49</sup> He describes, “terrorists now perform on the “informational battlefield” where they must pattern their attacks to attract the media so the world can hear their message.”<sup>50</sup> However, “with the Internet and technological advances in video production, terrorists now have expanded the quality and quantity of their message”<sup>51</sup> and thus no longer require the media at all. In essence, terrorism “outgrew” its relationship and need of the media and now has divorced itself from them.

Al-Qa-ida’s expansion into the Internet ties in positively to the trend where viewers are no longer relying on TV networks to receive their news. According to the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press,

the next generation of news consumers are increasingly going to the Internet for their daily news. Online and digital news consumption, meanwhile, continues to increase, with many more people now getting news on cell phones, tablets or other mobile platforms. And perhaps the most dramatic change in the news environment has been the rise of social networking sites. The percentage of Americans saying they saw news or news headlines on a social networking site yesterday has doubled—from 9% to 19%—since 2010. Among adults younger than age 30, as many saw news on a social networking site the previous day (33%) as saw any television news (34%), with just 13% having read a newspaper either in print or digital form.<sup>52</sup>

At this point, one can see the power of propaganda in motivating people to take action and how the media initially helped terrorists spread their message. The importance of propaganda and the mediums that help deliver the message

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<sup>49</sup> Hanna Rogan, *Al-Qaeda’s Online Media Strategies: From Abu Reuter to Irhabi 007* (Kjeller: Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, 2007).

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> “In Changing News Landscape, Even Television is Vulnerable: Trends in News Consumption, 1991–2012,” 2013, <http://www.people-press.org/2012/09/27/in-changing-news-landscape-even-television-is-vulnerable/>.

are the first steps in the process of radicalization by delivering the message for those people to read it, believe it, and, most importantly, take action based upon it.

## **E. PROCESS OF RADICALIZATION**

There are a myriad of reasons that can possibly explain how a person becomes radicalized from political, religious, social, economic, racial, and ethnic points of view. Section 2.59 of the Prevent element within the 2011 CONTEST describes radicalization as the “process by which people come to support, and in some cases to participate in terrorism.”<sup>53</sup> However, the crux of this is to ask what are the drivers relevant to radicalization? Even an analysis of more than 500 terrorists failed to yield any common cause of radicalization. According to Deardorff, assumed factors, such as economic deprivation, brainwashing, religious knowledge, poor education, and sexual frustration were discounted as causes. In fact, “many of the terrorists studied grew up in traditional families where they had positive relationships with family and friends.”<sup>54</sup> It has been proposed that certain stressors can trigger “cognitive openings.” This is where “life-changing events can cause abnormal stress to the subject and thus increase the subject’s vulnerability to recruitment to a group or cause.”<sup>55</sup> Contrary to this position is in the case of the Tsarnaev brothers 2013 Boston Marathon bombing. According to Abdo, “the Tsarnaev brothers should not be considered homegrown terrorists because “they lived in ‘two worlds’ yet did not feel like they belonged to either and received their teaching and instruction from the Internet.”<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> HM Government, *CONTEST: The United Kingdom’s Strategy for Countering Terrorism*, Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Command of Her Majesty (London: HM Government, 2011).

<sup>54</sup> Brad Deardorff, *The Roots of Our Children’s War: Identity and the War on Terrorism* (Williams, CA: Agile Press, 2013).

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>56</sup>GeneiveAbdo, “Boston Attacks Should Not Be Labeled “Homegrown” Terrorism,”*Newsday*, April 23, 2013.

The research presented later will concentrate on how the use of propaganda and the media may be contributing factors to the radicalization of individuals, regardless of socioeconomic status (SES). The research will attempt to advance the argument that regardless of these viewpoints on radicalization, it all begins with the “message” and the environment in which it is “received.”

The use of the media, especially the various delivery technologies (i.e., the Internet, television, radio, print, etc.), has been discussed as taking terrorists’ messages to a higher level of effectiveness in transmitting their message. That higher level is in the form of instantaneous messaging by terrorists to explain their actions in their own voice, clearer messages unedited by the media, near TV quality in their own video production, and even their own insurgent television stations. Hoffman emphasizes the importance of this effort when he states the following:

What is clear, though, is that as terrorist communications continue to change and evolve so will the nature of terrorism itself. While one cannot predict what new forms and dimensions terrorism will assume during the rest of the twenty-first century, this evolutionary process will continue and will doubtless be abetted—and accelerated—by new communications technologies—as has been the case over the past decade.<sup>57</sup>

Based on the terrorist message now being delivered in this manner, radicalization among potential supporters now is more efficient and cost effective. Terrorist organizations have harnessed the power of communication and use it to their advantage. They no longer are concerned about just collecting guns and weapons or physically planning their attack. They now are more focused on obtaining video cameras, laptop computers, CD burners, and a high-speed Internet connection. According to Hoffman, “the use of these inexpensive communications technologies allows foreign powers like al-Qa’ida and other terrorist groups to spread their message. The targeted audience is that portion of

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<sup>57</sup>Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 228.

the American population that identifies with al-Qa'ida and has proven susceptible to their message.”<sup>58</sup>

## **F. UK COUNTER RESPONSE TO AL-QA-IDA'S MEDIA STRATEGY**

Even with all the effort on pursuing terrorists, the UK government realized that its strategy on preventing future terrorist acts was not sufficient. Subsequently, the Home Office became a new strategic hub for all counterterrorism policy: the Office of Security and Counter Terrorism (OSCT).<sup>59</sup> The OSCT provides strategic direction to the UK's work to counter the threat from terrorism. The primary objective is to protect the public from terrorism by working with other government organizations and deliver the UK's counterterrorism strategy (CONTEST).<sup>60</sup> As of 2014, the OSCT reports to Home Secretary Theresa May, who was not Home Secretary when OSCT was created, and the parliamentary Under Secretary for Crime and Security James Brokenshire. Of the OSCT's five main responsibilities, their first is to support the Home Secretary and other Ministers in directing and implementing CONTEST—the government's strategy for countering terrorism.

When the United Kingdom updated CONTEST it was based on the belief that international counterterrorism work had made significant progress over the previous 10 years and that al-Qa'ida was weaker than at any time since 9/11, having played no role in recent political change in North Africa and the Middle East. Its ideology had been widely discredited, and it had failed in all its objectives. Nonetheless, “the government still believed that al-Qa'ida continued to be a significant threat and other terrorist groups, some affiliated with al-Qa'ida, had become stronger. In addition, the threat from Northern Ireland related terrorism also had increased.”<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 226.

<sup>59</sup> UK Home Office, *Protecting the UK Against Terrorism*.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

In response, the United Kingdom updated the 2006 CONTEST in 2009 and it reintroduced four core areas:<sup>62</sup>

***Pursue***: to stop terrorist attacks.

***Prevent***: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

***Protect***: to strengthen protection against a terrorist attack.

***Prepare***: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack.

Under PREVENT, the United Kingdom looks to prevent terrorism by challenging extremist ideas conducive to terrorism or shared by terrorist groups and making a clearer distinction between PREVENT work and programs to support integration. The strategy was again updated in 2011, and will be discussed later in this research.

## **G. METHODOLOGIES OF STUDY**

### **1. Case Study and Policy Modeling**

The method used to conduct this research was the qualitative method known as “case study,” whereby the unit of study is the UK’s counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST), specifically the PREVENT element of the strategy that seeks to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The rationale for this selection as a case study is based on an absence of other well-developed models to examine, thus resulting in this case to be a critical case or outlier case. According to Yin, “case studies are pertinent when the research addresses either a descriptive question—‘What is happening or has happened?’—or an explanatory question—‘How or why did something happen?’”<sup>63</sup> For the purposes of this research, it seeks to understand how the PREVENT element of the UK’s CONTEST functions and if it can be utilized in the U.S. counterterrorism strategy.

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<sup>62</sup> UK Home Office, *Protecting the UK Against Terrorism*.

<sup>63</sup> Robert K. Yin, *Applications of Case Study Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2012), 5.

The design of a case study incorporates three steps: defining the case, selecting the case design, and using theory in design work. For the purposes of this research, the defined case will be the PREVENT element of the UK CONTEST from its inception to its current status. The case design therefore will be an embedded, single case study since it will only involve the PREVENT element. As far as using theory in this type of design work, the research conducted here will exclusively examine PREVENT, and therefore, not incorporate or use any theory.

In terms of case study analysis, since the research question is open-ended and it has not yet been determined if the PREVENT element started with any predicted pattern, the explanation-building technique was utilized. Another case study analytic technique that was used is the time-series analyses. It involved developing a chronology of key events that may hint at possible causal relationships.

The case study method “is very suitable for learning about a little known or poorly understood situation,”<sup>64</sup> which this research seeks to do in examining the UK’s counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST), specifically the PREVENT element of the strategy that seeks to preclude people becoming radicalized into becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The research conducted asserts that the UK’s situation is not completely understood by U.S. counterterrorism strategists as a viable option to aid U.S. military/law enforcement forces and interests in implementing counter radicalization as part of its overall counterterrorism strategy.

“The major weakness of the single case study is that it cannot be made certain that the research findings are generalizable to other situations.”<sup>65</sup> George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950) once said, “England and America are two countries separated by a common language.” The statement could resonate with some

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<sup>64</sup> Paul D. Leedy and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, *Practical Research: Planning & Design*, 8th ed. (Columbus, OH: Pearson, 2005), 135.

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, 35.

accuracy since the basis of this research will examine how the United Kingdom uses language and programs to counter radicalize those people prone to be sympathetic to terrorism. Does the phrasing and “wordsmithing” used by the UK’s PREVENT phase have any bearing on its successful transferability to the U.S. counter-radicalization efforts?

At the end of the case study research, the researcher provides analytic generalizations that lead to a set of recommendations for the United States counterterrorism communications strategic plan. Per Yin, “analytic generalizations depend on using a study’s theoretical framework to establish logic that might be applicable to other situations.”<sup>66</sup> In this research, the other situation would be the U.S. position on counter-radicalization.

The method to outline a proposal of a U.S. counter-radicalization strategy based on local organizations is policy modeling. “Policy modeling, a type of policy analysis and evaluation, is broader than management science (using a system approach to implement actions) and operations research (focusing on problem solving) in that it 1) has interdisciplinary focuses of physical, economic, social, and political systems; 2) employs broader range of techniques; 3) focuses on formulation of models and solutions rather than technical details and computation.”<sup>67</sup> The proposed U.S. counter radicalization strategy is interdisciplinary in that it relies on a variety of U.S. government systems. It will also employ a range of techniques from a sociological and individual psychological perspective. Finally, rather than employing technical aspects, much of the effort will look at counter radicalization from an existing state and a desired state of where local organizations want their community to be in handling counter-radicalization.

By utilizing these two methodologies, the study of the UK PREVENT strategy involved looking at its individual components. Then the process of its

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<sup>66</sup>Leedy and Ormrod, *Practical Research: Planning & Design*, 18.

<sup>67</sup> Hun Myoung Park, “Introduction to Policy Modeling” (syllabus, International University of Japan, Winter 2014).

development was examined per the original 2006 version and why certain sections of it were changed resulting in the 2011 version. Finally, an analysis of its impact/success was examined to see if the United Kingdom had reached the desired state they sought.

## **2. Conclusion**

When it comes to waging a traditional military campaign against a country, the United States has no equal in the amount of manpower, technology, wealth and equipment that it will use. Given the warfare history of the United States, it also has the experience and strategies necessary to wage battle. However, the United States is now facing a different type of adversary. It is an adversary that is not in another country, is easily recognizable or may even realize that they are the enemy. It is the U.S. citizen that becomes radicalized to carry out terrorist actions against the United States. This individual, through a variety of environmental conditions and through the terrorist messaging via the Internet, has heard a message that resonates within him/her that death and destruction are necessary to carry out the group's goals.

The research conducted explores how the United States can mount a strategy against this type of terrorist by examining counter-radicalization efforts of a country also tasked with this same issue, the UK's PREVENT Strategy. By examining the components of the UK strategy, insight can be gained into exploring how aspects of it may be transferable into a U.S. counter-radicalization strategy. Unlike previous research that touts a national and regional strategy, the research proposed here looks at how counter-radicalization can be carried out at the local level with regional and national agencies only providing support.

## **H. OVERVIEW OF UPCOMING CHAPTERS**

To explore this subject, the following topics will be covered in the subsequent chapters.

- **Chapter II**, will provide a broad overview of the UK's first PREVENT 2006 strategy, the processes and factors of

radicalization, and how the United Kingdom attempted to address these processes and factors.

- **Chapter III** will examine how PREVENT 2006 strategy was modified to develop into PREVENT 2011 by examining the shortcomings of PREVENT 2006, such as its narrow focus on the Muslim community, accusations of spying, misallocation of funds, lack of an effective integration strategy, and addressing radicalization overseas, especially in North and West Africa. The research will also propose that the development of PREVENT 2011 also stemmed from the realization that the United Kingdom was involved in an “irregular warfare” situation and needed to adjust its strategy accordingly.
- **Chapter IV** will analyze why the current U.S. National Strategy for Counterterrorism (USCS) does not provide the counter-radicalization measures required in today’s new domestic battlefield. It will accomplish this effort by first discussing radicalization and establishing that through all the known causes of radicalization, it all begins with a message that the United States has failed to respond to. The analysis will specifically discuss the four guiding principles and the areas of focus of the USCS strategy and how they each fall short of what each seeks to accomplish.
- **Chapter V** will provide an examination of the factors that must be considered for the development of a U.S. domestic counter-radicalization program. The chapter will propose and examine the goals and objectives of the strategy as well as the means to carry it out from a U.S. government perspective. It will explore partnerships that should be considered to enhance federal engagement with local communities, build local government and local law enforcement expertise, and promote American ideals as a counter to al-Qa’ida ideology.

## I. SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

“Time will bring forth new and more lethal terrorist groups long after al Qaeda is defeated.”

–Philip Bobbitt, *Terror and Consent*

Literature: No unified counter-radicalization strategy currently exists to aid in counterterrorism. This research will make U.S. counter-radicalization strategy recommendations. The effort is significant because if the terrorist message is not countered, it will lead to further radicalization both abroad and domestically.

Since there is not a currently implemented streamlined messaging system in the United States, the literature is not available to analyze its effectiveness. The goal of this research is to contribute such information to the field.

Immediate consumer/customer: Every stakeholder in homeland security effort with a public face should be able to learn from and use this research, i.e., State Department, DOD, DHS, FBI, the State Department's Bureau of Public Policy and Public Affairs, and the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications are immediate consumers. This research will identify a "soft power" technique that will attack the enemy head on and at the roots of their support.

Homeland security practitioners and national leaders: This research will present a new approach to help further the development of local and regional strategies to counter domestic radicalization.

Future research efforts: This thesis will assist future research efforts of others pursuing the development of a national counter-radicalization and/or a counterterrorism strategic communications strategy by providing a starting point upon which to build. The research conducted will advance an approach that will impact the enemy militarily, but in a non-military manner. The ultimate goal is to maximize control over messaging to the masses without jeopardizing any single agency's efforts to carry out necessary anti-terrorist action to protect the United States.

## **J. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The research of this study is limited to only open source documents; that is, no interviews, no access to archival data, no direct observations, no participant observation, and no examination of physical artifacts were utilized. Regardless, the topic and discussion undertaken will provide a springboard for further research into this significant aspect of counterterrorism strategic communications.

## K. CONCLUSION

Some may believe that with the withdrawal of troops from Iran and Afghanistan and the death of Osama bin Laden, the War on Terror is over. However, on July 25, 2012, National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) Director Mathew Olsen testified before the House Committee on Homeland Security that “the overall terrorist threat remains persistent, adaptive and resilient.”<sup>68</sup> “These groups are multidimensional and are blurring the lines between terrorist group, insurgency, and criminal gang.”<sup>69</sup> The method of their growth is through their use of the media. He supports this by citing “how al-Qa’ida in Iraq (AQI) are supporting global extremism in their media statements and their publishing of an explosives training video calling for lone wolf attacks against the West, and even with the deaths of Anwar al-Awlaki and Samir Khan, the *Inspire* magazine still endures and continues to reach a global audience of violent extremists.”<sup>70</sup> “The United States must realize that its campaign against terrorism did not end with the death of Osama bin Laden, and more than a decade after 9/11 it remains at war with al-Qa’ida.”<sup>71</sup>

The United Kingdom has had a longer and more significant history with terrorist attacks, both domestic (IRA) and international (London subway bombings July 7, 2005), than the United States. As a major country, they provide a variety of rich targets that are susceptible to attacks, such as government facilities, transportation systems, critical infrastructures, and international events, such as the recent London Summer Olympics that took place during the summer of 2012. The United States has similar targets and, like the United Kingdom, supports a wide variety of international travel through air and sea, thus providing a wealth of targets to international terrorists. One key difference between the two

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<sup>68</sup>Thomas Joscelyn, “We Remain at War with al-Qaeda,” *The Long War Journal*, July 25, 2012.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

countries is that the United Kingdom has purposely made counter-radicalization strategy a significant part of its counterterrorism plan to offset the impact of the terrorist message and its intended audiences.

Based on these facts, the purpose of this thesis will establish the rationale for the United States to develop a counter-radicalization strategy on the War on Terror and the means for implementation through an examination of the UK PREVENT model. The following chapter will examine the UK's 2006 PREVENT. How it was implemented and the challenges it faced that warranted it to be reevaluated and subsequently modified.

## II. UNITED KINGDOM'S PREVENT 2006 STRATEGY

“As the threat continues to evolve, our efforts to protect against those threats must evolve as well.”

–National Strategy for Counterterrorism<sup>72</sup>

### A. CONTEST

Terrorism is not a new phenomenon in the United Kingdom. Based on the long-running troubles in Northern Ireland, the United Kingdom has a rich experience in repeated domestic terrorist attacks, which had become the basis of its counterterrorism strategy. Since 2003, the United Kingdom has had a long-term strategy for countering international terrorism known within the government as CONTEST. The aim of CONTEST is “to reduce the risk from international terrorism in order for people to go about their daily lives freely and with confidence.”<sup>73</sup> The CONTEST strategy is divided into four principal strands:

- PREVENT terrorism by tackling the radicalization of individuals
- PURSUE terrorists and those that sponsor them
- PROTECT the public, key national services, and UK interests abroad
- PREPARE<sup>74</sup> for the consequences

However, in 2006 the United Kingdom believed they faced a continuing threat from extremists who believed they could advance their aims by committing acts of terrorism in the United Kingdom against its citizens and its interests abroad. The principal terrorist threats at that time were made by “radicalized individuals who used a distorted and unrepresentative version of the Islamic faith

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<sup>72</sup>Deardorff, *The Roots of Our Children's War: Identity and the War on Terrorism*, 1.

<sup>73</sup> HM Government, *Pursue Prevent Protect Prepare: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering International Terrorism Annual Report* (London, HM Government, 2010), 3–31, [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/228907/7833.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/228907/7833.pdf).

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

to justify their violence.”<sup>75</sup> “These ideologues espoused a violent ideology for militant Islamists that believes in a selective interpretation of the Quran, opposes the beliefs of non-Muslims, and rejects political participation in both Western democracies and Middle Eastern institutions of government.”<sup>76</sup> Though the United Kingdom believed this group to only be a small minority within the Muslim community, much of the UK’s antiterrorism focus was nonetheless on the Muslim community.

## **B. PREVENT 2006**

Despite the efforts of the aforementioned operations in neutralizing some of the main supporters of Muslim radical ideology, these ideas still exist. Due to the ubiquity of these ideas and their acceptance by some in the Muslim community, other nations, such as the Netherlands have sought to take a more comprehensive and nonviolent approach to tackling violent extremism. Authorities label these programs as countering violent extremism (CVE), and they exist in both Muslim and non-Muslim majority states.<sup>77</sup> According to Deardorff, “bin Laden’s demise offers our nation an opportunity to truly prevent terrorism for the next generation. It is time to unplug the machine to transition from a preemptive to a preventative strategy.”<sup>78</sup>

The PREVENT strand of the 2006 CONTEST sought to prevent terrorism by tackling the radicalization of individuals. It sought to do this by

- “tackling the disadvantaged and supporting reform by addressing structural problems within the UK and abroad that could potentially contribute to radicalization, such as inequalities and discrimination;”
- “detering those who facilitate terrorism and those who encourage others to become terrorists by changing the environment in which

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<sup>75</sup> HM Government, *Pursue Prevent Protect Prepare: The United Kingdom’s Strategy for Countering International Terrorism Annual Report*, 12.

<sup>76</sup> William Sheridan Combs, “Assessing Two Countering Violent Extremism Programs: Saudi Arabia’s PRAC and the United Kingdom’s Prevent Strategy,” *Small Wars Journal* (July 2013).

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> Deardorff, *The Roots of Our Children’s War: Identity and the War on Terrorism*, xiv.

the extremists and those who perform radicalization can operate;”  
and

- “engage in the battle of ideas via challenging the ideologies that extremists believe can justify the use of violence, primarily by helping Muslims who wish to dispute these ideas to do so.”<sup>79</sup>

Finally, Deardorff stated, “the concept of a continuously evolving threat frames the fundamental challenge of developing a national counterterrorism doctrine. When the threat is dynamic, ideological and impacts a diverse population, lines of delineation between ‘us’ and ‘them’, free speech and violent rhetoric, and positive messaging and propaganda can become substantially blurred. These terms are understood differently depending on an individual’s personal experience and the cultural context in which one lives. Essentially, the terms are all subjective.”<sup>80</sup>

The researcher believes it was this subjectivity that may not have been completely appreciated and understood by the different levels of government and all the interested parties involved. Though the United Kingdom had been dealing with terrorism for decades, the terrorist created after 9/11 involves a completely different type of terrorist. Today’s terrorist has both a domestic and international influence that provides them the rationale to be radicalized. Today’s terrorist can learn everything they need to be effective from the Internet at their leisure. And, finally, today’s terrorist may be those individuals who have grown up in the very community they seek to destroy.

### **C. PROCESSES OF RADICALIZATION**

In order for PREVENT 2006 to be effective, it examined the processes by which individuals become radicalized. It stated, “to understand how terrorist groups recruit new members and sustain support for their activities, it is critical to understand the processes whereby certain experiences and events in a person’s

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<sup>79</sup> HM Government, *Countering International Terrorism: The United Kingdom’s Strategy* (London, HM Government, 2006), 1-2.

<sup>80</sup>Deardorff, *The Roots of Our Children’s War: Identity and the War on Terrorism*, xv.

life cause them to become radicalized, to the extent of turning to violence to resolve perceived grievances.”<sup>81</sup> At the time, the United Kingdom believed there were a range of potential factors in radicalization with no one factor being more dominant than the others.<sup>82</sup> The radicalizing factors were as follows:

- “development of sense of grievance and injustice where the terrorists’ version of history and recent events is highly negative and partial in its interpretation of past interactions between Islam and the West;”<sup>83</sup>
- “the process of globalization where traditional structures are challenged along the political, social, and cultural spectrum;”<sup>84</sup>
- “anti-Westernism where the presence of Western military forces conveys a paternalistic and condescending atmosphere that “emasculates” older and younger natives by conveying to their fellow countrymen that they are unable to run their own country;
- specific events, such as Coalition action to restore sovereignty in Kuwait was depicted as attacks upon Islam itself;”<sup>85</sup>
- “a sense of personal alienation or community disadvantage arising from socioeconomic factors, such as discrimination, social exclusion, and lack of opportunity;”<sup>86</sup> and finally,
- “exposure to ideas that can be from radical literature, the Internet, or more likely the association from local contacts and peers.”<sup>87</sup>

While none of these factors is conclusive, the research undertaken here believes that it is the exposure to ideas that is the one commonality amongst all radicalization processes and is the one certainty amongst the subjectivity mentioned earlier.

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<sup>81</sup> HM Government, *Countering International Terrorism: The United Kingdom’s Strategy*, 36.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

At the time, PREVENT 2006 saw the radicalization process as a two-stage process. It was assumed that an alienated individual who has become highly radicalized is not necessarily a terrorist. “Only a tiny minority of radicalized individuals actually crosses over to become terrorists: by financing, lending facilities to, or encouraging active terrorists, or by actively participating in terrorist attacks.”<sup>88</sup> In the event that an individual becomes a terrorist, “a range of factors could be involved with no single predominant factor or exclusivity to Islam in the West. It is likely the catalyst for any given individual becoming a terrorist will be a combination of different factors unique to that person.”<sup>89</sup> “Two such factors are a sense of grievance and injustice. Both can arise from a terrorist’s perception or version of history, and recent events can have a highly negative impact along with his or her interpretation of past interactions between Islam and the West. Another potential factor is a sense of personal alienation or community disadvantage, arising from socioeconomic factors, such as discrimination, social exclusion, and lack of opportunity. While an individual may not be relatively disadvantaged, he or she may identify with others seen as less privileged; also, different generations within the same family may have significantly different views about these issues.”<sup>90</sup>

The final factor is exposure to radical ideas. “Sources of these ideas may come from reading persuasive literature or surfing the Internet; however, exposure will primarily come from local contacts and from peers. Exposure to a forceful and inspiring figure already committed to extremism can be an important influence and, thus, a critical factor in radicalization. The influential person may be associated with a particular place (mosque) or can be a national or international figure, as seen on video or heard on tapes or heard live. PREVENT 2006 asserts that inspiration from a distance is critical, and there is evidence that the rise of the Internet, with its ability to connect people, to transmit ideas

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<sup>88</sup> HM Government, *Countering International Terrorism: The United Kingdom’s Strategy*, 10.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

between them, and then to distribute those ideas to others, has had a significant impact on the accessibility and flow of radical ideas.”<sup>91</sup>

One such example is Anwar al-Awlaki, who was westernized and produced radical English videos. “Described as the Jack Kennedy of the global jihad by Jarrett Brachman, a former researcher at the CIA’s Counterterrorism Center and author of *Global Jihadism*, al-Awlaki’s power lay in his ability to connect with ordinary people in the United States and make them feel closer to their faith and unfortunately seduce them to violence.”<sup>92</sup> Major Nidal Malik Hasan’s killing of 13 people at Fort Hood can be counted as one individual who had been swayed by al-Awlaki. According to CIA case officer Marc Hageman, “just about every plot in the United States was influenced or inspired by him. Even after his death, he continues to influence people to commit violence. In 2011, after al-Awlaki’s death, Jose Pimentel, a Manhattanite and U.S. citizen, was planning on building and detonating bombs targeting New York government facilities in order to kill soldiers returning home and their families.”<sup>93</sup> He learned how to make the bombs from Inspire magazine, which was created by al-Awlaki and continues to be in publication. Authorities are concerned that al-Awlaki’s presence may grow wider even after his death due to his talented oratory skills that are forever preserved on the Internet.

#### **D. UK EFFORTS TO ADDRESS RADICALIZATION**

The factors that can cause a person to become radicalized to the point of supporting terrorism or even becoming a terrorist himself or herself are varied, counterintuitive to basic assumptions and complicated. In fact, “a study conducted by Marc Hageman on more than 500 al-Qa’ida-affiliated terrorists discounted economic deprivation, brainwashing, religious knowledge, poor education, and sexual frustration as common motivators for terrorist activity.

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<sup>91</sup> HM Government, *Countering International Terrorism: The United Kingdom’s Strategy*, 10.

<sup>92</sup> Tara McKelvey, “Anwar al-Awlaki Continues to Inspire Islamists,” *U.S. News*, November 23, 2011.

<sup>93</sup> The Daily Beast, *Man Arrested in N.Y.C. Bomb Plot*, November 20, 2011.

Contrary to most beliefs, many of the “known terrorists” had studied and lived for years in the West, came from middle- to upper-income families, contributed to their local community, and were considered completely normal by friends and associates.”<sup>94</sup>

PREVENT 2006 sought to counter radicalization by addressing the structural problems in the United Kingdom and elsewhere that may contribute to radicalization. “The first area of action undertaken was the UK government’s efforts on an equality agenda and working with communities and the public and private sectors to address these wider issues. Efforts included the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund to help improve opportunities and strengthen society by reducing inequalities, especially those associated with faith and race. It included taking action to help the Muslim community improve their educational performance, employment opportunities, and housing conditions. Another effort was the Commission on Integration and Cohesion. Its goal was to consider how local areas themselves play a role in forging cohesive and resilient communities. Finally, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Global Opportunities Fund was created to address the political and socio-economic environment that extremists exploit. Its goals were to support the development of effective, accountable governments; democratic institutions; and the promotion of human rights.”<sup>95</sup>

The second area of action undertaken to counter radicalization was to change the environment in which extremists and those radicalizing others can operate; deterring those who facilitate terrorism and those who encourage others to become terrorists. PREVENT 2006 sought to accomplish this by enacting the Terrorism Act of 2006 that made it a criminal offense directly or indirectly to encourage the commission, preparation, or instigation of acts of terrorism or to disseminate terrorist publications. The Act also made it illegal for certain terrorist

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<sup>94</sup>Deardorff, *The Roots of Our Children’s War: Identity and the War on Terrorism*, 21.

<sup>95</sup>*Ibid.*, 11.

groups to operate in the United Kingdom and extended prescription to include international terrorist groups, like al-Qa'ida.

Associated with the Act was “the “List of Unacceptable Behaviors” likely to lead an individual to being excluded or deported from the United Kingdom. It covered any non-UK citizen using any medium, including writing, producing, publishing, or distributing material; public speaking including preaching; running a website; using a position of responsibility, such as a teacher, community leader, or youth leader, to express views that foment, justify, or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs; seeking to provoke others to terrorist acts; fomenting other serious criminal activity or seeking to provoke others to serious criminal acts; or fostering hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.”<sup>96</sup>

Another action taken in this area involved prisons and radicalization. Mosques are not the only places where radicalization occurs. “In 2006, HM Prison Services conducted a national training event that provided specialized training for Imams in order to support their daily work with all Muslim prisoners. Such training was provided to help identify those prisoners susceptible to radicalization or extremist views and support them upon their release from prison to integrate back into their local community.”<sup>97</sup>

The third area of action taken to counter radicalization was the battle of ideas. This notion even today is integral. Deardorff stated, “Al Qaeda is not just an organization: it is a violent political ideological movement, justified by an ultraconservative and anachronistic interpretation of Islam. And despite the fact that al Qaeda, as an organization, is ‘greatly diminished,’ the appeal of its narrative has increased dramatically during the past half decade.”<sup>98</sup> It became, and was necessary to challenge, the ideological motivations that extremists

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<sup>96</sup>Deardorff, *The Roots of Our Children's War: Identity and the War on Terrorism*, 12.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., xiii.

believe justify the use of violence. The action was accomplished with several meetings with various ministers of Muslim groups. Examples include the Prime Minister meeting with twenty-five Muslim community leaders following the London bombings in 2005; the Home Secretary meeting with Muslim community leaders and agreeing to create seven community-led working groups to develop recommendations for tackling extremism among Muslim youth; Ministers for Women meeting with Muslim Women's Network to discuss the role women can play in dealing with extremism in Muslim communities; the Prime Minister meeting with a group of sixteen- to twenty-five-year-old Muslims to discuss the challenges Muslim youth face; and the Prime Minister meeting with forty Muslim women to boost understanding of the community.

In addition to listening to the Muslim community, "the Home Office also worked with media organizations to improve perceptions of Muslim communities, worked with police on protecting the Muslim community, and consulted with all faith communities on the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act of 2001."<sup>99</sup>

Finally, "under the banner of "Preventing Extremism Together" the UK government had also established a national grassroots campaign targeted at Muslim youth, Muslim Forums on Extremism and Islamophobia, and the Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board."<sup>100</sup> In addressing interests abroad, "PREVENT 2006 worked to support Muslims across the world and in areas, such as Kosovo, Pakistan, Turkey, Kashmir, Palestine, Bosnia, Darfur, Sudan, Afghanistan, and Iraq."<sup>101</sup> The United Kingdom provided support along with international development assistance and disaster relief to the countries listed.

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<sup>99</sup>Deardorff, *The Roots of Our Children's War: Identity and the War on Terrorism*, 14

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

## E. CONCLUSION

The UK's PREVENT program in 2006 was a commendable effort in that it sought to address and prevent radicalization at a grassroots level. The United Kingdom recognized that in addition to the battlefields their military was fighting on in the Middle East, they also recognized there was a battlefield at home as well. However, much like the first radical action taken in any effort, it was viewed as a good attempt, but its practical effect was negligible. Dearforff discussed PREVENT 2006's strategy," extensively outlining the challenges and criticisms it brought up. One challenge was that it was viewed as discriminatory by some Muslims. It was perceived that the UK government was sponsoring Muslim organizations on the basis of theological criteria, for example believing Sufis to be intrinsically more moderate than Salafis."<sup>102</sup> Another group critical of PREVENT 2006 were civil libertarians and free-speech advocates. They espoused that those individuals or groups who were open and critical of government would risk being labeled "extremist" and risk losing funding.<sup>103</sup>

Dearforff's assessment of PREVENT 2006 was that the effort was a positive step in the right direction. Its aim was to "create an alert community that is willing to cooperate with government authorities,"<sup>104</sup> which anecdotally he believed to be happening at that time. However, even at the time of his analysis in 2010, there were still groups, both religious and political, who believed that PREVENT 2006 risked personal civil liberties and possibly further alienating (maybe even radicalizing) members of the Muslim community it sought to work with on addressing terrorism.

This chapter discussed how the United Kingdom made its first attempt at addressing radicalization at the domestic level based on what it understood to be the factors in causing radicalization. Though they realized these factors and were

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<sup>102</sup> Robert B. Dearforff, "Countering Violent Extremism: The Challenge and the Opportunity" (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2010).

<sup>103</sup>Ibid., 53.

<sup>104</sup>Ibid., 54.

cognizant that the factors alone were not the sole cause of an individual supporting terrorism or becoming a terrorist, they nonetheless proceeded to include it in their counterterrorism strategy (CONTEST) and implement policy targeting these factors. In the process, they faced a mixed bag of negative reactions from different interest groups, thus requiring the rewrite of PREVENT 2006 to address these concerns. The rewrite resulted in the creation of the PREVENT 2011 strategy. The next chapter will examine how it fared given the substantive changes made based on the criticisms of PREVENT 2006.

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### III. UNITED KINGDOM'S PREVENT 2011 STRATEGY

“Osama bin Laden may be dead, but the threat from Al Qa’ida inspired terrorism is not.”<sup>105</sup>

–Theresa May MP, Home Secretary and Minister for Women and Equalities, 2011

#### A. Rationale for Revised PREVENT in 2011 CONTEST Strategy

In the previous chapter, the researcher examined the UK’s 2006 CONTEST strategy in terms of the various environments (cultural, economic, educational, and political) and the factors at the time, which may have contributed to radicalization of members of the UK Muslim community. It was the combination of these environments and radicalization factors that led the UK government to assess, develop, and later coordinate the implementation of the PREVENT strategy as a viable strategy to combat domestic terrorism.

However, “on November 9, 2010, the Home Secretary announced a review of PREVENT and concluded that it had not been fully effective.”<sup>106</sup> The Home Secretary’s conclusion was based on expert, independent oversight review by Lord Carlile of Berriew QC. “The review began on November 10, 2010, and ran for three months. The review involved web-based questionnaires, eleven consultation events held around the country, and a series of focus groups.”<sup>107</sup> Based on the review, Theresa May MP stated that, “the PREVENT programme [sic] we inherited from the last Government was flawed. It confused the delivery of Government policy to promote integration with Government policy to prevent terrorism. It failed to confront the extremist ideology at the heart of the threat we face; and in trying to reach those at risk of radicalization, funding sometimes

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<sup>105</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Command of Her Majesty (London: HM Government, 2011), Forward, [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf).

<sup>106</sup>Ibid, Introduction, 4.1.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid, Introduction, 4.4.

even reached the very extremist organizations that PREVENT should have been confronting.”<sup>108</sup>

The focus of this chapter are the limitations of the 2006 PREVENT strategy that warranted the UK government to undertake significant revisions, the new factors that enables the PREVENT strategy in the UK's 2011 CONTEST to be more effective from its 2006 version, and its objectives and implementation. The limitations of PREVENT 2006 stemmed from the reactions of several groups that PREVENT 2006 (1) focused too narrowly on the Muslim community, (2) was a vehicle for spying on communities, (3) misallocated funding, (4) lacked an effective integration strategy, and (5) failed to address radicalization overseas, especially in North and West Africa. The research proposes that the development of PREVENT 2011 also stemmed from the realization that the United Kingdom was involved in an “irregular warfare” situation and needed to adjust its strategy accordingly.

### **1. Focusing Too Narrowly on the Muslim Community**

The PREVENT 2006 strategy “was considered by many to be disproportionate in that it stigmatized communities, suggesting they alone were collectively at risk of radicalization and implied terrorism was a problem specific to Muslim communities.”<sup>109</sup> “Further negative consequences of PREVENT 2006 focusing narrowly on the Muslim community led to viewing the Muslim community as a “suspect community” by government and security forces and the media, fostering social divisions among Muslims themselves and between Muslims and others, encouraging tokenism, facilitating violations of privacy and professional norms of confidentiality, discouraging local democracy, and being counter-productive in reducing the risk of political violence.”<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, Foreword.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid, Executive Summary, Objectives, Objective One: the ideological challenge, 3-25.

<sup>110</sup> Arun Kundnani, “Spooked! How Not to Prevent Violent Extremism,” *Institute of Race Relations*, October 2009, 8.

In 2010, information had become available that further substantiated the need to reexamine PREVENT 2006's focus on the Muslim community. "A 2010 Citizenship Survey showed that support for all kinds of violent extremism was prevalent, not only among the young but among all lower socio-economic and income groups and not just Muslim groups. Open source data from 2000 to 2010 on people convicted of Islamist terrorism-related offenses show that most offenses were committed by men under the age of 30. Most were British. Almost 25 percent had links to Pakistan—either as British nationals with Pakistani heritage or Pakistani nationals—and almost 15 percent had links to East Africa (notably Somalia). Almost 50 percent of the sample were residents in London at the time of their offense, notably in the north or northeast of the City; 13 percent were residents in the West Midlands (12% in Birmingham), 9 percent in Yorkshire/Humber, and 7 percent in the South East. Just over one-third of the group that were British citizens and just under one-third of the total for whom information on education was available had attended a university or institute of higher education. Fewer than half were either in employment or full-time education. Thirty-five percent were unemployed."<sup>111</sup> It can be inferred from both the Citizenship Survey and the open source data that extremism was not confined to the Muslim community.

"The inference also was supported by a majority (80%) of respondents to the PREVENT 2011 consultation who believed that PREVENT should have addressed a wider range of threats, including not only al-Qa'ida but also violence from extreme right-wing or other ethnic or religious organizations."<sup>112</sup>

## **2. Accusations of Spying on Communities**

The issue was raised in an article in the British newspaper, *The Guardian*, "that stated PREVENT 2006's efforts for "information gathering was directed at the innocent and the spying was directed at people because of their religion and

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<sup>111</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, The Context, Scale, 5.30.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid, Guiding Principle: A Framework for *Prevent*, The aim and scope of *Prevent*, 6.10.

not because of their behavior.”<sup>113</sup>“The information collected included political and religious views; information on mental health, sexual activity, and associates; and other sensitive information, all of which could be stored until the people concerned reach the age of 100.”<sup>114</sup> Traditionally, in Britain, “intelligence is gathered by the police and security services, but through PREVENT 2006 it was able to turn community, religious, and voluntary groups into information or intelligence providers.”<sup>115</sup> In fact, “PREVENT 2006 had earned the unique distinction of being the biggest domestic spying program that targeted the thoughts and beliefs of the innocent in Britain in modern times.”<sup>116</sup>

### **3. Misallocation of Funds**

With a budget in 2008–2009 of \$140 million, PREVENT 2006 was to mobilize communities to oppose the ideologies of violent extremism. “Despite the UK government’s claim that its efforts were community led, the allocation of funds to local authorities had not been driven by a decision-making process in which local agencies identified their own needs and accessed central government funds accordingly.”<sup>117</sup> “Rather, local authorities were pressured to adopt PREVENT 2006 in direct proportion to the numbers of Muslims in the area, thereby constructing the Muslim population as a “suspect community.”<sup>118</sup> In essence, a local authority had to describe their environmental situation as dire based on the number of Muslims in the area to secure funding, thus portraying all Muslims in the area as suspect.

Once the funds were issued, “local authorities used the funding to provide “targeted capacity building of Muslim communities,” focusing particularly on

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<sup>113</sup> Vikram Dodd, “Government Anti-Terrorism Strategy ‘Spies’ on Innocent,” *The Guardian*, October 16, 2009.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Kundhani, “Spooked! How Not to Prevent Violent Extremism,” 10.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

young people, women, and mosques. Serious problems arose, however, when deprived communities with many needs could only secure the funding via the voluntary sector by signing up for PREVENT's counterterrorism agenda."<sup>119</sup> In addition, many of the projects that were funded were geared toward cohesion rather than counterterrorism.

It was from an examination of the projects funded that PREVENT funding should not go towards wider objectives of promoting integration and community cohesion. This created the impression that the UK government was supporting cohesion projects only for security reasons and in effect "securitising [sic] integration."<sup>120</sup> Examples abound on "how funding for cohesion projects and faith-based projects could be obtained only by using counterterrorism funds and sometimes by dealing with counterterrorism officials and police officers."<sup>121</sup>

In March 2010, the House of Commons Select Committee for Communities and Local Government report on PREVENT stated that "much PREVENT money has been wasted on unfocused or irrelevant projects as a result either of misunderstanding of PREVENT or of a lack of willingness and capacity of local organizations to deliver."<sup>122</sup>

#### **4. Lack of an Effective Integration Strategy**

An effective integration strategy attempts to incorporate the strategies of an organization's various units to share resources and provide greater return on investment for the organization as a whole. In the case of PREVENT 2006, it had a budget of \$140 million in 2008–2009 that focused on mobilizing communities/sectors/institutions to oppose the ideology of violent extremism, promote shared values, and respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism.

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<sup>119</sup>Kundnani, "Spooked! How Not to Prevent Violent Extremism."

<sup>120</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, 6.28.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.28.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.29.

The effort involved a number of organizations and individuals tasked with carrying out the aforementioned goals.

In every case, the evaluation of any social or preventative program is inherently challenging. Unlike the “hard” sciences where hard-numbered data is used, success in the “soft sciences” often is reflected in changing attitudes as much as behaviors and attitudes that are complex to measure and assess. “So while many efforts have been made to evaluate the effectiveness of PREVENT 2006, the only description that can be used to describe its success is patchy.”<sup>123</sup> Progress had been made in measuring outputs but not always measuring outcomes. In the rush to implement PREVENT 2006, adequate monitoring and evaluation processes had not been built into the strategy to see if what was being done was actually making a difference. It was a bad combination of generous funding, a multitude of actors and organizations, and the need to show quick results that eventually led to quality control issues at all levels of the strategy.

## **5. Addressing Radicalization Overseas**

Extensive polling has been conducted overseas to gauge support for al-Qa’ida. “While some studies have shown that al-Qa’ida’s influence is declining, other countries have shown a high level of support; for example, Nigeria (49%), Jordan (34%), and Egypt (20%).<sup>124</sup> It was determined that these high levels of support and elsewhere could have impacted the radicalization process in the United Kingdom. A large number of people who have engaged in terrorism in the United Kingdom have come to the United Kingdom from overseas, notably from countries in the Muslim-majority world, which had been affected by conflict and instability. Most of those convicted in the United Kingdom between 1999 and 2009 were British nationals, but fewer than half were born in the United

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<sup>123</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, 6.71.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid*, 5.19

Kingdom.”<sup>125</sup> “Similar percentages have been found among people who have engaged in terrorist-related activity and who have not been convicted.”<sup>126</sup>

Many people who had been radicalized in the United Kingdom had been significantly influenced by propagandists of terrorism who are based overseas. “In many cases they had spent time in a current or historic theater of conflict in the Muslim-majority world.”<sup>127</sup> “Some had been influenced based on the time they spent in religious institutions in their countries and before they settled in the United Kingdom. Many had been recruited while they had been traveling or resident overseas. It is these connections that highlight the key fact that PREVENT work in the United Kingdom is often dependent on essential PREVENT work overseas, conducted by the United Kingdom, by other governments, or by multilateral organizations.”<sup>128</sup>

The research also proposes that the UK’s response to extremism and political instability in North and West Africa warranted an upgrade to the 2006 PREVENT strategy. Up until 2011, British interests overseas have been targeted by terrorist organizations. At its current pace, North and West Africa are set to become prime terrorist breeding grounds for future terrorist training camps due to the proliferation of madrassas in the area.

The update of the 2006 PREVENT strategy “stemmed from the UK’s terrorism assessment. At that time the United Kingdom faced a broad range of terrorist threats, with the most serious coming from al-Qa’ida, its affiliates, and like-minded organizations”<sup>129</sup> who sought to radicalize and recruit people to their cause. Based on more information not available or known prior to 2006, “the UK had become more familiar with the factors that encouraged people to support

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<sup>125</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, 5.32.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid*, 5.32.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid*, 5.33.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid*, 5.33.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid*, 3.2-3.3.

terrorism and to engage in terrorism-related activities.”<sup>130</sup> What the United Kingdom and the world had witnessed was that terrorism had evolved, thus making PREVENT 2006 that much more difficult to implement (irregular warfare). “The UK had assessed that radicalization is driven by an ideology which sanctions the use of violence; by propagandists for that ideology here and overseas; and by personal vulnerabilities and specific local factors which, for a range of reasons, make that ideology seem both attractive and compelling.”<sup>131</sup> The United Kingdom further admitted that evidence showed that support for terrorism is associated with rejection of a cohesive, integrated, multi-faith society and of parliamentary democracy. “Terrorist groups have shown that they can take up and exploit ideas which have been developed and sometimes popularized by extremist organizations that operate legally in the UK.”<sup>132</sup> In their conclusion, “their efforts to deal with radicalization will depend on developing a sense of belonging to the UK and support for its core values.”<sup>133</sup>

The UK’s terrorism assessment that warranted an upgrade to the 2006 PREVENT strategy “stemmed also from the UK’s response to extremism and political stability, especially in North and West Africa. In testimony offered by RaffaelloPantucci to the British Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee, he describes how the threat to British interests abroad was being impacted by the evolution of terrorism in these areas.”<sup>134</sup> According to Pantucci, “British security and intelligence (SIA) agencies were not aware of the threat of North African terrorism to the UK interests at home and overseas.”<sup>135</sup> As stated earlier, “even with bin Laden and al-Awlaki no longer leading al-Qa’ida, terrorism has

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<sup>130</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, 3.4.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid*, 3.5.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid*, 3.7.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid*, 3.6.

<sup>134</sup> RaffaelloPantucci, “The UK’s Response to Extremism and Political Instability in North and West Africa,” July 16, 2013, [http://raffaellopantucci.com/2013/07/16/the-uks-response-to-extremism-and-political-instability-in-north-and-west-africa/?utm\\_source=rss&utm\\_medium=rss&utm\\_campaign=the-uks-response-to-extremism-and-political-instability-in-north-and-west-africa](http://raffaellopantucci.com/2013/07/16/the-uks-response-to-extremism-and-political-instability-in-north-and-west-africa/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=the-uks-response-to-extremism-and-political-instability-in-north-and-west-africa).

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid*.

disaggregated and diversified throughout the world, which poses a challenge for the SIA who have limited resources. However, the link between North Africa and UK domestic terrorism was revealed through Abu Hamza Al-Masri at the Finsbury Park Mosque in North London. Abu Doha, Rachid Ramda, and Rabah Kadre represented a number of North Africans with formative experience and expertise from undertaking jihad in Afghanistan and/or Bosnia who were linked to the mosque. Actually, Abu Doha was believed to be a key figure in a network of plots that stretched across Europe, North America, and as far as the Khalden training camp in Afghanistan.”<sup>136</sup> The mosque was a place where al-Qa’ida-linked recruiters would operate and that Kamel Bourgas used as a postal address and photocopy shop for his poison recipes.

However, as time passed the terrorist threat adapted. According to Jonathan Evans, the Director General of the Security Service, “the threat is becoming less monolithic but more widespread. Al-Qa’ida affiliates in Yemen, Somalia, and the Sahel have become more dangerous as al-Qa’ida’s presence in Pakistan has declined, and increasing levels of cooperation are being witnessed between al-Qa’ida groups in various parts of the world.”<sup>137</sup> The most prominent international terrorist network in North Africa “is al-Qa’ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Led by Abu Qatada, also known as Omar Mahmoud Othman, AQIM has singled out the United Kingdom for direct punishment in its rhetoric. He is currently serving in detention, awaiting extradition to Jordan for his alleged role in terrorist plots in the country.”<sup>138</sup> However, even without Qatada, AQIM has committed acts of terrorism against the British, even after the passing of PREVENT 2011, such as follows:<sup>139</sup>

- “On January 22, 2009, an AQIM cell snatched a group of tourists that included British national Edwin Dyer. While the rest of the

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<sup>136</sup>Pantucci, “The UK’s Response to Extremism and Political Instability in North and West Africa.”

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

tourists were released, Dyer was brutally executed in late May 2009 when the UK did not meet the demands of the AQIM cell to pay a ransom and release Abu Qatada.”

- “In April 2012, the AQIM cell repeated this terrorist act to free their cleric when they snatched Stephen Malcolm, a dual British-South African national, in November 2011.”

While it is not clear whether groups like this in North and West Africa have either the capacity or intention to launch attacks, they do seem to target their efforts at foreigners through kidnappings/killings and the targeting of Western corporate interests as a means of gaining attention and as reprisals. Examples include the following:<sup>140</sup>

- “In late May 2013, MokhtarBelmokhtar’s“Signed in Blood Battalion’s” suicide attack against a military base in Agadez and a French run (the company Areva) uranium mine in Arlit killing 21 people.”
- “In December 2011, al-Qa’ida in the Land Beyond the Sahel claimed to be holding British national Chris McManus. In March 2012, British Special Forces mounted an assault to rescue McManus that unfortunately ended with his death.”<sup>141</sup>
- “In June 2012, an assault on Dominic Asquith, British Ambassador to Libya.”<sup>142</sup>
- “In September 2012, the death of American Ambassador to Libya, Chris Stevens.”<sup>143</sup>
- “In February 2013, a group of British, Italian, Greek, and Lebanese nationals were snatched from a construction site in northwestern Nigeria. All were executed on the basis of a claimed visible British support for the government in Nigeria.”<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>140</sup>Pantucci, “The UK’s Response to Extremism and Political Instability in North and West Africa.”

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup>Luke Harding, Chris Stephen, and Agencies in Tripoli, “Chris Stevens, U.S. Ambassador to Libya, Killed in Benghazi Attack,” *The Guardian*, September 12, 2012.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup>Pantucci, “The UK’s Response to Extremism and Political Instability in North and West Africa.”

Finally, within many lawless areas of the country, training camps have begun to grow, with reports of Nigerian extremists training at camps in Timbuktu, Mali. The proliferation of training camps growing unchecked presents more opportunities for those individuals who have become radicalized into supporting terrorist groups by undergoing training to carry out al-Qa'ida's mission. In fact, in a plot disrupted in April 2012, a group planning to carry out a terrorist plot spoke of going to AQIM for training versus Pakistan. Despite Syria's efforts to offer a more tempting and active battlefield for aspiring British jihadists, given the ongoing British connections to Libya and opportunities offered in the broader Sahel, it is possible that the area will be much more attractive for individuals to seek training.

Pantucci's analysis via AQIM supports the thesis of this research in that a "counter-terrorism response needs to focus on a number of aspects that strike a balance between protecting national interests abroad and dealing with the political realities at home."<sup>145</sup> Just like the U.S. public, "the British public will no longer support long-term heavy military engagement in foreign nations from where the direct threat to their country is opaque."<sup>146</sup> The result "must be a light foot approach focused on training to develop local capacity and on understanding how the threat is set to develop."<sup>147</sup> In the longer term, this would involve "a clear focus on stabilization and development that will help resolve age-old regional disputes, and in turn reduce the space available for Islamist groups to move in."<sup>148</sup>

Pantucci offers five approaches that can accomplish this task. Of the five, the one that supports this research was "recognizing the role of local communities." Pantucci states that in "PREVENT terms the growing priority and

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<sup>145</sup>Pantucci, "The UK's Response to Extremism and Political Instability in North and West Africa."

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

focus placed upon North and West Africa in counterterrorism terms requires a parallel push for the North and West Africa communities to understand British foreign policy in the region and feel that their views in turn are being heard and understood.”<sup>149</sup> Pantucci believes that if engaged positively, they can play a key role in protecting Britain’s interests. He predicts, “without robust counter-narrative work and effective counterterrorism-informed community policing, there is a risk that the issue of the “home grown” South Asian terrorism of 2005 onwards will be witnessed again in the North and West African community.”<sup>150</sup> It is this prediction that may have driven the revamping of PREVENT in 2011.

It is the stark reality that “groups, such as AQIM, Ansar Dine, Movement for Oneness, Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) and “Signed in Blood Battalion,” Ansaru, and Boko Haram operate in a territory that is almost the size of Europe and are coupled with strong smuggling and nomadic traditions that make them adept at slipping back and forth across porous desert borders.”<sup>151</sup> It is from this environmental reality that the researcher believes the Home Office recognized that there are simply not enough military and intelligence resources to address the entire gamut of terrorism around the world. Part of this dilemma stems from what was stated at the beginning of this research where terrorism is evolving and subsequently changing the face of warfare, thus warranting new approaches.

PREVENT 2011 seeks “to address this issue through better communication of the UK’s security and foreign policies to rebut claims made about them and challenge terrorist ideologies.”<sup>152</sup> This has come in the form of the creation of the Research Information and Communications Unit (RICU) that was established in the Office of Security and Counter-Terrorism in the Home

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<sup>149</sup>Pantucci, “The UK’s Response to Extremism and Political Instability in North and West Africa.”

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, 8.23.

Office in 2007. Its function is “to coordinate government communications about the terrorist threat and the UK’s response to it and facilitate and generate challenges to terrorist ideology and the claims made by terrorist groups.”<sup>153</sup> “RICU has had a central role in developing counter-ideological or counter-narrative work.”<sup>154</sup> However, its impact has been variable due to its lack of precision around target audiences and messages. It has been a struggle to analyze its impact and evaluate its effectiveness. Regardless, through PREVENT 2011, RICU has implemented better programs and evaluative techniques to better measure its effectiveness.

PREVENT 2011 is in position and designed to better explain foreign policy to British domestic audiences. Tools of foreign policy often employ the sticks-and-carrots, direct and indirect, hard and soft power approaches through the military instrument. Today, “most nations” “sticks” (hard power) are executed in general direct approaches becoming increasingly lethal, and the carrots (soft power) executed in general indirect approaches are limp and looking a little rotten.”<sup>155</sup> In a sense, many nations find themselves at a strategic inflection/tipping point. To address this issue, nations must boost their carrot-indirect-soft power engagement or risk their global influence to wane.

In addition, according to Robert Sharpe, “the Islamic world is undergoing a transition, in some cases very intelligently, by what he would describe as benevolent monarchies. In the less benevolent monarchies, the issues are more about power, resources, sectarianism, and standing in the Islamic world rather than the “haves” and “have-nots.””<sup>156</sup> “With the Arab republics experiencing the most unrest, they are where the most work is needed and the most change can occur. Most remain very vulnerable. Good governance provides the solution in all

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<sup>153</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, 8.28.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.47.

<sup>155</sup> Robert Sharp, “Call Them Sticks and Carrots, or Direct and Indirect, or Hard and Soft Power Approaches,” *Small Wars Journal*, October 2013.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*

cases, but in most cases good governance is merely an aspiration.”<sup>157</sup> Good governance is not just a new idea in some of these countries; there also is a lack of government capacity and capability. In his view, there will be many more revolutions and counter-revolutions to come. The point here is that “engagement has been less effective than many would have liked, and it is suggested that it is because nations actually have reduced or at least appeared to have reduced their ability, competence, and capacity to engage and gain trust indirectly with carrots as soft power.”<sup>158</sup> PREVENT 2011 seeks to address this issue through identifying priority areas in education, faith, health, criminal justice, and charities and providing governmental support.

Finally, PREVENT 2011 can utilize the power of propaganda to help advance the UK’s response to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat from those who promote it. Propaganda’s role in history in and of itself can warrant a study on its own. For the purposes of this research, it will cite David Welch who states that, “‘Propaganda is ethically neutral,’ it is not intrinsically good or bad, for it is simply the communication of a message; what is important is to spot persuasion, bias and untruth when it occurs, and to think about who might have a monopoly on its dissemination, and thus on power. Historically, it’s almost always been a pejorative word: ‘our side’ produces information and ‘your side’ produces propaganda. Our government tells the truth, yours tells lies.”<sup>159</sup>

Propaganda has been compelled to change in recent decades. “Citizens have instead become skeptical of “spin” and “public relations,” and they are right to be, for it serves the exact same purpose: to shape information in the interests of those holding the megaphone.”<sup>160</sup>“Propaganda has had to adapt to meet its audience in much the same way as commercial advertising has done: the human

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<sup>157</sup> Sharp, “Call Them Sticks and Carrots, or Direct and Indirect, or Hard and Soft Power Approaches.”

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Dan Hancox, “From Stamps to Social Media, the History of Propaganda,” *The National*, September 2013.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

brain in the consumer age has evolved to become much more resistant to the simplistic messages of the 1930s.”<sup>161</sup>“Political communications must now drive at the heart of an individual’s desire and aspiration, as modern advertising does, rather than simply and plainly stating the merits and specifics of a particular politician, policy, or party, as they would have done in the past.”<sup>162</sup>

The use of propaganda by terrorist organizations has taken political communications to a much higher level. “By making sure that terrorist attacks are filmed and then widely disseminated, al-Qa’ida—and other “insurgent” groups, such as the Taliban—take the battle of ideas into the media.”<sup>163</sup> The content of the attacks may be simple, the footage grainy and dark, but it is the dissemination that is so important. Neville Bolt, in his book *The Violent Image*, quotes at length from jihadi Internet forums that show the attacks, “raids” in their jargon, as merely the first step in the process. “We expect you to be like beehives during the raid,” writes a forum moderator. “One person takes part in distributing...another generates links...one person writes an article. People must feel and notice that the forums have changed radically during this blessed raid. The raid is dependent on you.”<sup>164</sup>

Thus, “the original attack becomes merely the spark. The real propaganda comes after. Indeed, for Bolt, such is the importance of the dispersal of the act across the media that he views the attack as the mere beginning.”<sup>165</sup> “The entire operation might be born in an explosion of blood and bone, but the central event is the media dispersal.”<sup>166</sup> For “Bolt and, to an extent, the terrorist organization, propaganda requires two things: an act and a viewer.”<sup>167</sup> It is not enough to

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<sup>161</sup>Hancox, “From Stamps to Social Media, the History of Propaganda.”

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Faisal al Yafai, “The Violent Image Explores Use of Pictures As Propaganda,” *The National*, August 2012.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

merely destroy a tank or blow up a building. Terrorist propaganda requires viewers.

The UK's RICU via PREVENT 2011 addresses this new use of propaganda by terrorist organizations "by running a range of projects designed to challenge terrorist ideology online through effective counter-narratives, positive messaging from credible sources, and critical analyses of extremist propaganda."<sup>168</sup>

This discussion has presented information that PREVENT 2011 was a product of addressing the limitations of PREVENT 2006, where it was accused of (1) focusing too narrowly on the Muslim community, (2) being a vehicle for spying on communities, (3) misallocated funding, (4) lacking an effective integration strategy, and (5) failing to address radicalization overseas, especially in North and West Africa. The research also proposed that the development of PREVENT 2011 stemmed from the realization that the United Kingdom was involved in an irregular warfare situation and adjusted its strategy accordingly. Based on these issues, the new PREVENT 2011 strategy was adopted by the UK government.

## **B. NEW FACTORS OF PREVENT 2011**

The 2011 PREVENT strategy has thirteen guiding principles which are consolidated into the nine bullet points below.

- "PREVENT will always be part of the UK counterterrorism strategy with the aim of stopping people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorists."<sup>169</sup>
- "Though it will address all forms of terrorism, it will concentrate a majority of its resources and efforts to preventing people from joining or supporting al-Qa'ida, its affiliates, or related groups."<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, 8.28-8.30.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid*, 7.1

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid*, 7.1

- “It will be committed to protecting freedom of speech in the UK. But preventing terrorism will mean challenging extremist (and non-violent) ideas that are also part of a terrorist ideology. PREVENT will also mean intervening to stop people moving from extremist groups or from extremism into terrorist-related activity.”<sup>171</sup>
- “PREVENT will allocate resources proportionate to the threat, and at present the greatest threat is al-Qa’ida.”<sup>172</sup>
- “To prevent a mistake in the past, PREVENT must not assume control of or allocate funding to integration projects which have a value far wider than security and counterterrorism; the Government will not securitize its integration strategy.”<sup>173</sup>
- “PREVENT must not be used as a means for covert spying on people or communities.”<sup>174</sup>
- “The Government’s commitment to localism will support the PREVENT strategy.”<sup>175</sup>
- “PREVENT will be funded from the Home Office and other departments. Grants will be made available for local authority PREVENT work. Evaluation of PREVENT activity to date has been poor; money has been wasted. Funding and other support will not be provided to extremist organizations.”<sup>176</sup>
- “The process of radicalization in the UK often has overseas connections. To be effective, PREVENT must take place overseas as well as in the UK. However, that type of work has not been effective to date and funds have been wasted.”<sup>177</sup>

### **C. OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTATION**

The objectives of the 2011 PREVENT strategy are to<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Ibid, 7.1.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid, 7.1.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid, 7.1.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid, 7.1.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid, 7.1.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid, 7.1.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid, 7.1.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid, 7.2.

- “Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat the UK faces from those who promote it;
- Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support; and
- Work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalization which must be addressed.”

The UK’s efforts to achieve Objective 1 are to challenge the ideology of terrorist groups. While previous work on this has made some progress, it has not been consistent or reached those individuals most susceptible to radicalization. PREVENT 2011 “proposes that much more work needs to be done in this area, but it must be proportionate and focused.”<sup>179</sup> The strategy to advance this objective “is to include better communication of government security and foreign policies to rebut claims made about them; more projects in education, communities, and the criminal justice system to enable understanding of and challenge to terrorist ideology; and support for experts where ideology draws on and misrepresents theology and requires a detailed response.”<sup>180</sup>

The basis of achieving Objective 2 is that “the UK believes radicalization is usually a process and not an event.”<sup>181</sup> It is proposed that intervention during the radicalization process can prevent vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorist-related activity. However, programs to address this are new, and evidence of the programs’ impact is limited.

In fact, part of the reason that PREVENT 2006 was updated was due to the accusation that these programs served as vehicles for spying into those targeted groups.

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<sup>179</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, Objective One: Challenging the ideology that supports terrorism and those who promote it, Summary.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid*, Summary.

<sup>181</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, Objective Two: Protecting vulnerable people, Summary.

Finally, the success of Objective 3 is based on working with key sectors. “The key sectors identified are education, faith, health, criminal justice, and charities.”<sup>182</sup> “Some progress has been made in these key sectors with the Internet being proposed as a key sector in its own right, providing the vehicle for delivery of programs for these key sectors.”<sup>183</sup>

In order to ensure that PREVENT 2011 “will accomplish its objectives, its actions continue to be coordinated by the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT) in the Home Office, and the Home Secretary will be the lead Minister.”<sup>184</sup> “Funding for PREVENT 2011 was to come from three main areas: local authority work in association with communities, policing, and work overseas. The first two areas were to be funded by the Home Office, while the third was to be funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO).”<sup>185</sup> The objectives and implementation of PREVENT 2011 were based “on its prioritization of the risks faced by the United Kingdom and not (as has been the case) on the basis of demographics.”<sup>186</sup>

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

The focus of this chapter examined the limitations of the 2006 PREVENT strategy that warranted the UK government to undertake significant revisions resulting in the new 2011 PREVENT strategy. The result of these revisions led to the creation of PREVENT 2011 that addressed the limitations of PREVENT 2006 that (1) had focused too narrowly on the Muslim community, (2) was accused of being a vehicle for spying on communities, (3) misallocated funding, (4) lacked an effective integration strategy, and (5) failed to address radicalization overseas, especially in North and West Africa. The research also proposes that the United

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<sup>182</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, Objective Three: Supporting sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation, Summary.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid*, Summary.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid*, 3.41.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid*, 3.44.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid*, 3.42.

Kingdom realized that the War on Terror required them to conduct an irregular warfare campaign reflective of warfare in the twenty-first century.

The next chapter will examine the current U.S. Strategic Counterterrorism Strategy and its goals, and, most importantly, how it intends to advance them. The research will examine the issues, challenges, metrics, stakeholders, and projected outcomes of the SCC. Through this discussion, further analysis will be explored into how the UK's experience with the 2011 and 2006 PREVENT strategy can lead to the possible creation and implementation of a U.S. version.

## IV. WHY THE U.S. NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR COUNTERTERRORISM DOES NOT PROVIDE THE COUNTER RADICALIZATION MEASURES REQUIRED IN TODAY'S NEW DOMESTIC BATTLEFIELD

“Our terrorist adversaries have shown themselves to be agile and adaptive; defeating them requires that we develop and pursue a strategy that is even more agile and adaptive.”<sup>187</sup>

–U.S. President Barack Obama  
National Strategy for Counterterrorism, June 2011

### A. INTRODUCTION

What has been covered to this point is how “the UK developed, implemented, and revised their PREVENT strategy to directly address the principle threat to the United Kingdom of radicalized individuals who are using a distorted and unrepresentative version of the Islamic faith to justify violence”<sup>188</sup> against the United Kingdom both abroad and domestically. The UK’s PREVENT strategy seeks to address radicalization as a significant component in combating terrorism. The PREVENT element strategy seeks “to actively counter the rhetoric in order to influence individuals from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.”<sup>189</sup> It is based and vetted through the UK’s past and present dealings with domestic terrorism as well as the growing ease and presence of radicalization on the Web and what it can make people do. It is also based on the Security Service’s belief that “the terrorist groups operating in Britain today are different in many important respects both from Islamist extremist activity in other parts of the world and from historical terrorist movements, such as the IRA or the Red Army Faction.”<sup>190</sup> This is evidenced by the 2013 Birmingham

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<sup>187</sup> The White House, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism* (Washington, DC: The White House, 2011), 1–26, [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/counterterrorism\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/counterterrorism_strategy.pdf).

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> UK Home Office, *Protecting the UK Against Terrorism*.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

plotters' bombing attempt, which showed that terrorism is still active, especially in the United Kingdom.

Faced with a similar amorphous threat, the United States lacks a coherent domestic counter-radicalization strategy similar to PREVENT. The United States must develop such a counter-radicalization strategy to reinforce, integrate, and complement public communication efforts that focuses on countering the rhetoric of al-Qa'ida, its affiliates and adherents, other international terrorist organizations and violent extremists overseas. The United States must then "confront the al-Qa'ida rhetoric by providing tools, techniques, methods and programs for all U.S. government communicators, both domestic and international to advance the U.S. message."<sup>191</sup> However, the U.S.'s messaging efforts are challenged by the variety of al-Qa'ida's rhetoric. Their rhetoric often involves the seven major "sources of tension that ranges from violent extremism, the situation between the Israelis', Palestinians, and the Arab world, the rights and responsibilities of nations on nuclear weapons, democracy, religious freedom, women's rights and economic opportunity."<sup>192</sup> Thus, the problem becomes, how can the United States restructure its strategy to win the war of "hearts and minds" within the United States? Can it develop a counterterrorism strategy that implements counter-radicalization techniques and counter-strategic communications as part of its strategy to address al-Qa'ida's rhetoric? The rhetoric often is linked to rising instances of homegrown terrorism within the U.S. borders and international al-Qa'ida-affiliated terrorism that may threaten U.S. interests abroad as well.

What is needed is a strategy that counters the communications put out by al-Qa'ida that targets those individuals in the domestic front who may be prone to support terrorism. After Afghanistan and Iraq, the United States is less likely to mount a full scale military operation because it is too costly in terms of budgets as well as the personal turmoil that impacts military personnel and the general

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<sup>191</sup>"Organization Description."

<sup>192</sup>Obama, "Prepared Remarks to the Muslim World."

population. The United States must develop a counter-radicalization strategy to fight in this new type of irregular warfare at home.

The issue, therefore, is not to have the most powerful military today but rather the most relevant strategy at the point of necessity—a point that this research proposes as counter radicalization and strategic counterterrorism communications. To have that, “the U.S. needs a strategy in place that is not necessarily “ready for combat” at any given moment but instead is most able to adapt to the events of tomorrow”<sup>193</sup> domestically as well as internationally.

However, the only current U.S. strategy that can guide the United States handle the terrorist events of tomorrow is the U.S. National Strategy for Counterterrorism. However, the basis of this strategy is grounded on the U.S. experience abroad, that is, internationally. The effectiveness of this strategy has proven to be limited due to the U.S. international strategy not reflecting the actions taken by the U.S. government domestically. There is essentially a “disconnect” between what is written and what is actually done in the United States. For the purposes of this research, this chapter will provide a critical analysis of the U.S. National Counterterrorism Strategy through the lens of a domestic target. It will also propose that this cannot be accomplished at the federal level. Therefore, the responsibility for domestic counter radicalization rests, due to the abdication of the federal authorities, with local government. Development of the counter radicalization and counterterrorism strategic communications as a result must be driven by community relations bottom up and not top down.

## **B. ANALYSIS OF U.S. COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGY**

According to Deardorff, “globalization, electronic media, and ease of trade and travel have exposed various cultures to one another more rapidly, more frequently, and in greater depth today than at any other time in

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<sup>193</sup> Thomas E. Ricks, “Heed the History Lesson: A Smaller Military is Better,” *Sun-Sentinel Newspaper*, December 12, 2013, 13A.

history.”<sup>194</sup>“Through this technologically advanced and interconnected world, grievances (real or imagined) can be shared instantaneously, and even small numbers of violent actors have the potential to do great damage.”<sup>195</sup> In addition, while the general public could simply blame Islam because it would be expedient, easier, and less controversial than reexamining the core political issues and grievances that resonate much in the Muslim world, it is hardly practical in the long run and would degrade U.S.-Muslim relations further. Therefore, the challenge is to determine “how the U.S. can mount a “relevant” counterterrorism strategy that addresses these twenty-first century realities taking into account that the Muslim community makes up less than one percent of the U.S. general population.”<sup>196</sup>

The USCS outlined in the June 2011 National Strategy for Counterterrorism and signed off by President Barack Obama attempts to address these realities. The USCS positions itself that this strategy will be more focused. “It supports the claim by declaring that the U.S. is not at “war” with the tactic of terrorism or the religion of Muslim but at war against a specific organization—al-Qa’ida.”<sup>197</sup> The strategy to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qa’ida and its affiliates and adherents will require the concerted efforts of allies, partners, and multilateral institutions. It also includes specific areas of focus tailored to the regions, domains, and groups that are most important to achieving the strategy’s goals. To accomplish this, the strategy is directed by four guiding principles, overarching goals, and several areas of focus.

The four guiding principles that lead the strategy are “adhering to U.S. core values, building security partnerships, applying counterterrorism tools and capabilities appropriately, and building a culture of resilience.”<sup>198</sup> The areas of

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<sup>194</sup>Deardorff, *The Roots of Our Children’s War: Identity and the War on Terrorism*, 17.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup>“Organization Description.”

<sup>198</sup> Ibid

focus identified by the strategy are “the Homeland, South Asia, Arabian Peninsula, East Africa, Europe, Iraq, Maghreb and Sahel, Southeast Asia, Central Asia, and Information and Ideas.”<sup>199</sup> It is the Information and Ideas focus this research examines, since it is this principle that can “adapt to the events of tomorrow” within the Homeland.

The following section reviews the principles and how the domestic Muslim communities (or those prone to disenfranchisement) may view these principles.

## **1. Four Guiding Principles of USCS**

### **a. Adhering to U.S. Core Values<sup>200</sup>**

The principle of adhering to U.S. core values “refers to the power and appeal of the U.S. values of freedom, fairness, equality, dignity, hope, and opportunity that are woven into the fabric of U.S. society.”<sup>201</sup> The USCS counts on offering these values when terrorists offer injustice, disorder, and destruction. Under this guiding principle, there are five subheadings to help advance this principle.

(1) **Respect for Human Rights.**<sup>202</sup> The USCS declares its respect for universal rights in the hopes of contrasting it against the actions of al-Qa’ida, its affiliates and adherents, and other terrorist organizations. By positioning the U.S. agenda that supports the rights of free speech, assembly, and democracy with the death and destruction offered by terrorists, it is believed that it will help undermine and undercut their appeal. However, the success of this depends upon the U.S. matching its words with actions.”

Discussion: Examples at home abound on the hypocrisy of this subheading; that is, the U.S. use of inhumane interrogation methods undermine the rule of law and are ineffective in gaining intelligence. There are the numerous

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<sup>199</sup>“Organization Description.”

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

reports of police departments overstepping the lines, trampling over the rights of individuals, and then covering their actions through lies and deception. All these examples undermine U.S. Muslims belief in the rule of U.S. law.

(2) Encouraging Responsive Governance.<sup>203</sup> Through the promotion of a representative, responsive government, the USCS is able to more successfully meet its goals. The USCS contends that when governments are responsive to the needs of their citizens, it diminishes the discontent of their people and thus weakens those negative feelings that al-Qa'ida actively seeks to exploit.”

Discussion: Whether examining federal, state, or local levels of government, there are plenty of examples where each level of government has been unresponsive to the needs of the population it serves. The unresponsiveness at the federal level is validated by the 113th Congress being the least productive body in history by only passing fifty-five laws due to partisan politics. Their inability to cooperate and pass laws to help the general public with employment, housing, immigration, and so forth, has led to an increase in the number of American “patriot” extremist groups, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center who count 1,360 “patriot” extremist groups in 2012, up by 7 percent from 2011.<sup>204</sup> These groups oftentimes target those who are of different color, country of origin, and worship differently as the source of the problems caused by the U.S. government’s unresponsiveness. Their race crimes may generate further radicalization against the U.S. government, which they claim they are acting to protect.

(3) Respect for Privacy Rights, Civil Liberties, and Civil Rights.<sup>205</sup> These are critical components of the USCS. They are needed to maintain the support of the American people for the efforts carried out by the USCS.”

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<sup>203</sup>“Organization Description.”

<sup>204</sup>Callie Carmichael, “Anti Government Extremist Groups Reach Record Levels, Say Experts,” *CNN News*, March 6, 2013, <http://www.cnn.com/2013/03/05/us/splc-extremist-groups-report/>.

<sup>205</sup>“Organization Description.”

Discussion: There has been a longstanding history of unacceptable intrusion of government into American's lives (i.e., Watergate), with the use of facial recognition software at the 2001 Super Bowl, license plate tracking, and so forth. Recently, former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden's alleged whistleblowing act, where he released an estimated 1.7 million classified documents, showed how the NSA carried out surveillance aimed at foreign governments and their leaders.<sup>206</sup> What was more surprising of Snowden's whistleblowing was when information also came out about how the NSA carried out surveillance on American citizens as well. Another example includes the use of drones by local law enforcement. These drones had been credited with helping eliminate terrorists overseas. But so fearful and distrustful are U.S. citizens of their own local law enforcement having use of these drones that many cities have now passed laws that protect air space and prevent the use of drones without a warrant. If non-Muslims have this level of distrust of their own local law enforcement, the U.S. Muslim population is considerably higher. It is easy for them to feel this way when they witness inappropriate surveillance of their mosques, FBI sting operations on Muslims, and use of national security laws to incarcerate them without due process. It is the U.S. government's flagrant disregard for privacy rights, civil liberties, and civil rights that empowers the ACLU to be much stronger in the United States than in the United Kingdom.

(4) Balancing Security and Transparency.<sup>207</sup> The USCS states that a well-informed American public is a source of its strength, based on the notion that democratic institutions function best in an environment of transparency and open discussion of national issues. From this, the USCS plans to make information available to the American people about the threats they face and the steps being taken to mitigate those threats. However, the USCS tempers it with the fact that in some cases information must be protected from disclosure to

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<sup>206</sup> Ken Dilanian and Richard A. Serrano, "Report: NSA Leaks Hurt Terror, Crime Fight," *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, January 10, 2014, 6A.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*

protect personnel, their sources, and methods of gathering information and to preserve the ability to counter the attack plans of terrorists.”

Discussion: Due to the variety of government agencies involved in this effort, there is a hesitancy to release such information without verifying and re-verifying the potential threat for fear of being wrong, subject to public and political ridicule and weakening its legitimacy for future notifications to the public. It results in a delay of information to the general public who use the Internet and thus question why these organizations charged with our safety are even needed if they cannot furnish information in a timely and effective manner. The role of the U.S. news media also feeds into this when they highlight the abuses, thus reinforcing fear of government and fostering negative perceptions.

(5) Upholding the Rule of Law.<sup>208</sup> The USCS’ commitment to the rule of law is fundamental to supporting the development of an international, regional, and local order that is capable of identifying and disrupting terrorist attacks, bringing terrorists to justice for their acts and creating an environment in every country around the world that is inhospitable to terrorists and terrorist organizations. In order to accomplish this, the USCS promotes two actions:

- Maintaining an Effective, Durable Legal Framework for Counterterrorism Operations<sup>209</sup>

After 9/11, the United States was confronted with trying to legally counter a terrorist attack that had never happened before. Since then, the USCS has stated that a refined and applied legal framework is needed that ensures all counterterrorism activities are placed on solid legal footing. The challenge will be whether it can be flexible enough to adjust to the changing threat and environment.”

Discussion: However, both houses of the U.S. Congress passed the controversial Military Commissions Act of 2006. The Act “establishes Military

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<sup>208</sup>Dilanian and Serrano, “Report: NSA Leaks Hurt Terror, Crime Fight.”

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

Commissions, redefines U.S. obligations under Common Article 3 of the Geneva Convention, strips detainees of their right to file habeas corpus pleadings, allows for evidence obtained by coercion or hearsay, and limits a defendant's right to examine government evidence."<sup>210</sup> So to Muslims who were taught in American schools that even though Americans have their rights protected by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, those rights can be suspended due to this Act, that is, "liberty and freedom for some."

- Bringing Terrorists to Justice<sup>211</sup>

Successful prosecution of terrorists will continue to play a critical role in counterterrorism efforts, enabling the United States to disrupt and deter terrorist activities, gather intelligence from those lawfully held in U.S. custody, dismantle organizations by incarcerating key members and operatives, and gain a measure of justice by prosecuting those who have plotted or participated in attacks. The USCS also proposes to work with foreign partners to build their willingness and capacity to bring to justice suspected terrorists who operate within their borders. It also supports the notion that when other countries are unwilling or unable to take action against terrorists within their borders who threaten the United States, they should be taken into U.S. custody and tried in U.S. civilian courts or by military commission."

Discussion: After 9/11, the United States believed itself to be attacked by a unique and wholly different type of threat, and, so the argument went, "efforts to combat this new threat should be equally unique and should not be judged nor constrained by adhering to existing legal norms."<sup>212</sup> "The United States then engaged in torture, cruel and inhumane treatment in the detention and prison facilities that they ran. Beginning in 2003, allegations of abuse of prisoners held

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<sup>210</sup> Mark W. Vorkink and Erin M. Scheick, "The 'War on Terror' and the Erosion of the Rule of Law: The U.S. Hearings of the ICJ Eminent Jurist Panel," *Human Rights Brief* 14, no. 1 (2006): 2–6.

<sup>211</sup> "Organization Description."

<sup>212</sup> Vorkink and Scheick, "The 'War on Terror' and the Erosion of the Rule of Law: The U.S. Hearings of the ICJ Eminent Jurist Panel."

in the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq surfaced, and by early 2004, the media released lurid, disturbing photos depicting U.S. military personnel abusing prisoners.”<sup>213</sup> The act presented a negative perception of the U.S. government. It portrayed the U.S. government in a vengeful and haughty light through their embarrassment of Muslims versus an appearance of seeking justice. This has caused Muslims, and many Americans, in the United States to be more disenchanted with their own government.

***b. Building Security Partnerships***<sup>214</sup>

“It is no secret that the United States cannot eliminate every terrorist or terrorist organization that threatens its safety, security, or interests. It must rely on and foster collaboration among key partners and allies to share the burdens of common security. To do this, the USCS proposes to”:

(1) **Accept Varying Degrees of Partnership.**<sup>215</sup> The United States along with its partners and allies are engaged in the full gamut of collaborative counterterrorism activities, from intelligence sharing to joint training and exercise to operations that counter radicalization to pursuing community resilience programs. It is advantageous working with countries that share the same common core values of the United States, have similar democratic institutions, and bring a long history of collaboration. However, in many cases the United States does not have that luxury and oftentimes must work with countries they have very little in common with except for the defeat of al-Qa’ida. Regardless, it is imperative that the United States build cooperation with these countries.”

Discussion: However, while the United States is clamping down on civil liberties and fundamental freedoms, the world is watching them do it. It can have two effects on countries, and both are negative. First, some countries will see this

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<sup>213</sup>Vorkink and Scheick, “The ‘War on Terror’ and the Erosion of the Rule of Law: The U.S. Hearings of the ICJ Eminent Jurist Panel.”

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

hypocrisy, which could possibly lead more people to be sympathetic to those groups that the United States is fighting. Second, and possibly even worse, other countries may do similar things like the United States, believing that if the United States can justify it then they are permitted to do the same.

From a domestic point of view, Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) groups have been created in every state to aid in the dissemination of intelligence to all groups in their respective state. However, they do not reach everywhere since many of the police departments are too small and cannot afford to send officers to the JTTF. In addition, much of the information is processed top down rather than bottom up, resulting in the front lines getting information slowly or the decision makers at the JTTF not getting “boots on the ground” information to help drive better policy and intelligence. In essence, a full-scale counter-radicalization program needs more than the police. PREVENT 2006 failed because it was too law-centric. However, it was corrected in PREVENT 2011 by bringing in organizations in fields, such as health, education, prison, and so forth. There are no efforts to bring these elements together in the United States.

(2) Leveraging Multilateral Institutions.<sup>216</sup> To counter violent extremists who work in scores of countries around the globe, the United States must draw the resources and strengthening activities of multilateral institutions at the international, regional, and sub-regional levels. The benefits are multiple: By working with these multilateral institutions, the United States can increase its engagement of partners, reduce the financial burden on the United States, and enhance the legitimacy of its counterterrorism efforts by advancing their objectives without a unilateral U.S. label. Through this effort, it avoids duplication and diluting its own or its partners’ counterterrorism efforts, recognizing that many of its partners have capacity limitations and cannot participate adequately across too broad a range of multilateral fronts.”

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<sup>216</sup>Vorkink and Scheick, “The ‘War on Terror’ and the Erosion of the Rule of Law: The U.S. Hearings of the ICJ Eminent Jurist Panel.”

Discussion: The challenge of this effort is how U.S. institutions define terrorism and determine who the enemy is. The U.S. federal government claims it is fighting the War on Terror, but it lacks any real meaning “because one cannot engage in a war against a method (or means) of war.”<sup>217</sup> Also, is there a timeline for this “War”? And is it only against al-Qa’ida, a non-state actor? Or should it be against those elements/forces that turn Americans toward supporting al-Qa’ida and carrying out its mission against the United States? Without these basic questions settled, how can partnerships with any institutions be made?

**c. *Applying Counterterrorism Tools and Capabilities Appropriately***<sup>218</sup>

As stated earlier by President Barack Obama’s Introduction to the National Strategy for Counterterrorism, “our terrorist adversaries have shown themselves to be agile and adaptive.” In response, the tools and capabilities should be just as equally agile and adaptive. The USCS proposed to accomplish this through”

(1) “Pursuing a “Whole of Government” Effort.”<sup>219</sup> This bold claim advanced the notion of a rapid, coordinated, and effective counterterrorism effort that reflected the full capabilities and resources of the entire U.S. government. It envisioned that the capabilities and authorities of each department and agency ensured that the right tools are applied at the right time to the right situation in a manner that was consistent with U.S. laws.”

Discussion: Though the DHS was created to provide a safer, more secure America by combining twenty-two different federal departments and agencies in 2002, it still competes for intelligence against the FBI, DOD, all military branches, all intelligence agencies, all U.S. states, several large cities, “think tanks,” and private contractors. In fact, there is no document that coordinates any type of

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<sup>217</sup>Vorkink and Scheick, “The ‘War on Terror’ and the Erosion of the Rule of Law: The U.S. Hearings of the ICJ Eminent Jurist Panel, Washington College of Law Human Rights Brief.”

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

strategy that involves all of these groups. The U.S. government at every level (local, state, regional, and federal) as a whole even lacks basic messages targeted at vulnerable populations that all can agree on, thus resulting in lacking its own PREVENT strategy. There seems little current indication that any level of U.S. government can produce a domestic counter-radicalization strategy in America as wide ranging as PREVENT in the United Kingdom.

(2) “Balancing Near- and Long-Term Counterterrorism Considerations.<sup>220</sup> The defeat of al-Qa’ida must be accomplished without acting in a way that undermines the U.S. ability to discredit its ideology. America’s exercise of power against terrorist threats must be done in a thoughtful, reasoned, and proportionate way that enhances U.S. security and delegitimizes the actions of those who use terrorism. A balance must be attained between the costs and risks of action versus inaction that may have unintended consequences affecting the costs at a strategic level.”

Discussion: A significant obstacle to any foreseeable solution is that the United States has no established scope, timeline, or reasonable way to measure its effectiveness. Without these issues defined, how are near and long term defined? In addition, America’s law enforcement exercises of power against terrorist threats have not been uniformly reasonable. For instance, in 2012, twenty-seven-year-old Ahmed Ferhani was sentenced to ten years for plotting to blow up synagogues and churches in New York. Ferhani had been institutionalized for psychiatric issues since he was seventeen years old. Yet, the NYPD used an undercover officer to befriend the broke, depressed, unemployed, and mentally unbalanced Ferhani and “tricked and coaxed him into a scheme that was completely initiated, constructed, and performed by NYPD agents preying on one Muslim man who they knew to be impressionable and in need of

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<sup>220</sup>Vorkink and Scheick, “The ‘War on Terror’ and the Erosion of the Rule of Law: The U.S. Hearings of the ICJ Eminent Jurist Panel, Washington College of Law Human Rights Brief,” 7.

help.”<sup>221</sup>“The Muslim community often refers to such law enforcement agency tactics as entrapment as far as the Muslim community is concerned. Another more current example is U.S. District Judge William Martini who dismissed a lawsuit against the New York City Police Department and said that the covert NYPD operation that sent undercover officers into area mosques to conduct surveillance on innocent Muslims was not unconstitutional. Essentially, this decision gives NYPD legal sanction to conduct targeted discrimination against Muslims.”<sup>222</sup>

Ultimately, this war on terror has been too tactical from a military perspective, insufficiently political in its effect, and so lacking in its impact for protecting the United States from those citizens who see it specifically targeting the U.S. Muslim community.

**d. *Building a Culture of Resilience***<sup>223</sup>

This principle seeks to strengthen the security and resilience of the United States through systematic preparation for the threats that pose the greatest risk to the security of the Nation, including acts of terrorism, cyber-attacks, pandemics, and catastrophic natural disasters. It seeks to accomplish this through:”

(1) “Building Essential Components of Resilience.”<sup>224</sup> Based on the al-Qa’ida’s belief that it can cause the United States to change its course in its foreign and national security policies by inflicting economic and psychological damage through terrorist attacks. To deny success to al-Qa’ida along this front means to demonstrate that the United States has and will continue to construct effective defenses to protect vital assets, whether they are critical infrastructure,

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<sup>221</sup> “Mentally Ill Man Gets 10 Years In Prison For Plotting ‘Terrorist Attack,’” December 5, 2012, <http://rt.com/usa/sentence-terrorism-ferhani-york-357/>.

<sup>222</sup>“Federal Judge Says It’s Okay for the NYPD to Spy on Muslims,” February 21, 2014, <http://rt.com/usa/nypd-muslim-martini-ruling-132/>.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

iconic national landmarks, or the U.S. population. However, to present the United States as a hardened target is unlikely to deter al-Qa'ida and its adherents and affiliates from attacking or abandoning terrorism, but it can deter them from attacking particular targets or persuade them that their efforts are unlikely to succeed.”

Discussion: Unfortunately, there has not been any systematic effort carried out by the U.S. government to strengthen and secure critical infrastructure, iconic national landmarks, or the U.S. population. These efforts have been pushed down to the state level, with competitive grants as the only means of support. “While numerous studies and reports validate that these three groups need to be protected, funding has not been sent directly toward them. The only times U.S. efforts arise are in the aftermath of a natural disaster, such as Hurricane Sandy and the tornadoes in Oklahoma, and international relief efforts that the United States undertakes, such as Typhoon Hyain in the Philippines. But in the 2011 UK Strategy for Countering Terrorism, it incorporates both PROTECT (to strengthen protection against a terrorist attack) and PREPARE (to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack).”<sup>225</sup> Should these two strategic strands be more closely linked in the United States?

## **2. Four Guiding Principles of USCS**

In order for the previously-mentioned goals to be accomplished, the USCS specified more detailed and localized areas of focus, that is, areas of the world. The USCS believed that the highest rate of success would best be approached from a local perspective, such as USCS efforts to diminish specific drivers and grievances that al-Qa'ida exploits in its efforts to radicalize, recruit, and mobilize to violence from a regional and group-specific context.

The areas of focus identified by the strategy are the Homeland, South Asia, Arabian Peninsula, East Africa, Europe, Iraq, Maghreb and Sahel,

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<sup>225</sup> HM Government, *CONTEST: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism*, 10.

Southeast Asia, Central Asia, and Information and Ideas. All that are listed in the USCS are significant in that how the United States conducts itself in these parts of the world does affect the domestic diaspora. This research will however concentrate on “The Homeland” area of focus as what is described in the U.S. Counterterrorism Strategy (USCS).

Discussion:“The Homeland<sup>226</sup>—Offensive efforts overseas to protect the Homeland have been complemented by equally robust defensive efforts to prevent terrorists from entering the United States or from operating freely inside U.S. borders. To support this defensive side of the equation, massive investments have been made in aviation, maritime, border security capabilities, and information sharing to make the U.S. a hardened and increasingly difficult target for terrorists to penetrate.” According to the USCS, these efforts must continue. “A counter response to this by al-Qa’ida and its affiliates involves them trying to identify operatives overseas (Underwear Bomber) and develop new methods of attack that can evade these U.S. defensive measures (photocopier machine bomb plot in 2010).”<sup>227</sup> Another counter to these U.S. defensive measures is al-Qa’ida inspiring individuals to engage in terrorism on the U.S. homeland.

While the USCS recognizes that al-Qa’ida is capable of inspiring individuals to engage in terrorism on the U.S. homeland, it lays out no strategy to counter it. Colleen LaRose aka “Jihad Jane” and the Tsarnaev brothers are prime examples of U.S. citizens who were inspired to commit terrorist attacks through radicalization via the Internet. Regardless of the hardening efforts by the U.S., domestic terrorists are agile and adaptive enough to overcome them.

The USCS is cognizant that operating in the United States is different than any other country. First, the United States exercises sovereign control and can

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<sup>226</sup> HM Government, *CONTEST: The United Kingdom’s Strategy for Countering Terrorism*, 10.

<sup>227</sup> “Copier Bomb Plot Could Be Third After Dubai UPS Bombing Sept. 3,” November 1, 2010, [http://seshippingnews.typepad.com/south\\_east\\_shipping\\_news/2010/11/copier-bomb-plot-could-be-third-after-dubai-ups-bombing-sept-3.html](http://seshippingnews.typepad.com/south_east_shipping_news/2010/11/copier-bomb-plot-could-be-third-after-dubai-ups-bombing-sept-3.html).

apply the full strength of the U.S. legal system, drawing on the capabilities of U.S. law enforcement and homeland security communities to detect, disrupt, and defeat terrorist threats. Second, in the USCS description of the Homeland, the capabilities and resources of state, local, and tribal entities serve as a powerful force multiplier for the Federal government's counterterrorism efforts. It's rationale for this statement is that as the domestic terrorist threat continues to evolve, the efforts to protect against those threats must also evolve. However, this evolution is not uniform for all those levels of U.S. government. This is partly due to the sheer number of different government bodies that make up the United States. In 2010 alone, there were 87,576 systems of government.<sup>228</sup> Coordination among them also involves jurisdictional issues, such as who would be in charge, as well as the lack of manpower, resources, and expertise.

The United States has not had as much experience in dealing with terrorism as other countries. It has resulted in U.S. law capabilities not being as thoroughly developed as other countries. In fact, U.S. freedoms and rights of individuals (privacy, due process, habeas corpus, speech, etc.) have created a roadblock to develop the laws necessary to carry out this area of focus. The second point of this area is also misleading about the force multiplier. It assumes federal, state, local, and tribal entities all are on the same page, are willing to share information, are uniform, and work together. It is a notion that has not been fostered nor exercised to make this statement true enough to be effective.

- Information and Ideas: Al-Qa'ida Ideology, Messaging, and Resonance

Information and ideas as presented in the USCS refer to the global communications via the Internet and media that al-Qa'ida utilizes. Through these mediums, al-Qa'ida's calls for violence and instructions for carrying it out are within easy reach of millions of individuals who may or may not come to sympathize with or actively support al-Qa'ida, even if they have little or no formal

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<sup>228</sup> Douglas F. Morgan et al., "Recovering, Restoring and Renewing the Foundation of American Public Administration: The Contributions of Herbert J. Storing," *Public Administration Review* 70, no. 4 (July/August 2010): 621.

contact with them. In order to counter this, the “USCS proposes reducing the traction and space for al-Qa’ida, reducing its resonance, and contributing to what it fears most—irrelevance.”<sup>229</sup>

However, there has been no strategy outlined or carried to reduce the al-Qa’ida message to irrelevance. As stated earlier, there are many agencies (federal, state, local, civilian contractor, etc.) conducting their own war against terrorism, and all are not in synch with each other let alone with any type of unified message(s). “The only organization that has been on record of providing some type of counter message to al-Qa’ida is the U.S. Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications; a tiny and ineffective agency staffed by 12–15 people according to some critics.”<sup>230</sup>

### **3. Conclusion**

The USCS as outlined in the National Strategy for Counterterrorism (June 2011) represents the culmination of the United States experience with terrorism overseas since 9/11. It is acknowledged that al-Qa’ida continues to be a group that is agile and adaptive and that the United States must be just as equally adaptive and agile. The United States has learned that the effort will take the committed involvement and collaborative efforts of all U.S. government agencies.

The research proposes that a counterterrorism response needs to focus on a number of aspects that strike a balance between protecting national interests abroad and dealing with the political realities at home. The U.S. government must recognize the role of local communities because, if engaged positively, they can play a key role in protecting U.S. interests and providing more effective counter radicalization at the targeted groups. Without robust counter-narrative work and effective counterterrorism-informed community

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<sup>229</sup> Morgan et al., “Recovering, Restoring and Renewing the Foundation of American Public Administration: The Contributions of Herbert J. Storing,” 621.

<sup>230</sup> Shaun Waterman, Social networks used to counter al Qa’ida: Team Tries to Impede Jihadi Recruiters,” *The Washington Times*, October 5, 2011, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/oct/5/social-networks-used-to-counter-al-qaeda/>.

policing, there is a risk that in the future homegrown terrorists will become even more prevalent and much more lethal.

The next chapter will discuss how federal engagement with the communities, increased law enforcement, government expertise in countering violent extremism, and the promotion of American ideals can act as a counter to al-Qa'ida's ideology. These factors should serve as the basis of the U.S. counterterrorism strategy, which can lead to developing counter-radicalization programs and improving strategic counterterrorism communications.

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## V. PROPOSAL AND ELEMENTS OF A U.S. PREVENT STRATEGY

“Are we capturing, killing, or deterring and dissuading more terrorists every day than the madrassas and the radical clerics are recruiting, training, and deploying against us?”<sup>231</sup>

–Former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld

### A. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to bring together the elements and considerations discussed in previous chapters and to present an outline of a U.S. domestic counter-radicalization strategy with recommendations on how this strategy should be implemented. The U.S. domestic counter-radicalization strategy proposed will be based on U.S. and UK domestic terrorism experiences and the unique challenges faced by U.S. domestic counterterrorism agencies. Utilizing the UK’s Executive Summary June 2011 Summary Headings, the chapter shall outline a U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy “by considering the context, guiding principles, objectives, and delivery of such a strategy.”<sup>232</sup> Essentially, the discussion will consider the implementation issues which will need to be explored, what those issues involve, what role the federal government should play, which agency would head this strategic effort, how the program would be funded within the federal budget, and how “success” can be measured.

Before a strategy can be proposed, it first must be acknowledged that a U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy is an effort that is an entirely new front for the United States This program requires a different mindset. The United States cannot simply use past national strategic efforts and simply add a counter-radicalization section to it. Just as the United Kingdom realized, the United States

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<sup>231</sup> Michael Jacobson, “Learning Counter Narrative Lessons from Cases of Terrorist Dropouts,” in *Countering Violent Extremism*, ed. Erik Akerboom (Breda, The Netherlands: KoninklijkeBroese&Peereboom, 2010), 73.

<sup>232</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, 1.

must acknowledge and accept that counter radicalization is, in fact, a stand-alone, independent operation worthy of separate analysis and execution. It will require the intra-departmental efforts of various U.S. federal agencies and departments on a significant scale. It will also be a program where the fruits of its efforts may not be immediately felt and not realized until much later.

## **B. CONTEXT OF A U.S. PREVENT STRATEGY**

The United States, like the United Kingdom, faces a range of terrorist threats both domestic and internationally. The most serious threat is from al-Qa'ida, its affiliates, and likeminded organizations. These groups also seek to radicalize and recruit people within America to their cause. While the percentage of Americans who are prepared to support violent extremism in the United States is small, it is significantly higher among young people. During the last decade, the United States has acquired knowledge about radicalization. It has gained experience regarding the factors that encourage people to support terrorism, and then for those radicalized individuals to carry out the terrorism-related activity. Therefore, it becomes imperative to understand these factors so as to prevent radicalization in order to minimize the risks it poses to U.S. national security. Based on this understanding, the United States can develop the basis of the U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy.

As stated in Chapter III, "radicalization is driven by an ideology which sanctions the use of violence by propagandists for that ideology here and overseas."<sup>233</sup> The ideology seems both attractive and compelling to some based on personal vulnerabilities and specific local factors. Evidence also reinforces the notion that support for terrorism is associated with the rejection of a cohesive, integrated, multi-faith society based on democracy. Efforts to address radicalization will aggressively, therefore, depend on developing a sense of belonging to this country and support of U.S. core values.

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<sup>233</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, 1.

### **C. GUIDING PRINCIPLES: A FRAMEWORK FOR U.S. DOMESTIC COUNTER RADICALIZATION STRATEGY**

The U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy must be guided by principles that are consistent with U.S. domestic policy. The principles selected must be of a domestic nature and applicable to the proposed method that will carry it out. They must also be understood at a local level.

Based on the UK's Executive Summary Headings from 2011, the following principles are proposed to frame the U.S. domestic counter-radicalization strategy:

- PREVENT strategy should be an equal, if not, greater part of the overall U.S. counterterrorism strategy, with the number one aim to stop U.S. citizens from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

Discussion: As mentioned in Chapter I, the United Kingdom recognized the importance of the PREVENT strategy which was one of the four core areas of their entire CONTEST strategy. The other three core areas being PURSUE: to stop terrorist attacks; PROTECT: to strengthen protection against a terrorist attack; and PREPARE: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack.<sup>234</sup> The U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy recognizes that radicalization will be a significant component, recognizing the complex causes of radicalization within the overall national counterterrorism strategy.

- The U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy should address the threat of radicalization from environmental groups to international groups. It should also prioritize according to the threat level that these groups pose to the U.S. national strategy.

Discussion: This is based on the fact that the United States deals with a variety of terrorist groups, such as animal rights and environmental groups, White supremacist groups, and the 1,360 "patriot" extremist groups<sup>235</sup> discussed in Chapter IV. Complicating matters are the supremacist and patriot groups that oftentimes target those who are of different color, country of origin, and worship

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<sup>234</sup> HM Government, *CONTEST: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism*.

<sup>235</sup> Carmichael, "Anti-government Extremist Groups Reach Record Levels, Say Experts."

differently as the source of the problems caused by the U.S. government's unresponsiveness. Race (hate) crimes generated from some of these groups often furthers radicalization against the U.S. government from the perpetrators and the victims. The perpetrators feel that the United States is not doing enough to protect its quality of life from people of different backgrounds, and the victims feel that the United States is not doing enough to ensure their protection against these groups.

- The U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy effort will require the balancing of privacy rights, civil liberties, and civil rights versus countering the terrorist messaging that seeks to radicalize individuals.

Discussion: However, as mentioned in Chapter IV, the U.S. government has a longstanding history of unacceptable intrusion of government into Americans' lives. This means that it has to carefully explain the strategy to the U.S. public. It will obviously be controversial and cause debate among many groups, such as the media, civil rights groups, minority groups, think tanks, political parties, etc. It therefore becomes imperative that the U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy have a clear and vetted message on its purpose and the specific means on how it will carry out its purpose. This is where the CSCC, currently located in the U.S. State Department, can take the lead to provide explanation to the domestic audience.

- The U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy will depend on a successful integration strategy. It must not, however, assume control of or allocate funding to integration projects, which have a value far wider than security and counterterrorism as stated in Chapter III. This is in response to a lesson learned in the UK PREVENT strategy where such efforts created the impression that the UK government was supporting cohesion projects only for security reasons and, in effect, securitizing integration.

Discussion: The U.S. PREVENT strategy must not be used as a means for covert spying on U.S. citizens or communities. This was an accusation the United Kingdom faced within their 2006 PREVENT strategy as mentioned in Chapter III, and it undermined its effectiveness and legitimacy resulting in a

revised version, the 2011 PREVENT strategy. This principle will be a challenge because as stated in Chapter IV, the United States is currently depicted as being hypocritical in its respect of human rights. Efforts must be taken to provide a higher level of transparency to bring legitimacy to its labors.

- The U.S. PREVENT strategy will be built on a commitment to localism, where communities and local authorities will have a key part in this strategy. In Chapter IV, the National Strategy for Counterterrorism proposed a “whole government effort” but only at the federal level with a ‘trickle down’ effect on state and local governments.

Discussion: It is proposed here that local government be the main delivery system of the U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy, with the federal government as a support. The approach is similar to the national policy in dealing with natural disasters. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) utilizes the policy that “all disasters are local” meaning that it is the local jurisdiction’s responsibility to handle the disaster first. If the local jurisdiction needs assistance, they seek assistance from the state. And if the state needs assistance, they appeal to the federal government, i.e., FEMA.

- The DHS will fund the U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy. DHS would administer grants to local communities and groups that seek to implement programs to address those social factors that could potentially lead to radicalization. The principle will tap into local communities’ identification of efforts that will foster counter radicalization since they are closer to those groups targeted for radicalization by terrorist groups.

Discussion: As mentioned in Chapter V, the City of Minneapolis works with the Somali Youth Group and Broward County, Florida’s Sheriff’s Office “Uniting Broward” Initiative are examples of efforts that would be eligible for grant funding to reach out to groups targeted for radicalization. In Chapter II, the UK PREVENT 2006 sought to counter radicalization by working with communities and the public and private sectors to address wider issues through the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund to help improve opportunities and strengthen society by reducing inequalities, especially those associated with faith and race. It included taking action to help the Muslim community improve their educational

performance, employment opportunities, and housing conditions. Another effort was the Commission on Integration and Cohesion. Its goal was to consider how local areas themselves play a role in forging cohesive and resilient communities. And, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Global Opportunities Fund was created to address the political and socio-economic environment that extremists exploit. Its goals were to support the development of effective, accountable governments; democratic institutions; and the promotion of human rights.”<sup>236</sup> The U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy can help support these same types of UK organizations by providing grants that incentivize local communities to emulate what these UK organizations accomplished.

- The U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy must be aligned with domestic priorities and avoid being involved in overseas counterterrorism efforts. While it is said, “what happens over there, impacts what happens here,” the strategy must not get bogged down in the foreign policy rhetoric. It must be cognizant of the realities of what happens “over there” and be prepared to respond immediately and with conviction.

Discussion: The CSCC would take the lead on this effort by presenting the U.S. position fairly and openly. In fact, the CSCC should encourage discussion among the different groups that may feel impacted by the action. It would demonstrate that the United States is aware and cognizant of opposing views. By inviting such discussion, it would mitigate and/or diffuse resentment as opposed to ignoring/not addressing the action. However, any more than that will deviate from the strategy’s goals. As mentioned in Chapter III, the UK’s 2011 PREVENT Strategy sought “to address this issue through better communication of the UK’s security and foreign policies to rebut claims made about them and challenge terrorist ideologies.”<sup>237</sup> This has come in the form of the creation of the RICU that was established in the Office of Security and Counter-Terrorism in the Home Office in 2007. Its function is “to coordinate government communications about the terrorist threat and the UK’s response to it and facilitate and generate

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<sup>236</sup> Carmichael, “Anti-government Extremist Groups Reach Record Levels, Say Experts.”

<sup>237</sup>HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, 8.23..

challenges to terrorist ideology and the claims made by terrorist groups.”<sup>238</sup> “RICU has had a central role in developing counter-ideological or counter-narrative work.”<sup>239</sup> However, its impact has been variable due to its lack of precision around target audiences and messages. It has been a struggle to analyze its impact and evaluate its effectiveness. Regardless, through the UK’s PREVENT 2011 strategy, RICU has implemented programs and evaluative techniques to better measure its effectiveness. RICU’s U.S. counterpart, the CSCC just mentioned (and mentioned in Chapter I) is located within the U.S. State Department. It is similarly tasked with the same goals, but is unfunded, understaffed and works more internationally. The CSCC proposed here would be more domestic oriented.

#### **D. OBJECTIVES OF THE U.S. PREVENT STRATEGY**

Extracted from the 2011 UK PREVENT Strategy, the U.S. counter radicalization strategy should address objectives that,

- “respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat the United States faces from those who promote it;”<sup>240</sup>
- “prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support;”<sup>241</sup> and
- “work with sectors and institutions that are familiar with the risks of radicalization that need to be addressed.”

##### **1. Objective One: The Ideological Challenge**

All terrorist groups have an ideology they promote via the Internet to facilitate radicalization and recruitment. The U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy must challenge and disrupt the ability of terrorists to promote their extreme ideology. According to the rationale behind the development of the UK strategy discussed in Chapter III, “previous work in this area had made some

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<sup>238</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, 8.28-8.29.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid, HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, 3.21

<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

progress but had not consistently reached the few people who were most susceptible to terrorist propaganda. Their strategy had failed to recognize the way in which terrorist ideology makes use of ideas espoused by extremist organizations and had not fully understood the implications.”<sup>242</sup> They had not effectively engaged and/or used the influence and reach of communities and community groups. In fact, previous UK PREVENT work had sometimes given the impression that “Muslim communities as a whole were more “vulnerable” to radicalization than other faith or ethnic groups.”<sup>243</sup>

The current U.S. experience in countering terrorist ideology is being carried out by several U.S. and local agencies, such as the DOD, State Department, and the DHS. They have tasked themselves with providing their own strategic communication to terrorist propaganda as discussed in Chapter IV. While they may see the importance of countering the terrorist propaganda, they do not follow a U.S. accepted, universal counter messaging strategy and their work mainly targets international audience with little domestic effort.

In fact, just recently, “the State Department has finally taken to ratcheting its efforts for an English-speaking audience with its Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications’ latest YouTube satire of the “Welcome to the ‘Islamic State’ land (ISIS/ISIL).”<sup>244</sup> The State Department parodies the group’s recruitment that promises followers will learn “useful new skills,” such as “blowing up mosques” and “crucifying and executing Muslims” by imposing phrases and terms on the screen, such as “Travel is inexpensive because you won’t need a return ticket!” and ends with the words “Think again, turn away.”<sup>245</sup>

However, some social scientists question a strategy that showcases violence and death caused by groups like the Islamic State. Such publicity on the

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<sup>242</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, Objective One: Challenging the ideology that supports terrorism and those who promote it, Summary.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

<sup>244</sup> Matt Hansen, “U.S. Boosts Propaganda War with Islamic State,” *Sun-Sentinel*, September 8, 2014.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

U.S.'s part can motivate some Americans to actually participate in terrorism. In fact, Hansen states, "previous government antiterrorism outreach efforts had fallen into similar patterns where challenging a young adult with the fact that something might be difficult and challenging might excite them to take part."<sup>246</sup> In response, the U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy must make the consequences of participating seem dire and undesirable in the worst possible way. It will require solid coordination between the DHS and the State Department. It will need to develop the type of counter-ideological or counter-narrative work performed by the UK's RICU.

Much more needs to be done in this critical area. The U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy effort must be proportionate and focused. It must not pass judgment on faith or to suggest only a particular kind of faith is appropriate or acceptable. This was one of the criticisms of the UK's 2006 PREVENT Strategy mentioned in Chapter III. What is critical is that this effort must be in conjunction with local domestic communities. They are often better able than the federal government itself to disprove the claims made by terrorist groups and to challenge terrorist and associated extremist ideologies.

The British successful implementation of this objective "will require better communication of government security and foreign policies to rebut the claims made about [U.S. actions]; more projects in education, communities, and the criminal justice system to enable the understanding of and challenge to terrorist ideology; and support for experts where ideology draws on and misrepresents theology and requires a detailed response."<sup>247</sup>

## **2. Objective Two: Supporting Vulnerable People**

At an individual level, there are many theories that explain why/how an individual becomes radicalized. The main theme of the UK PREVENT strategy as

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<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>247</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, Objective One: Challenging the ideology that supports terrorism and those who promote it, Summary.

well as that of the proposed U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy is to address radicalization before it takes root in an individual. The objective therefore is to intervene through crime prevention programs to prevent vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorist-related activity. However, the U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy must avoid what the 2006 UK PREVENT strategy experienced in using this delivery method. When first used by the United Kingdom, “they had been accused of using these programs to restrict free speech and for spying.”<sup>248</sup> “If properly implemented, these programs should identify those people/groups at risk for radicalization and provide the relevant support. This can only happen with the expertise of policing, local authorities, and community organizations tasked with providing services to vulnerable people because they are in a position of great influence. The elements exist but a counter radicalization program needs to be implemented to coordinate this effort.”<sup>249</sup> These organizations can be created in any forward-looking state or city that wishes to undertake the effort under the auspices of a mayor’s office (city) or governor’s office (state). To reach those vulnerable populations in all parts of the United States, the DHS would create a national grant program that encourages cities, counties and states to reach out to vulnerable populations through innovative methods unique to their local situation and similar to what the United Kingdom created.

### **3. Objective Three: Working with Key Sectors**

While progress has been made, more must be done to match the level and effort of individuals and groups bent on the radicalization of U.S. citizens. To accomplish this, “the U.S. must be committed with the resolve and resources to not let “ungoverned spaces” go unchallenged in which extremism is allowed to flourish and, where appropriate, to counter it by legal intervention.”<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>248</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, 3.15.

<sup>249</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, Objective Three: Supporting sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation, Summary.

<sup>250</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, 10.1.

As stated in Chapter V, there is a wide range of sectors helping to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. How the U.S. federal government can support these efforts will be the key to the success of a U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy. The United States must implement support systems to those key priority areas of education, health, economics, criminal justice, faith, charities, and the Internet that all play a role in the cure of U.S. domestic radicalization. Support of these key sectors would be those federal agencies, such as the Department of Education, the Department of Health & Human Services, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Justice. Leading the strategy would be the Department of Homeland Security and the CSCC to coordinate counter messaging that can be modified for local communities.

However, since the U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy involves efforts from a variety of different departments, the appointment of a *Counter-Radicalization Czar* in DHS would be appropriate. The *CR Czar* would have the authority to cross departmental jurisdictions and mandate cooperation and support from these departments in support of U.S. counter-radicalization efforts. To avoid accusations that the strategy is a masquerade to spy on vulnerable groups, the czar must not be connected with law enforcement. The czar should have a varied professional background in government and/or business, and possibly be a member of one of the vulnerable groups.

**E. PREVENT DELIVERY: IDENTIFY FUNDING SOURCES (OR HOW TO IMPLEMENT PREVENT IN THE FEDERAL BUDGET)**

In order for the U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy to be successful, it must be placed within the DHS to ensure effective coordination, oversight, and accountability. From here, the strategy would be coordinated to develop and implement the three objectives just discussed. Using a well-thought-out and well-monitored grants program, the DHS would support those local communities who wish to address counter radicalization in their communities.

One of the critical criteria of the funding would be that while the role of policing is critical to the U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy, it must not become a police program. As a lesson learned from the 2006 UK PREVENT experience, the United States must establish successful partnerships with organizations in those key priority areas discussed earlier with local policing. Funding, therefore, can be divided between two key areas: local authority work in association with communities, and policing. Through the grant program, local communities must be able to implement local initiatives to manage local radicalization.

### **1. How Can U.S. PREVENT Strategy Success be Measured?**

It is a fact that what gets measured gets talked about, worried about, and acted on. While the UK PREVENT strategy and current U.S. counterterrorism plans discuss local/community-based efforts, they strictly rely on qualitative data, (i.e., interviews or subjective perceptions of who may become radicalized, what triggers it, and how to deal with it). Regardless, they both lack any concrete data that may identify those individuals or groups who may be experiencing radicalization tendencies and the effect of programs to dissuade them from supporting terrorism.

It is no surprise that it is difficult to measure if a program has had a positive impact on a person to persuade them from supporting terrorism. In fact, the 2011 UK PREVENT strategy states that evaluation and performance monitoring have been weak and must be improved.<sup>251</sup> This was because of inadequate data collection. Therefore, it makes it that much more difficult to understand what the funding has been used for and/or what impacts the projects have had.

The U.S. domestic counter radicalization strategy must then develop, maintain, and utilize performance measures first. Essentially, the strategy must develop an endgame to what the strategy is to achieve and by what means it will

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<sup>251</sup> HM Government, *Prevent Strategy*, Guiding Principles: A Framework for *Prevent*, 6.71.

accomplish its objectives and goals. This will require an examination of other similar domestic social programs as well as those outside of the United States. Once established, the performance standards can be included as a condition of their counter radicalization grants program. Outcomes, or performance measures, of the U.S. PREVENT strategy would be the use of local matrices and figures that would show fewer complaints, fewer drug busts, and less juvenile delinquency.

## **2. Conclusion**

After 9/11, the United States has made drastic efforts and committed major resources to fight the war on terrorism. The United States has developed the National Strategy for Counterterrorism, June 2011, the National Security Strategy, May 2010, the Strategic Implementation Plan for Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States, December 2011, and, to a lesser extent, a counter-strategic communications plan. However, all are geared toward international terrorism and with the federal government as the lead.

The United States has not truly developed and/or implemented a counter-radicalization plan to handle a new kind of domestic enemy. This is an enemy that may not be seen until it is far too late. However, all the signs of radicalism may have been obvious in retrospect, becoming sympathetic to terrorist ideology over a period of time, the radicalized U.S. citizen. Therefore, the United States needs to develop a counter radicalization strategy similar to the one developed by the United Kingdom that is implementable at the local level, supported at the federal level and targets those groups that terrorists seek to persuade to join and support their cause.

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