

**PROTECTING NEW YORK CITY FROM HOMEGROWN TERRORISM:  
THE CITY'S ROLE IN RADICALIZATION AND COUNTER-  
RADICALIZATION**

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Over the past decade, the city of New York has come to grips with the specter of global terrorism. Governments, no matter how large or small, are responsible for protecting their people, and the city of New York is of no exception. How the city chooses to protect its people and assets through law enforcement and other measures is a subject that has received little attention, due to the mentality of ‘doing now’ and asking questions ‘later’. The role of the city in addressing the most recent threat, homegrown terrorists, is one that is central to the struggle against terrorism and violence. In order to address this role, it is prudent to understand how individuals become radicalized and what actions governments can take to counter this behavior.

## Acknowledgements

I dedicate this thesis and research to my dear friend Ricardo Cerros Jr. who was killed in action during a heavy firefight while conducting combat operations in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Logar Province, Afghanistan on October 8<sup>th</sup> 2011. Ricardo was a man of character who fought for what he believed in. He was one of the happiest people I've come across and was always ready to lend a helping hand. The events of September 11<sup>th</sup> compelled him to serve his nation. Ricardo did just that when he joined the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment in March 2011. He was a warrior who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Ricardo truly embodied the Ranger Motto: *Sua Sponte* (Of Their Own Accord).

I would like take this moment to extend my sincere thanks to my thesis advisor, Dr. Elliot Sclar. Thank you for providing me with the direction I needed to get this project headed in the right direction, and thank you for letting me take this academic endeavor into the realm of personal and intellectual curiosity. I am also indebted to my second reader, Mitchell D. Silber, the head of Intelligence Analysis at the New York Police Department and adjunct faculty at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs.

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## INTRODUCTION

The horrific events of September the 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 reminded the world that dense city centers are acutely vulnerable to terrorist attacks. With the barriers to entry alarmingly low, the collateral damage that results from a successful urban terror operation can be catastrophic (Willis, 2005). The damage sought by terrorists and terror organizations is not exclusively physical, but psychological as well. The institution of fear and the stigma of susceptibility to violence can drive off populations, culture, economic activity and ultimately the life of a city (Sustein, 2002).

As irrational as the act of terrorism is to the average person, it is a logical and straightforward course of action to those who carry out these acts of barbarism. It may come as a surprise, but terrorists- particularly of the suicide-bombing ilk are a very risk averse group. They need to make their actions *count*, and there are no such things as seasoned suicide bombers to provide tips and counsel on how to do it right the first time. In order to carry out a successful attack, a terrorist must weigh his risks to rewards as with any high stakes, rational decision making process (Willis, 2005). Discounting death and bodily mutilation, the greatest fear of a suicide bomber is getting caught or triggering an unsuccessful device. These attackers display a high degree of methodological evaluation, knowingly or unknowingly, with their targets. Targets are chosen for their impact value accounting for how much collateral damage can be inflicted with the least amount of investment and operational risk. These targets are often high visibility or highly travelled public spaces that terrorists know will have exhaustive media coverage if their attack were to succeed.

Open public spaces in New York City, such as Times Square, are purposefully designed to be inclusionary in nature and are natural draws to locals and visitors alike. The openness of these spaces is representative of American norms and values as a whole and serves as symbols of the city and society. It is these symbols that terrorists wish to bring down. The fact that hundreds, if not thousands, of innocent people may be seriously hurt or killed while bringing down these symbols is a selling point to many would-be attackers who see doing so as simply reciprocating their pain and grievances.

The dilemma now exists on how to go about preventing these attacking from taking place. In the case of public spaces in New York City such as Times Square or even Grand

Central Station, is the answer to fortify these areas with hardened barriers and increase uniformed and plain-clothes security? Would these precautions prevent the public areas in question from being a target simply due to the fact that they aren't open and inclusionary anymore?

In the race to secure the city and save lives, many questions on the nature of openness, democracy, safety and jurisdiction arise. These queries are complimentary to the question of what role planning has to play in preventing and mitigating the results of acts of terrorism. With a new cadre of *homegrown* terrorists, planning issues such as the optimal allocation of educational and public health resources arise. In an era of smaller and deadlier bombs, the issue of hardening subway and rail tunnels and other infrastructure assets also comes into question. With an ever increasing population, and a higher percentage of foreign diaspora calling the city home, the roles of domestic surveillance and the greater actions of the NYPD (and by extension, the city) should also be looked at. Finally, one must ask what the very role of a city is. *The urban area's philosophical existence stems from the free flow of ideas, commerce and people. If radical thought is just another idea, should it be locked out from the discourse of the city?*



## RESEARCH DESIGN AND HYPOTHESIS

The question this paper seeks to answer is, “What can the City of New York do to protect itself from homegrown terrorist activity?” In answering this question, a variety of subjects will be studied and woven together to create a balanced argument as to what New York can do to protect itself from future terror attacks. Since homegrown terror is a relatively new phenomenon in the United States, the scholarship on this subject is lacking, but the facts and ideas presented in this limited canon makes up for the lack in quantity. In order to understand how a city can protect itself, it is best to understand the threat and how this threat originated. Once we understand this, we are now in a position to handle the threat and hopefully contain or neutralize it. Since the threat to the city is people from the city and neighboring areas, it is prudent to understand how these individuals became who they are. Terrorists aren’t born, but are made, and it is essential to understand what drives them to violence. It is this understanding that can potentially prevent future generations from walking down this disastrous path (Neumann, 2011). This counter-radicalization and de-radicalization process will involve city services in addition to those provided by the NYPD. It is here where the planner can make a difference.

It is hypothesized that a New York City specific prescription for counter- and de-radicalization will be needed to ensure the continued safety of the city. These methods will include (but not limited to):

- ❖ Community Outreach
  - Immigrant Services
  - Civic Engagement
  - Religious Engagement
  - Outreach to Ethnic Communities
- ❖ Education
  - Monitoring of Academic Performance
  - Funding of After-School Programs
- ❖ Economic
  - Job Programs
- ❖ Law Enforcement
  - Trust and Confidence Building Measures

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Radicalization Process

The scholarship of violent Islamic Salafi-jihadist radicalization on Western populations is, at most a decade old, and is constantly being revisited with even new foiled homegrown terror plot. The most pragmatic study of radicalization is by Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Laura Grossman. This study, titled *Homegrown Terrorists in the U.S. and U.K.: An Empirical Examination of the Radicalization Process* draws the data of 117 jihadist terrorists in the United States and the United Kingdom to trace common patterns and profiles. The study also explores how many of these subjects took their first steps towards being radicalized and the role religion plays with the individual's journey to terrorism. The authors find many common themes amongst homegrown radicals such as adopting a legalistic interpretation of Islam, trust in only select religious authorities, perceiving a schism between Islam and the West, a low tolerance for perceived theological deviance, attempts to impose religious beliefs on others and political radicalization. The report concludes with findings which I wholeheartedly agree with after conducting my research on this subject. These findings include the roles of religious mentors and ideology, common demographics (there is no general terrorist "profile"), international connections and the lack of greater community engagement (Gartenstein-Ross, 2009).

The Gartenstein-Ross and Grossman report also cites a New York Police Department study titled *Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat* which is the NYPD's take on understanding how individuals become radicals. The report, written by Mitchell D. Silber and Arvin Bhatt, outlines a four phase theory of radicalization that describes the process that one might follow from average citizen to a terrorist plotter. The model is fluid but also flexible and stresses that it is not a cookie cutter platform but just a guide or framework that can better assist in analyzing how certain individuals became the radicals they are. The report also highlights prominent homegrown terrorists from the New York metropolitan region and their journey towards radicalization (Silber and Bhatt, 2007).

### The Terrorist Threat

Government documents and congressional testimony provide valuable insight as to what policy makers and officials know and how they perceive danger. The Senate Committee on

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs held hearings in 2006 to ascertain the threat from radicalization of prisoners in the U.S. penal system. This inquiry on radicalization was expanded to explore the roots of domestic radicals and how these homegrown instances occur. Documents such as the 2008 Staff Report by the same committee point to the internet as a major conduit and catalyst for radicals to spread their message with minimal risk and to a worldwide audience. The report concludes:

Those who want to know more about violent Islamist ideology, immense caches of information and propaganda are available online. Some material is produced by organized groups committed to advancing this ideology around the world. While other material is produced by self-starting individuals, who themselves may have “signed on” to the ideology’s virtual network. These self-appointed amplifiers of the violent Islamist message may not be part of a known terrorist organization, but they choose to advance the cause, not necessarily with guns but with propaganda. Much of this material is readily available through web searches and is often discussed in chat rooms and other online forums where those interested in learning more about violent Islamist ideology begin radicalization process and seek out like-minded individuals (United States. Cong. 2008)

The openness of the internet, much like cities, is exploited by extremists to distribute their message and recruit new members. The response to this new threat must be different than previous responses to terror, which was exclusively military operations to combat terror abroad, and needs to be dealt with in a far more surgical manner. The report’s findings include a broad recommendation for formulating new strategies to combat radicalization, and by extension terror:

To defeat the new homegrown terrorist threat, the United States must carefully develop and implement a cohesive and comprehensive approach called for in the NIP [National Implementation Plan] and apply it to an effective outreach and communications strategy. We must isolate and discredit the violent Islamist ideology as a cause worth supporting, let alone a cause worth advancing by attacking and killing one’s neighbor and fellow citizens. In developing such a strategy, the federal government must address several key questions including:

- What, if any, new laws, resources and tactics other than those already employed by intelligence and law enforcement should be used to prevent the spread of ideology in the United States?
- What should a communications strategy...and what role, if any, should the government have in carrying out that strategy? What role must community and religious leaders play?
- What is the purpose of current outreach efforts, and how can those efforts improve, especially with increased coordination at all levels of government?

- What role should local officials and local law enforcement play given their longstanding relationships with the communities they serve and the fact that they are better positioned to recognize and intervene? (United States. Cong. 2008)

One of the best accounts of how New York City dealt with the threat for homegrown and international terrorism in the years since 9/11 is Michael Sheehan's *Crush the Cell: How to Defeat Terrorism Without Terrorizing Ourselves*. Sheehan, a former Special Forces commander and Coordinator for Counterterrorism at the United States Department of State, served as the deputy commissioner for counter-terrorism at the NYPD after 9/11. He offers a firsthand account of the department's priorities, actions and transformation after the horrific attacks on the World Trade Center. Mitchell D. Silber, a colleague of Sheehan, dissects various plots against the West by homegrown radicals in his book, *The al Qaeda Factor: Plots Against the West*. Silber, also an insider at the NYPD, offers insight as the mindset of authorities as they foiled homegrown terrorist plots such as Herald Square in 2004 and Times Square in 2010. Silber's book also looks at the role of al Qaeda in these plots as a facilitator, an inspiration or direct participant and reviews the role of such terror networks in ongoing radicalization and terrorist plots (Silber, 2012).

### **Counter-Radicalization Process**

A good way to understand the counter-radicalization process is to look at how it has been utilized in other Western nations such as the United Kingdom. Nadav Morag's *Comparative Homeland Security: Global Lessons* does just by looking at the immigration history of various Muslim-majority ethnic groups across Europe and the path individuals take to become radicalized (which may be different than the paths laid out in the American experience). The author looks at various factors that may have contributed to radicalization such as geographic dispersion, education, employment and group identity. Once a concrete understanding of how and why individuals have been radicalized, Morag reviews what selected European governments have done to respond to homegrown radicals and radicalization. A notable government program that the author reviews is *Wij Amsterdammers* or "We the People of Amsterdam" which was developed in the wake of the murder of Theo van Gogh by a radicalized Dutch Muslim in 2004. This program is designed to encourage a theology that is counter to the beliefs of radicals, such as democratic norms, non-discrimination and non-violence (Morag 2011). Three policies of this

program, some which can be transfused to a local New York counter-radicalization program include:

1. Resilience- enhancing the capacity of Muslims to resist radical ideologies.
2. Alternative supply- providing moderate religious information and discourse that can compete with radical ideologies.
3. Breeding ground- tackling external factors that create a basis for radicalization such as the perception of discrimination, lack of economic opportunities, perception of injustice and alienation (Rijbroek, 2008).

The Bipartisan Policy Center's National Security Preparedness Group which is co-chaired by former Indiana Representative Lee Hamilton and former Governor of New Jersey Thomas Kean provides very solid and thoughtful recommendations as to what an American counter-radicalization policy could look like. This report, *Preventing Violent Radicalization in America*, stresses the importance of positive intentions in legislation and bridge-building amongst different communities (Neumann, 2011). This report recommends the follow strategies for a successful counter-radicalization policy at home:

1. *Messaging*
  - a. Communication with Muslim communities must include an "ask", or precisely telling Muslims what they need to do.
  - b. al Qaeda's ideology should be challenged as well as contested.
  - c. Government should be careful not to meddle in religious debates.
  - d. The policy of refusing to name the underpinnings of al Qaeda's ideology is contrived and counterproductive.
2. *Structure and Organization*
  - a. Any policy requires leadership and coordination.
  - b. Counterterrorism and counter-radicalization must be kept separate.
3. *Information-sharing*
  - a. The White House should designate a single agency that serves as the principal hub for collecting, disseminating, and evaluating information on counter-radicalization.
  - b. Government must promote standards for effectiveness.
  - c. The development of an intervention capability that is consistent with American culture and values should be a priority.
4. *Outreach and Engagement*
  - a. Outreach efforts should reflect the diversity of Muslim communities.
  - b. Officials need to understand the difference between engagement and empowerment.

- c. Federal engagement efforts need to galvanize local activities.
  - d. The new role of the U.S. Attorneys in federal outreach should be institutionalized.
5. *Capacity-building*
- a. Capacity-building must focus on “at-risk” places and populations.
  - b. Each department and agency should “scan” existing programs for counter-radicalization impact.
  - c. Governments must engage non-profits and the private sector.
6. *Training*
- a. The Departments of Justice and Homeland Security must overhaul their procedures for awarding training grants.
  - b. More training needs to be offered on engagement, outreach and cultural competency.
7. *Community Policing*
- a. Government must recognize the limits of community policing (Neumann, 2011).

## **BACKGROUND**

### **The Morning That Changed Everything**

Tuesday September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 changed New York City. This change was unplanned, painful and is irreversible. It was inflicted not only on city, but the nation and the world. Change through death, destruction, suffering and monumental loss is never positive, but the transformation that New York City has undergone in the past decade is a testament to the resilience of the urban environment. Over 2,700 lives were lost including many hundreds of city servants. To compound to the devastation, was a looming global economic downturn and the upcoming storm clouds of the War on Terror, which would remind the public that terror was real and that it could happen anytime with no warning. Fear was *real* because it was the smoldering remains of the World Trade Center towers, mangled FDNY trucks and lost love ones. Fear was everywhere immediately after 9/11, and it had the potential to paralyze the city and its people.

Instead of being crippled by fear, the city rebuilt itself and healed the wounds of that autumn morning, albeit with the scars still present. Although there are many physical changes to New York as a direct result of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the changes to the city's organizational and service structure are on orders of magnitude higher. In the decade since these attacks, the city of New York has grown (Sheehan, 2008).

### **The World Today**

Between the decline of the Soviet Union and just prior to the events of 9/11, the enemies of the United States were a reliable group of global terror outfits primarily based out of the Arabian Peninsula or the Afghanistan/Pakistan region. Al Qaeda, or *the base* in Arabic, has been the prime focus of the global war on terror spear headed by the United States. It was al Qaeda trained operatives, al Qaeda funding and training and ultimately al Qaeda's leadership that planned the attacks of September the 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. Within weeks of these attacks, the United States and its allies responded with *Operation Enduring Freedom*, which displaced the Afghan Taliban (key facilitators and hosts to al Qaeda) and the al Qaeda organization itself, which was no match for a modern military (Tridico, 2011).

Over the next few years since the incursion into Afghanistan, the ability of al Qaeda to orchestrate an attack on the level of 9/11 has been severely compromised. Its leadership must constantly stay mobile, its ability to move money across borders has been compromised and the quality of its recruitment has suffered. Al Qaeda is not the same organization that carried out attacks on New York City and the Pentagon over a decade ago. While the organizational structure may have been decapitated over the years, culminating with the killing of its leader, Osama bin Laden, the ideology of the organization lives on (Sageman, and Hoffman 2008).

Operationally, al Qaeda has not been involved in many plots around the world since 9/11, but terrorism still occurs nonetheless. “Al Qaeda Central is of course not dead, but it is still contained operationally.... The surviving leaders of al Qaeda are undoubtedly still plotting to do harm to various countries in the world and have the expertise to do so, but they are hampered by the global security measures that have been put in place,” says Marc Sageman, the scholar in residence at the NYPD. He also advocates going after the echelon of al Qaeda’s leadership that has been responsible for past atrocities, “the core group of people who comprise al Qaeda Central – those who have blood on their hands or are plotting against the United States – must be eliminated or captured and tried for their crimes.” Sageman’s assertion is that due to the war on terror and the changing nature of global affairs, al Qaeda and its progeny have evolved (Sageman, 2008):

The process of radicalization is still going on but now proceeds in a hostile, post-9/11, wired environment, resulting in a social structure comprised of disconnected groups. My description of the four-pronged process of radicalization, which explains the difference between the terrorist threat in Europe and that in the United States. I show how the Internet has enabled a new wave of terrorist wannabes, who not constitute the main – but not entire – threat to the West. However, this new wave has been completely neglected in recent analyses of terrorism; I can find no other source providing a comprehensive examination of this new phenomenon...Missing the evolution of the threat condemns us to keep fighting the last war. (Sageman\* and Hoffman, 2008)<sup>\*Sageman’s opinion in a commentary written by Sageman and Hoffman</sup>

Sageman purports the phenomena of transference insofar that the main terrorist activity and plotting that used to be conducted by an organized and hierarchical al Qaeda abroad is now being conducted by unaffiliated and disjointed persons on the home front (Sageman, 2008). The spirit of al Qaeda and its grievances against the West and the United States (a perceived corruption of Islam, occupation of Arab states, support for Israel), in particular, have left their bases abroad and have come home, not by ship or plane but by the Internet (United States Cong.



2008). Allied military operations have physically squeezed the enemy into irrelevance, but by doing so have created a conduit for terrorist ideology to more easily embraced by those who would not otherwise have been audience to it due to the ease of access and relative security of the internet. In an article written about his testimony to the September 11<sup>th</sup> Commission, Sageman categorized this new homegrown phenomenon as a “bunch of guys”:

Perhaps his most unexpected conclusion was that ideology and political grievances played a minimal role during the initial stages of enlistment. “The only significant finding was that the future terrorists felt isolated, lonely, and emotionally alienated,” Sageman told the September 11<sup>th</sup> Commission in 2003, during a debriefing about his research. These lost men would congregate at mosques and find others like them. Eventually, they would move into apartments near their mosques and build friendships around their faith and its obligations. He has called his model the “halal theory of terrorism”—since bonds were often formed while sharing halal meals—or the “bunch of guys” theory. The bunch of guys constituted a closed society that provided a sense of meaning that did not exist in the larger world. (Khatchadourian, 2007)

Although the nature of the threat remains the same, the persons committing acts of terror are fundamentally different. The 9/11 hijackers were 19 men, primarily from Saudi Arabia who grew up in that region of the world and had their ideology cultivated there as well. Their beliefs were shaped by their experiences, all or most of which are out of the control of the U.S. These hijacker’s successors are cut from a different cloth. The new breed of radical is from the U.S. homeland, with American experiences and background. Understanding how they became who they are is pivotal in stopping them from executing acts of violence and maintaining a robust city. In New York, the current threat is homegrown and does not fit the traditional mold of the “9/11-esque” terrorist as Mitchell Silber explains during testimony before the U.S. Senate, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs in 2007:

*The NYPD believes that the threat and nature of the threat of al Qaeda-inspired terrorism to New York City has evolved since September 11, 2001. While the threat from overseas remains, most of the terrorist attacks or thwarted plots against cities in the West since 9/11 have fit a different pattern. The individuals who plotted or conducted the attacks were generally citizens or residents of the nations in which the attacks occurred. Though a few may have received training in al Qaeda camps, the great majority did not. Although al Qaeda claimed responsibility for each attack, these attacks were not under the command and control of al Qaeda central, nor were they specifically funded by al Qaeda central. Rather, they were conducted by local residents and citizens who used al Qaeda as their ideological inspiration. This is a homegrown threat, and it is driven by radicalization. (Silber- United States Cong. 2008)*

## Protecting New York- The Birth of NYPD Intelligence

In the decade since September 11<sup>th</sup>, the city of New York has cultivated a robust counter-terrorism organization within the New York Police Department. The Department has detectives posted worldwide in locations ranging from Abu Dhabi to London. It has recruited native speakers of almost 50+ languages including Arabic, Dari, Urdu and even Pushtu. It has been speculated that the NYPD may have more Arabic speakers in its ranks than the FBI. This immense organization was raised in anticipation of continued threats to the city following 9/11 (The Economist 2012). Department and City leadership were right, and hedged their bets accordingly as several attempted plots to attack New York have been neutralized or foiled. These plots were foiled thanks to a sophisticated network of operatives, agents and informants that operate on a global scale- much larger than the purviews of any other city's police force and even many national governments. Raymond Kelly, the NYPD Commissioner recently justified his department's scale of activity by commenting:

*If terrorists aren't limited by borders and boundaries, we can't be either. It is entirely legal for the Police Department to conduct investigations outside of city limits, and we maintain very close relationships with local authorities.*

*Since 9/11, New York City has been targeted by terrorists in 14 different plots. Thanks to the work of the Police Department, the FBI, and a good deal of luck, none of these plots have succeeded. In fact, while the city saw terrorist attacks in the 1970s, 80s and 90s, no attack has taken place in the past ten years.*

*We are proud of this fact. We're also very clear about the nature of the threat we face. It is persistent and it is dangerous... We have a responsibility to protect New York, and we uphold the law in doing so. (Kelly 2012)*

If crisis is the mother of innovation, then the establishment of the current intelligence operation at the NYPD was paradigm shift in the wake of the mother of all crises, September the 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. NYPD intelligence was a paradigm shift because it involved the idea of a non-federal agency conducting domestic and international intelligence gathering operations. This send reverberations not only in the intelligence world, but also demonstrated that cities are always in ultimate control of their destiny.

In the aftermath of 9/11, the newly elected mayor of New York City, Michael Bloomberg, recognized the value of a city-centric intelligence and counterterrorism apparatus. The mayor turned to Raymond Kelly, a former head of the force, to return to the helm as the

department's commissioner. The selection of the right people for the right job- at the right time was a boon bestowed to the city after 9/11, and it seems that Bloomberg could not have selected a better-experienced and qualified person than Ray Kelly. Kelly gleaned invaluable insights into the workings of the federal government, international organizations and private-sector experience during his interim period away from the department throughout most of the decade preceding.

Upon taking the helm at NYPD, Kelly embarked on a transformative path to alter the city's intelligence and counterterrorism programs to appropriately reflect new threats to the city post 9/11. The mantra in the commissioner's head was that New York (or any large urban center) could no longer afford to rely on the outside, non-local, actors to protect the city. New York knows what's best for New York, and having to be solely reliant on the federal government, with its own machinations, bureaucracy, overspread resources and agenda, just wasn't an optimal situation for a city of 8 million.

Naturally, an organization with the scope such as the FBI's would take issue with an upstart competing with their veritable monopoly in intelligence and information. Raymond Kelly was cognizant of this fact and treaded carefully, yet firmly. Kelly made it a point to avoid conflict with the FBI by playing to their tune. As Michael Sheehan observes, the FBI's grip on domestic intelligence was nearly absolute. The FBI argues that they are the only agency with the jurisdiction for intelligence and counterterrorism operations and any subordinate (in scale) organization could easily join in the effort as long as it was in the FBI's total control via partnership in their anti-terror ecosystem. This network is called the Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) and pairs local agencies with the FBI in a connected web of information, all controlled by the bureau in Washington.

Aware of the comparatively endless resources of the FBI had at its disposal, Kelly appropriately requisitioned some of his best people to work alongside their federal counterparts at the FBI's JTTF in New York. The New York Police Department sends more personnel to the JTTF than any other department, gaining valuable experience for its organization and a near endless stream of national intelligence.

Although the FBI provides needed intelligence and information to the JTTF, the relationship between the NYPD and FBI evolved into, from my observation, a noticeably one-sided arrangement with the Fed's generously benefiting from the veteran knowledge base that

the NYPD brought to the table. Raymond Kelly provided the FBI and its JTTF with over one hundred veteran cops from fields covering the gamut of bad to ugly such as narcotics, vice, organized crime, homicide and more.

Kelly made it a point to never concede complete control of counter-intelligence and counter-terrorism operations to the FBI or its Joint Terrorism Task Force (Sheehan, 2008). The commissioner knew that it was his city and his department alone that could wholly be counted on, with the full confidence of New Yorkers to secure the city. With this trust, Kelly, much like an ER surgeon with a charged defibrillating paddle, resuscitated the NYPD's Intelligence Division as a new and independent intelligence entity.

In order to create a competent organization that could faithfully carry out on its objectives, Kelly took audacious steps to recruit experts in the craft of intelligence. First on his list was former CIA clandestine spymaster David Cohen. The new head of intelligence quickly got to work creating a program tailored to the city, for the city and addressing real threats to New York. Cohen paired rising stars from the departments African American, Hispanic and Middle Eastern ranks with established veterans who were traditionally of European ancestry. This dynamic facilitated learning for both juniors and seniors and strengthened the internals of the department's intelligence apparatus.

Since its inception by Commissioner Kelly, Intelligence grew to new heights and in 2005 a showdown with the FBI seemed inevitable. This was just the nature of the beast of having multiple organizations on different levels with overlapping directives and responsibilities competing for a piece of the pie. The hierarchical approach has always worked and as Sheehan notes, it beats having a nationalized central police authority like many other countries do (Sheehan, 2008). By this time, the NYPD was growing into itself and understood the nature of its existence in the order of government agencies.

No one or agency would ever tell the NYPD that its primary mission, to protect New York City, would be subordinate to the jurisdiction of another. So long as other federal and state authorities respected this core mission, the NYPD could develop lasting operational relationships with other agencies such as the DEA, Coast Guard and even the CIA.

The NYPD-FBI relationship dipped even further in 2006. It was at this time that FBI director Mueller came to New York to see what was what and hopefully relieve pent up pressure from the past years of familial antagonism. In a sweeping gesture of leadership and quite

frankly, bravery, the director remarked that he was impressed with the NYPD's intelligence operations and that the FBI had a lot to learn from the city. This display of humility was uncharacteristic of the FBI and immediately led to cooled tensions and warmer relations between the NYPD, FBI and their cooperative efforts via the Joint Terrorism Task Force.

The NYPD, its intelligence division, and the FBI are different animals with overlapping missions and goals. The obvious area of overlap is in securing New York City, which could be argued to be *America's City*. Both are very professional organizations that take this mission seriously and if one has data that better enables them to carry out that mission while the other doesn't, conflict will arise. When the NYPD opened a new front in the overlap through the establishment of an intelligence division to get better information about the city and potential threats, the FBI was naturally not so happy.

The rift between the two agencies is also organizational. The FBI tends to be more 'well pressed' with a whiter-collar pool of agents of whom almost all have college degrees and officials whereas the NYPD is a mix of cops and investigators of varying backgrounds. Due to the nature of the composition of these organizations, the way they do things and perceive the other is quite different. Grievances traveled back and forth between the two entities and varied from the NYPD's observations that the FBI had to be in constant control of investigations and didn't like playing with others to the FBI accusing David Cohen's Intelligence section of only being able to accomplish what they did because they operated 'out of bounds' and that the FBI, like all other Federal Agencies, had a handicap because they had to 'play by the rules' (Sheehan, 2008).

Both agencies have their strengths and weaknesses. The NYPD contends that their intelligence operation is essential because those from other agencies do not look at events and data through the 'New York' lens. An illustration of this 'New York' lens that drives home the justification to the existence of NYPD Intelligence is the March 2005 Madrid commuter rail bombings. Since the department had an established intelligence division during these attacks, it was able to place its own people on the ground in no time and could work with local authorities to better glean raw events and information for the *New York angle*.

In Madrid, NYPD agents deployed to the scene of the bombings to gather intelligence that may have some impact on events back home. This information was sent to New York, where analysts gave a second look to the largest (by distance) commuter rail network in the world

and acted accordingly. The department quickly pushed patrols past their traditional subway station perimeters to a few more blocks out as the bomb containing backpacks in Madrid were placed in geographies as such. The city also upped the public awareness campaign to alert New Yorkers of suspicious activity on rail and transit lines and that if they ‘saw something, to say something’. The value of having organic assets around the world was now validated, and the NYPD moved swiftly to deploy agents to cities and regions spanning all continents.

## **RATIONALE**

### **Planning for the Future**

There should be no mental gymnastics involved in equating the specter of terrorism on cities such as New York and its impact on the discipline of Urban Planning. Planners, as city servants and decision makers, are responsible to the institutions and people of city and are entrusted with the orderly function and physical flow of the built environment. These responsibilities are manifested through the power of having the ability to affect the distribution of resources to certain areas as allocated by the city (Coaffee, 2009).

Just as planners may use zoning as a tool to promote change or maintain the status quo, they also have a supporting role to play in the security of the city. This role is primarily the responsibility of law enforcement, the NYPD, but planners can make passive decisions that can have real effects on the security of the city. Planners and other city officials must also understand the impact of various social services and interactions within the 'big picture'. An illustration of the aforementioned passive role of the planner would be if a planning professional with the city Department of Transportation was tasked with working with security personnel to make a street in front of a sensitive building safer. The prescription calls for security bollards to be placed every 10 feet along the part of the road once designated for street side parking. The planner must take a step back and recognize that exposed bollards may give off a stigma of vulnerability, and more importantly might discourage pedestrians from utilizing the 'secured' side of the street. Instead, the planner calls for heavy duty planters with shade trees and bollard cores every 10 feet to replace the proposed bare bollards.

The rationale for such actions is that safety is planning concern that should not be mutually exclusive of all other planning issues such as design or openness. Planning for safety should not be just the burden of law enforcement, but all city agencies. The city, as an organism, lives to grow and thrive and any force challenging this should be fully understood, analyzed and dissected for solutions and ultimately a cure (Hidek, 2007).

As an urban planning issue then, urban terror in the context of New York City should be understood for what it is in its present form. Planners must understand:

- I. The people committing these acts of terror.
  - a. Who they are?
  - b. How did they end up turning to terror?
  - c. What are their primary grievances?
  - d. Can these feelings be reversed or toned down to non-violence?
- II. City institutions
  - a. What failures, if any, exist in municipal services that made the perpetrators of terror who they are?
  - b. What is the role of a city police department on the local, regional, national and international stage?
  - c. Is what the city doing working to prevent terror?
- III. Populations
  - a. Is there means to engage the population that these terrorists come from?
  - b. Exploring the isolation of immigrant populations and the conditions that lead to radicalism.
  - c. Can we protect the next generation/youth of these populations from the path of violence?

Once these ideas are understood by planners and decision makers alike, another valid question to ask is, “what would happen if we did nothing?” Without getting into an elaborate cost benefit analysis, one can say that the opportunity costs of the past decade are the billions of dollars of funding that could have gone schools, health and human services and community outreach programs instead of funding anti-terror operations. Planners should perhaps pose the question, “is increased funding for schools, public health and community projects the same as increased funding for anti-terror operations?” Would increasing funding for public schools in at-risk areas near vulnerable immigrant population centers achieve the same result as having a hundred undercover police in that locale? Hypothetical questions like this can never be quantified or answered, but are worth exploring.

Questions similar to the aforementioned are part of the democratic process, an institution terrorists the world over loathe. As plural and free democracy, the city and nation are obliged to protect its citizenry from all enemies and threats- foreign and domestic.



# RADICALIZATION

## The Threat

The New York Police Department's Intelligence Division's seminal report on radicalization, *Radicalization in the West: A Homegrown Threat*, describes four stages or distinct phases which the authors, Mitchell D. Silber and Arvin Bhatt, believe homegrown terrorists pass through on their trajectory towards violence. The methodology involved a comparative case study method which the department "dispatched detectives and analysts to meet with law enforcement, intelligence officials and academics" at locations of some of the most notorious homegrown terrorist plots.

This roadmap towards radicalization is not a concrete thesis for all homegrown radicals, but rather a loose framework to assist in understanding an individual's track towards radical thoughts and ultimately action through violence. The report makes clear that individuals who begin this process may not necessarily finish it and that many do abandon the process. The report also states, "individuals who do pass through this entire process are quite likely to be involved in the planning or implementation of a terrorist act", implying that passing through these four phases is instrumental to the creation of homegrown terror (Silber and Bhatt, 2007).

The first phase on the road to radicalization is called *pre-radicalization* and is described as launch pad towards a jihadi-Salafi interpretation of Islam as their own. The authors detail a majority of the individuals who enter this phase share traits such as being "unremarkable" or having "ordinary" jobs and had minimal run ins with the law.

The second phase is *self-identification*, where an individual will begin to actually explore a new ideology and begin to associate with like-minded individuals:

Self-Identification is the phase where individuals, influenced by both internal and external factors, begin to explore Salafi Islam, gradually gravitate away from their old identity and begin to associate themselves with like-minded individuals and adopt this ideology as their own. The catalyst for this "religious seeking" is a cognitive opening, or crisis, which shakes one's certitude in previously held beliefs and opens an individual to be receptive to new worldviews.

There can be many types of triggers that can serve as the catalyst including:

- Economic (losing a job, blocked mobility)
- Social (alienation, discrimination, racism- real or perceived)
- Political (international conflicts involving Muslims)
- Personal (death in the close family) (Silber and Bhatt, 2007)

Following self-identification is *indoctrination*, the phase where an individual will progressively intensify their new beliefs and wholeheartedly adopts jihadi-Salafi ideology. The individual “concludes, without question, that the conditions and circumstances exist where action is required to support and further the cause.” This action is most often militant jihad, manifested through violence or acts of Terror. Associating with other like-minded individuals is critical at this state in order to reinforce the groups collectively held convictions:

While the initial self-identification process may be an individual act...association with like-minded people is an important factor as the process deepens. By the indoctrination phase this self-selecting group becomes increasingly important as radical views are encouraged and reinforced. (Silber and Bhatt, 2007)

The final phase of radicalization is *jihadization*. This phase builds upon the indoctrination phase as its requisites are individual resolve and a cohesive group identity. This is the final step for homegrown radical and those who do come this far in the process are liable to carry out the acts of violence which they’ve planned out in reality, on paper and in their minds. These homegrown radicals are dangerous and are just one lit fuse away from creating havoc (Silber and Bhatt, 2007).

### **Case: Herald Square Plot**

One of the earliest incidences of post 9/11 homegrown terrorist activities in New York is the Herald Square Plot that was foiled in 2004. This plot is considered a lone wolf type plot with just two main suspects, Shahawar Matin Siraj (22 years old at arrest) and James Elshafay (19 years old at arrest). Both men were picked up by the authorities on August 27<sup>th</sup> 2004, just days before the Republican National Convention, which they had planned to disrupt by bombing the Herald Square/34<sup>th</sup> Street Subway station. Six days prior to their arrest, these men had descended on the subway station to conduct reconnaissance for trash receptacles and inconspicuous areas to drop their improvised explosive devices (Horowitz, 2005).

On Monday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, just four days prior to their ultimate arrest, the duo planned to conduct one more run through of their target in preparation for the actual future act. It was just prior to actually arriving on the site that Siraj expressed reservations about bombing the subway, not out of concern for the public, but more out of self-preservation. It was at this moment that the younger Elshafay, eager to prove himself, offered himself as the point man who would descend into the station and place the explosives. In order to avoid undue interest, he proposed

to dress himself as an Orthodox Jew. Elshafay even mentioned that he'd put on the signature side curls and long black garb to complete his identity. In order to integrate the explosives with his new guise, the young Eshafay suggested placing the bombs in a Macy's bag as he said, "Jews shop at Macy's" (Band of Brothers, 2006).

With the lead up to the Republican National Convention close by, authorities decided that the duo, Siraj and Eshafay, were too close to operation success for comfort and needed to be brought in. Unfortunately for the two would-be terrorists, their father-like mentor, an older man named Dawadi, was an NYPD informant who was paid by the department to lead the life of a mole whose job it was to gain the trust of the Arab and Muslim community of Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. Dawadi befriended Siraj, who worked at an Islamic bookstore in the community and came onto the radar of the NYPD's Intelligence Division many months before from an anti-terror hotline where he was reported for his regular anti-American tirades. The informant was sent into the community with the bookstore and Siraj as targets to befriend and gain the trust of. This happened over time and Dawadi regularly updated the NYPD on Siraj's activities and whereabouts. Dawadi provided the inspiration, much of the logistics and moral support to the two younger men who were tasked with creating havoc at Herald Square. If Dawadi hadn't been an NYPD informant, but just another radical, things may have turned out much worse than they did (Horowitz, 2005).

A profile of Elshafay and Siraj reveal many similarities to their homegrown cohort. James Elshafay was raised by his mother and aunt and was described as overweight and sloppy, and just not that impressive. He was not in school and was being treated for psychological issues. He immediately saw Dawadi as a father figure who he could look up to, and valued Siraj's friendship and learned to embrace the grievances of the two older men as a way to feel part of group. Shahawar Matin Siraj first arrived in the United States in 1999, illegally from his home country of Pakistan. He worked at Islamic bookstore, owned by uncle, almost six days a week from the early afternoon to closing. The extent of his education in the US seems to be biweekly computer networking studies in Queens. Although not truly 'homegrown', Siraj's radicalization is representative of advanced stages of homegrown terrorist, predominantly men of Muslim background who harbor grievances about the way the United States carries out foreign policy through, what they perceive, as atrocities against their fellow Muslims around the world (Horowitz 2005).

## **Case: Times Square Plot- Faisal Shahzad**

The Times Square Bomb plot that occurred in May 2010 reminded the city that although no attacks had successfully been carried out since 9/11, the threat of a terrorist attack is still very real. The plot's lone wolf suspect was Pakistani-born Faisal Shahzad (age 30 at arrest) who doesn't fit the mold of a homegrown terrorist. Shahzad came from a well to do family, was married with two children and possessed a good job and graduate degree. He was naturalized American citizen who held and still holds deep grievances against the United States and its actions abroad, particularly in Afghanistan (Mazzetti, 2010).

This plot is particularly alarming in that Shahzad, a person familiar with the area he was targeting, chose a well-travelled target with a high visibility factor. On a corner of W. 45<sup>th</sup> Street and Broadway, adjacent to the Minskoff Theatre entrance for *The Lion King*, Shahzad parked a recently acquired SUV haphazardly laden with explosives and timing devices. The bomb did not go off as planned, but proved to be a dud that was quickly recognized as a hazard by a street vendor who alerted the authorities. Shahzad was apprehended three days later and was charged and convicted of plotting to commit acts of terror shortly thereafter. Prior to this event, Shahzad had travelled to his native Pakistan's Waziristan region to train with al Qaeda affiliated militants. Shahzad was trained and is believed to have been funded by the Pakistani Taliban to carry out the failed plot (Mazzetti, 2010).

The implications of an educated family man from a well-to-do background committing acts of terror are staggering. The first point of apprehension that comes to mind is if this type of radicalization can happen to a person with so much going for him, and much to lose, then it theoretically should be able to take hold in more vulnerable populations such as out of work and undereducated youths. Shahzad breaks the mold of what a homegrown radical is, and challenges thinking about approaches in combating radical thought.

## **Understanding the Cases**

These cases demonstrate the reality of homegrown terrorist activity in New York from pre-radicalization to the act of jihad through violence. The city is home to a diverse Muslim population ranging from 600,000 to 700,000 or just about 7.5% of the entire population. Of this demographic, about 40% are foreign-born immigrants. Radical agents, either in person or via the Internet, have permeated many Muslim communities where they actively seek to recruit new

faces. It should be a chilling fact that an NYPD informer easily radicalized James Elshafay and Shahawar Matin Siraj in just months.

The ease at which certain individuals are ready to carry out violent attacks against their own city is concerning and can be directly attributed to the use of religion, particularly Salafism, by jihadist recruiters. “In New York, there may be only very small numbers who sympathize with al Qaeda or any other terrorist or radical elements. But it takes only small numbers to do terrible things,” notes Shamsi Ali, the Deputy Imam of the Islamic Cultural center of new York. As these individuals seek to explore their Islamic identity, they self-identify with more activist messages that call for “aggressive action rather than steadfastness and patience (Silber and Bhatt, 69)”.

Once Siraj, Elshafay and Shahzad had accepted the decision that Jihad was the answer they began planning their attack by selecting targets, conducting reconnaissance and training in explosives. Fortunately, the radicalization of both the Herald Square and Times Square plotters did not result any loss of life (an in the case of Herald Square, did not result in an attack).

The lesson that these cases convey is that radicalization is real and can manifest itself from the act of reading material on the internet to committing a violent act in just a matter of months. The fact that many individuals who gravitate towards these acts are from urban areas comes of no surprise as cities are the perfect conduit for information sharing and associating with like-minded persons. Shamsi Ali comments on the ease at which young people are being radicalized by Salafist elements:

There are people who, rather than encouraging young people to build better lives for themselves, irresponsibly egg them on toward an angry and narrow view of the future. I see this danger every day. As a scholar of the Koran and community leader in New York, I work closely with hundreds of Muslim teenagers. To a person, they have typical American dreams of becoming doctors, businesspeople, baseball players, you name it.

But I know Muslim young people well enough to understand that some who are susceptible to dangerous ideologies could turn in the wrong direction. (Ali, 2006)

## THE SOLUTION

### Counter-Radicalization

Samir Khan, the editor of al Qaeda's *Inspire* Magazine, was just another New York teenager before he became a jihadi radical. Before he published cover stories such as *Make a Bomb in the Kitchen of Your Mom*, Khan was an average American teenager. The four stages of Khan's radicalization can be easily traced from pre-radicalization to jihadization, but nothing was done to prevent Khan from leaving home to join al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) in the hinterlands of Yemen. Authorities and the media were cognizant of Khan's activities, as he made no cover of his beliefs.

Khan was killed in a CIA drone attack in the autumn of 2011 in Yemen alongside his fellow American jihadi and al Qaeda leader Anwar-al-Awlaki. What is alarming about this entire story is that "everyone was watching, but at no point did anyone challenge his behavior," the NSGS reports. There was no formal institution, policy or systematic approach to challenge Khan's beliefs to stop him from pursuing the life as a hate monger (through the distribution of *Inspire*) or as an al Qaeda operative. It is impossible to say if a formal counter-radicalization policy or institution would have helped Khan, but it would have certainly been better than how events played out leading to the killing of an American who fell victim to radicalization.

Regardless of what policies are actually enacted, there will always be groups against any action or legislation. The camp who view these counter-radicalization measures as doing "too little" to protect the nation against the enemy, Islam, will raise objections that a counter-radicalization strategy is too weak and is not broad enough. Conversely, their opponents on their end of the spectrum will proclaim that any efforts will be "too much" as radicalization is just a myth and "any challenge to hateful ideas in an attempt to 'criminalize thought'."

Understanding why certain individuals have a propensity to radicalize or creating a formula for screening just who might become a terrorist will never work. "Just as there is no grand theory of radicalization and no common terrorist profile, there is no single explanation for why people de-radicalize or disengage from a militant group", the US institute of Peace, a non-partisan think tank states in a special report on the subject. Understanding common grievances against the West and the United States might be the best way to begin to understand why people radicalize and stay engrained in violent jihadist ideology. U.S. Army Colonel Matt Venhaus

splits radicals seeking to join terror networks as “revenge seekers needing an outlet for their frustration, status seekers needing recognition, identity seekers in need of a group to join and thrill seekers looking for adventure (Neumann, 2011).” In Western Europe, these sentiments range from a search for some identity to expressing anger over economic deprivation and desperation.

## **Lessons from Europe**

The Western European Muslim experience can be broadly characterized by various degrees of integration amongst mainstream society. In order to counter radicalization in their nations, European nations have sought out partners in their Muslim communities to assist in their counter-radicalization initiatives. Lorenzo Vidino, a fellow at the RAND Corporation, suggests that there are risks to this approach and that “counter-radicalization efforts could be perceived by Muslims as unfairly targeting them (Vidino, 2010).” Across France, the United Kingdom and Germany Muslim students generally perform poorly in school and are less likely to have secondary education qualifications. Surprisingly, even Muslim students who are second generation and native born in countries such as Germany exhibit even worse performance than their recently immigrated counterparts. This fact suggests that successive generations of Muslims in these countries may have even more difficulty integrating than newly arrived immigrants. In line with depressed educational figures are those of employment with alarming figures for unemployment of Muslim immigrants across Europe. In Germany, Turkish immigrants have an unemployment rate of 23% while French Muslims have unemployment rates twice that of their ethnic French countrymen (Morag, 2011).

It has been argued that the lack of quality education and the jobs and affluence that come with it have stigmatized and isolate many Muslim communities across Europe. This in turn has resulted in a reinforced group identity manifested by increased religiosity, especially amongst the younger generation, “a 2007 British study found that the younger generation of Muslims identifies itself as more religious than their parents (including a preference for Islamic schools, Islamic dress, and the Shari’a) and feel that they have less in common with non-Muslims than their parents have (Morag, 2011)”. The German experience is similar with 87.3 of Muslim youth in that nation identifying as either devout or very devout. This religious devotion combined with an indifference to their host country (only 5.5% of schoolchildren felt closely attached to

Germany) has led to a toxic environment of radicalization, a process that happens similarly to how it does in the United States (Morag, 2011).

European nations have had to deal with homegrown radicals longer than the U.S. and have reacted in differing ways that may or may not be compatible or applicable here at home. The Netherlands Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations has acknowledged that the “Salafist culture” is an idea that needed to be understood in the context of being a belief system that was fundamentally incompatible with Dutch beliefs and values. During the Dutch evaluation of radicalism, the Netherlands general intelligence and security service (Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst, or AIVD) purported that that radicalism and radicalization was a threat to the “democratic political order” even when radicals did not overtly advocate the use of violence and noted that the European Court of Human Rights ruled that governments “may act against groups seeking to subvert or undermine the democratic legal order, in particular if there is a real risk that their activities may have effective results” in 2003 (Morag 196). AIVD’s task now is to balance the fine line between allowing for the freedoms of speech and organization, much like in the U.S., and minimizing the perpetuation of ideas that threaten democratic values.

The Dutch, in particular, have been proactive in involving local authorities in addressing Islamic radicalization. In *Comparative Homeland Security: Global Lessons*, Nadav Morag argues that since locals know their jurisdiction so well, they should be central in counter-radicalization activities:

Local authorities are responsible for town planning and preservation of law and order and consequently are tasked with providing approval for the construction of mosques and Muslim cemeteries as well as Islamic schools. These powers allow them to interface with the local Muslim community and help ensure the propagation of moderate messages. Local authorities are also responsible for provision of welfare, employment, education, culture and recreation services. In each of these capacities, the local authorities are able to conduct outreach with and provide services to the Muslim community (Morag 197).

As mentioned earlier, the Dutch city of Amsterdam developed the Wij Amsterdammers program to counter radicalization. This is a successful municipal program that promotes social cohesion, social resilience to polarization, works complimentary to police activities. In order to balance the separation between non-police/security and police-based municipal involvement, the Dutch have instituted a case by case “early-warning system” that allows authorities to determine if an



individual is “thinking” or “acting” in their state of ideological radicalization. This determination will affect which city/local entity will interact with this radicalized individual.

Across the channel, the United Kingdom has taken a four “stranded” approach with policies known as *pursue, prevent, protect* and *prepare*. *Prevent* is the most well-known and analyzed pillar of the anti-terrorism strategy in the U.K. and involves a set of 5 counter-radicalization objectives. These objectives range from challenging current extremist thought with more moderate interpretations of Islam to the provision for social and economic support for individuals who have been identified as vulnerable to recruitment by extremists. Other facets of prevent include building stronger communities and addressing the grievances that are being exploited by radicalizers. Like its Dutch counterpart, this counter-radicalization plan acknowledges the importance of local authorities as the first line against radicalization:

In addition to the local police authorities and local government, prevent strategy calls for partnerships with social, cultural, sports and leisure services, community representatives, schools and universities, prisons and probation authorities, public health agencies and other governmental and non-governmental entities (UK Government, 9). The strategy also calls for local authorities and police to determine where radicalization is occurring in their jurisdictions (in some cases through mapping out ethnic and religious communities and socioeconomic factors), which groups may be most vulnerable to radicalization and which sectors of the local community need to be supported in resisting radical messages and overtures (Morag, 2011).

*Prevent* centers on community engagement and partnerships with local Muslim ethnic, religious and community leaders to challenge radicalism head on via government sponsorship and support.

Both the British and Dutch counter-radicalization plans involve heavy community engagement and stimulation to counteract the root causes and grievances of radicalization, mainly the alienation and isolation of swaths of the Muslim population. Amsterdam’s approach is to address the socio-economic preconditions of social inclusion to include housing policy, the general social environment, employment, income, education and health. The city’s officials have also recognized that a fundamental values shift has occurred where although Amsterdam is a rich patchwork of different lifestyles, cultures, religions and communities; it has shifted from a model of tolerance to one of interaction and intercultural dialogue. Amsterdam’s approach bypasses a head-on provocation with radicals on religious terms, but attempts to handle the basic human issues of why an individual would be vulnerable to radicalization in the first place. The *Wij Amsterdammers* plan looks at the conflicts that arise in the city such as the “frustration of basic psychological needs by difficulties in livelihood or tensions between groups, lays a foundation

for conflict potential in a society” and that “tensions arise when subordinate groups in society claim more wealth and (political) power” adding “groups start blaming each other for their own frustrations” (Rijbroek, 2008).

Amsterdam has started to ‘bridge’ groups within the city to create social cohesion, one of the main goals of Wij Amsterdammers. Within the social cohesion component, the city’s goals are to bond and bridge social capital amongst different groups and to offer prospects to disadvantaged groups to take part in Amsterdam society. These goals are accomplished by “building and connecting networks”, “investing in good contacts with key-figures in communities” and “using social capital by connecting elites”. A keystone actionable that the city of Amsterdam produced to address this goal was the Urban Games or StadsSpelen which was first started in 2006 and have run in the years succeeding. This event is a district-level cross-cultural friendly competition in five competencies- dance, cooking, music, knowledge and football (soccer). These events are local and peg different districts against each other in friendly competitions, culminating in a final match at the Olympic Stadium. Crowds and corporate sponsors have grown as this community event continues to draw in participants and spectators from all walks in the city. This approach to curbing radicalism through community cohesion is just part of a greater holistic approach to improving the city.

The second pillar in countering radicalism is to make society at large more resilient to polarization. Amsterdam’s leaders hope to accomplish this by stimulating mutual positive perceptions of groups as well as taking a mild stance on orthodox religious beliefs while being firm with radicalism. It hopes to accomplish these goals by encouraging and hosting public forums, implementing a wide range of anti-discrimination campaigns (this is not limited to ethnic minorities and Muslims, but also sexual minorities and the GLBT population as well) and by giving more support to school teachers and stimulating parents to actively educate their children on discrimination.

Amsterdam’s more specific counter-radicalization programs are geared towards to the middle to long term, not just the short. The city believes that creating robust relationships with the Muslim community is the right start in a strategy of supporting mosques and Muslim organizations, supporting organizations that show diversity within Islam and stimulate dialogue and expressing repression towards radicalism and a very pronounced mildness towards orthodox beliefs. In the short term, the city of Amsterdam hopes to establish an intervention unit which

will be empowered to monitor and analyze radicalism and extremism. This program will allow security and municipal officials to develop expertise for the long term, develop robust information gathering abilities, assist ‘informers’ and advise the national government in future policy initiatives.

The Amsterdam experience with *Wij Amsterdammers* is a model that the city of New York should emulate in crafting a well-rounded, municipally inclusive and effective counter-radicalization strategy. New York can learn lessons from Amsterdam’s growing pains over the past few years of *Wij Amsterdammers*’ infancy such as always being cognizant and aware of the tremendous political and media sensitivity to any program that involves engaging certain populations and not others. Other lessons learned from Amsterdam include:

1. This process is not top down, but bottom up.
2. Officials should invest in *trust* rather than investing in *control*.
3. Society cannot be managed from the purview of elected officials and conference rooms- get on the ground and talk to ordinary people.
4. Make sure such bold endeavors have ample, not just adequate, political support.

New York has the potential to learn from others’ mistakes and create a program that takes the best ideas and implementations from around the world and do with them what New York does, best: make them better.

## **A New York Counter-Radicalization Plan**

As the Bipartisan Policy Center's National Security Preparedness Group's report on homegrown terrorism states, the United States was effectively founded by radicals. As odd as it may sound, for their time, our founding fathers and their compatriots were radicals. They thought radically different than the establishment and used violence to achieve their ends. One can think of *radicals* as the real drivers of American history and society:

American history books are full of reminders that many of the rights and freedoms now taken for granted were fought for by individuals who were condemned as 'radicals' and 'extremists' by their contemporaries. Abolitionists "faced violent mobs and hostile legislators who interfered with their mail and destroyed their presses"; women campaigning for their right to vote "were called 'hysterical' and ...banned from publicly speaking"; Martin Luther King Jr. was "smeared and threatened" by the government. This collective experience has taught Americans of all political persuasions that 'radicals' are essential parts of their national story, and on many occasions they have been drivers of positive change and renewal. (Neumann, 2011)

At a time in history, American values were radical values. The US Constitution's Bill of Rights is perhaps the most radical treatise on governance in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In the American context, the word radical has a very different connotation than in other nations. If America is the marketplace for free discourse, then New York City is its epicenter and any counter-radicalization policy that occurs here will certainly be utilized in other parts of the country.

The NSPG's report posts a few prudent guidelines to crafting a counter-radicalization policy that will be appropriate to the American experience. First and foremost, the report stresses the importance of staying true to American values as, "a genuinely American policy would not make any speech illegal, but be more robust in standing up to extremist hate speech." A robust counter-radicalization policy will uphold the values of the U.S. Constitution such as free speech and expression of religion and must not "prosecute someone for speaking out in favor of al Qaeda or publishing a website that glorifies terrorism." Although this may seem counter intuitive, the government must not engage in "policing" thought (Neumann, 2011).

In order to avoid debates about counter-radicalization practices, it is best to truly understand what it is, and how to convey this to the public at large. Let's define what counter-radicalization is not: a policy of criminalizing ideas and people. "Properly understood, counter-radicalization aims to challenge extremist narratives in the "marketplace of ideas," and in doing so, draws on a long and well-established American tradition of speaking out against intolerance,

racism and ‘hate speech’,” and should, as the NSPG puts it, “not make any kind of speech illegal, however distasteful and disagreeable, but try to be more robust in standing up to extremist hate speech, specifically when it seems to legitimate violence, and encourage communities to do the same (Neumann, 2011).”

Another consideration to a sound counter-radicalization policy is the First Amendment’s establishment clause, which prevents governments on any level from funding religious organizations or “making rules that ‘entangle’ government and religion.” Many European nations with similar homegrown terror issues as the United States have embraced religious organizations with direct funding in an effort to ‘spend’ the problem away. Most have failed, but their policies and actions can teach the U.S. a lot about what not to do.

My counter-radicalization plan for New York utilizes best practices from programs around the world, most notably the Netherlands, and adapts them to work within the capabilities and scope of New York City. This plan involves the resources of multiple city agencies, the NYPD, national law enforcement and intelligence, NGOs, community organizations, corporations, politicians and the Muslim community and public alike. This is four pillared framework for counter-radicalization that is fluid and can be adopted in whole or just portions. This plan is titled *New York First* and has four pillars that will guide planners and policy makers.

### ***New York First***

#### **Pillar 1. Communication**

Expectations setting and management.

*Set Clear Metrics*

*Measure Effectiveness*

Educate Policy makers on radicalization and counter-radicalization process.

AQ Ideology needs to be challenged and contested

*Differentiate with anti-Islam*

#### **Pillar 2. Leadership Across City Services**

Municipal and Police

Non Profits

Business

#### **Pillar 3. Community Outreach**

Perspective

*Set many partners, but choose carefully*

*Know your audience*

*Reflect Diversity across the City and Muslim communities*

Engagement vs Empowerment

Be Open

*Have a Thick Skin*

Counter-terrorism vs Counter-Radicalization  
*Community Policing*

**Pillar 4. Capacity Building**

Economic development entities need to be engaged.

NGOs

More Training

*Cultural Competency*

*Engagement and Outreach*

Long Term Thinking

**Communication**

In the months succeeding September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 governments around the world proposed new anti-terror and safety legislation to prevent future attacks. At home, the Federal government launched countless initiatives and even created a new cabinet level department, The Department of Homeland Security. I believe that the best way to deploy New York First would be to have a managing task force based out of the Mayor's office comprised of a proportionate mix of law enforcement and civilian municipal employees. Communication between members of the taskforce and their respective agencies is crucial in executing New York First.

This program needs to be as vocal as possible with participating stakeholders of what success is and isn't. Vidino asks in his own counter-radicalization proposal, "if a program successfully deradicalizes 99 committed Jihadists, but then one reverts to terrorism, is the initiative a success or failure?" a just inquiry that compels evaluators to understand that success of radicalization prevention requires them to prove a negative, "the number of individuals who did not become terrorists because of the programs (Vidino, *Foreign Policy*, 2010)." Such programs are generation and will take decades to be realized, a time horizon that many policy makers at home are uncomfortable with.

In order to better manage external pressures and expectations of such a program, clear metrics to empirically measure and manage results need to be instituted. These metrics should be laid out as clearly as possible and first establish if the program seeks to simply target violent individuals or the cognitive manifestation of radical ideology. Whatever these metrics are and how they will be measured should be one of the top priorities of this new task force. I would suggest taking a step back and looking at radicalization from an objective standpoint such as the 'supply and demand scheme' created by Colin Mellis, a policy advisor on radicalization for the

City of Amsterdam. Mellis sets up his explanation of radicalization with two major players: supply of radical thought and ideology and those who seek these ideas. Usually, a strong society, or ‘resilience’, prevents demand from meeting supply. When a breakdown in society exists, a ‘cognitive opening’ is created that links the supply of jihadist ideology with young Muslims in the community who may have issues concerning identity, society and the role that their religion plays. Societal conceptions such as perceived or actual discrimination, humiliation, alienation, frustration and injustice act as a ‘breeding ground’ for the ‘demand’ to absorb the ‘supply’. New York First can measure effectiveness by removing the breeding ground, and closing the cognitive opening that arises from a breakdown in society.

The two are different targets, and it must be clearly laid out over which is the primary focus of New York First. I believe targeting the actual ideology, not the individuals, will yield better results in New York as it has in Amsterdam. New Yorkers must be made to understand that this program is NOT a campaign against religion, the freedom to worship or Islam, but rather a campaign against an ideology that leads to terrorism and violence.

### **Community Outreach**

Community outreach should be viewed as a tool to strengthen the city, not just against radicalization and terrorism but the other ills that plague modern cities such as unemployment, crime and poor education. This pillar is included in the plan with the objective of activating different elements in the community to bind potentially radicalized individuals to society, therefore making it harder for them to follow through with a violent act.

When reaching out to ethnic and religious groups such as the Muslim population, the New York First taskforce should maintain a sense of perspective. “The obsession of politicians and the media with scrutinizing the wider Muslim population, either as victims or potential terrorists, means that Muslims are regarded as outsiders, rather than as members of society like everyone else,(Morag, 2011)” exemplifies the importance of understanding who you are reaching out to. If this counter-radicalization program was a marketing campaign for a product or service, the first thing an advertising executive would want to know is who the intended audience or customer is. It would be prudent to know exactly ‘who’ the Muslim community is in New York City. American Muslims encompass many races, ethnicities and local cultures as well as sects and levels of religiosity towards Islam. There really is no “one size fits all” approach to

tailoring a message that will resound with this entire group. “Knowing the ethnic, sectarian, linguistic, social, and political lines that characterize this fragmentation is crucially important,” and on a more individual level, “the reasons that drive a suburban college student, a new convert, and an immigrant from an underprivileged neighborhood to embrace al Qaeda’s ideology might be completely different (Vidino, 2010).”

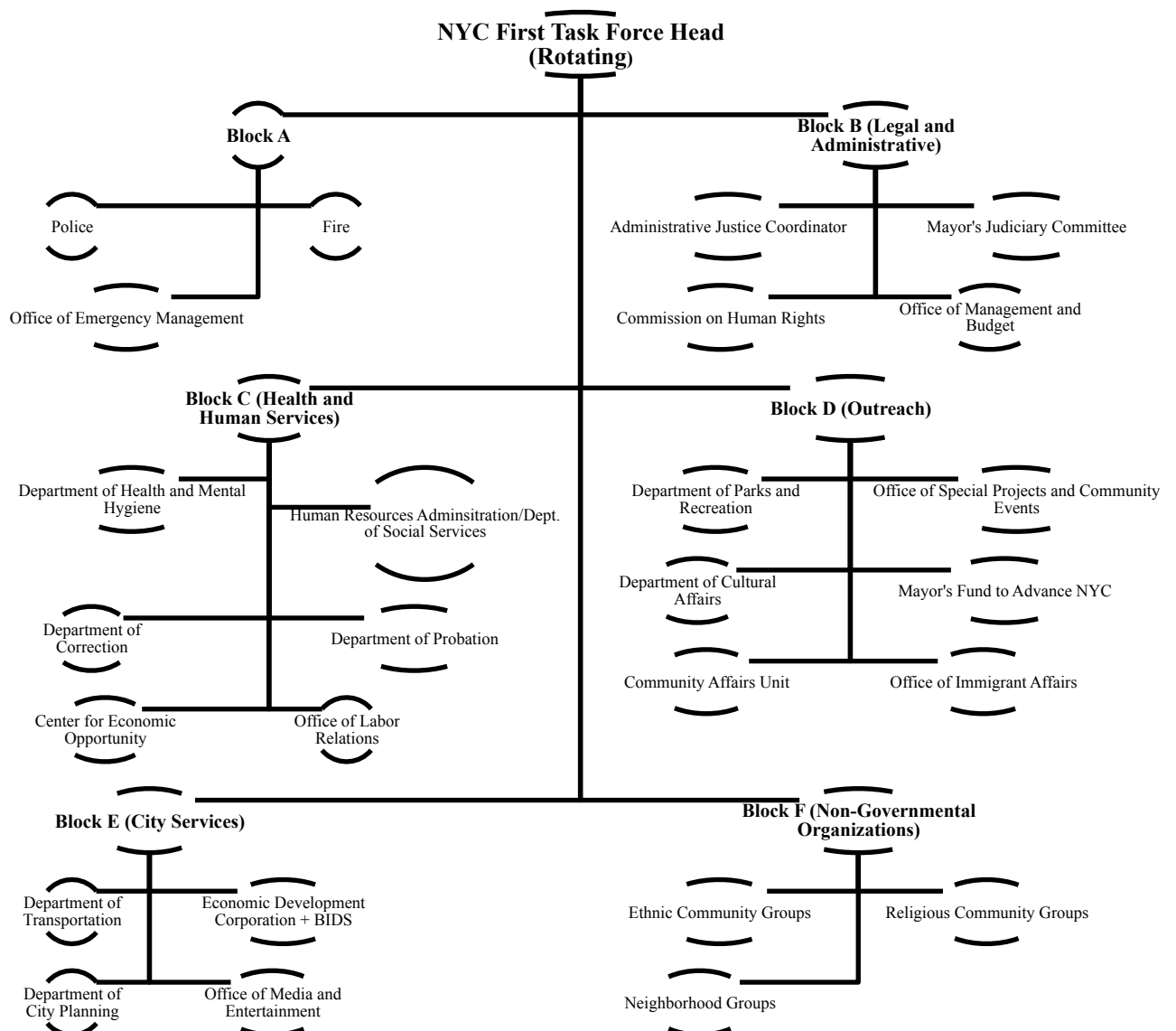
Openness will go a long way in building community support and hopefully catching the eyes and ears of those you are hoping to target. New York First will be designed to interface with academics, civic groups, civil liberties organizations and fellow city governments. The Muslim community must be engaged and the best way to do this is through existing Muslim leaders and organizations. As stated earlier, once the various divisions within the Muslim community have been ascertained (sect, ethnic, cultural, national identity), partners can be identified from these various sub-communities who can assist and are vested in preventing radicalization. The balancing game of credibility management must be constantly played as it is important to carefully choose partners who can reach vulnerable audiences. This usually means partnering with organizations with ties to nonjihadist/political Salafists who, although condemn violence in the West, may support more drastic actions in certain Middle Eastern theaters. Partners in a long lasting counter-radicalization program must be chosen carefully, fostered, trusted (this trust must be mutually built) and vested in a safer, non-radicalized city. As a partner, the city’s leadership and counter-radicalization officials must recognize the difference between engagement and empowerment with these community partners. Officials need to recognize that not all groups are the same, and not all may make appropriate partners in official programs that have specific goals, objectives and purport a certain set of values.

Understanding and stressing the importance of what counter-radicalization is not will also enable policy makers to make better decisions. First and foremost, counter-radicalization should not be treated as an intelligence-gathering activity nor is its primary focus on policing. Conveying the differences between counter-terrorism and counter-radicalization activities to all stakeholders is crucial and should be a first step in New York First’s activities. Once totally understood, a sound counter-radicalization policy will always be within the demands from civil libertarians’ demands that “no law enforcement action should be taken unless someone’s behavior indicates criminal intent”, simply due to the fact that tools and policies of the counter-radicalization program are not coercive.



## Leadership Across City Services

In order to maximize the complimentary nature of the New York First taskforce, champions within respective municipal departments must be identified and delegated with the responsibility of fostering and maintaining open lines of communication amongst their departments. Not only will this be a conduit for information sharing by experience from seemingly different municipal departments will now be pooled for all members of the task force to glean. Community and faith based NGOS as well as development entities such as economic development corporations and business improvement districts (BIDs) will be woven into the official leadership matrix of the taskforce.



**Figure 1: Proposed New York First Organizational Structure**

## **Capacity Building**

With the proposed organizational structure in mind, it is imperative for city departments to know what they need to do, and should actively “scan existing programs for counter-radicalization impact” (Neumann, 2011). There are countless programs across the city with counter-radicalization impact, intended or not, that work but can be made better if they were not treated as independent programs, but part of a larger whole. The Taskforce needs to take inventory of its respective departments and understand how various initiatives interface with each other. The Bipartisan Policy Center stresses that capacity-building in the context of a counter-radicalization program “must focus on *at risk* places and populations” and need to focus on “penetrating such *difficult* environments and *hard to reach* populations (Neumann, 2011).”

Finally, the City must remember that it cannot possibly take this task on by itself. New York must leverage its diverse population, community organizations, non-profits and the private sector. Amsterdam has many non-governmental stakeholders in their counter-radicalization policy, not only to make the community more vested in these activities, but to foment dialogue and understanding between different segments of the population. “In using its convening power, the government should look beyond Muslim communities and make more systematic efforts to connect Muslim community partners with industry, the mainstream media, non-profits, foundations, the philanthropy sector, and other non-governmental actors who can provide skills, expertise and funding,” and could lead to “helping Muslim communities to become more effective in reaching out to their followers and countering the extremist narrative via the internet and social media,” as well as local radical instigators, analyses the Bipartisan Policy Center’s Preventing Violent Radicalization in America policy whitepaper. New York is the perfect incubator for this theory with the critical mass in both populations and organizations that are willing to engage in such interactions (Neumann, 2011).

## CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

New York is the center of American culture, spirit and thought. This city represents everything that al Qaeda and its ideological equivalents despise about the United States and Western values. These terrorists seek out symbols of our freedom, many of which are integral parts of New York City's built environment. In the past, the best safeguard against these terrorists was to monitor and engage them abroad, since this is where they were from. Many such persons were unfamiliar with American culture and were easy for law enforcement and intelligence officials to pick out of the crowd. As the United States and her allies flushed out these elements in Afghanistan and other hotbeds abroad, the phenomenon of transference took place and the Salafist ideology of jihad digitized itself onto the Internet. In a literal click of a mouse, an ideology of hate that preyed on the insecurities and vulnerabilities of a select few is now easily accessible anywhere to anyone in almost total anonymity.

This ideology and its ability to radicalize members of society to commit violent acts against their countrymen and hometowns is alarming and has the potential to create a climate of fear and hysteria. The only way to fight this enemy is to go after the ideology itself by strengthening society. This fortification of civil society begins at the local city level where municipal agencies and community actors need to be lockstep in identifying the issues, communicating amongst each other and executing various initiatives based off their collective and individual strengths as agencies.

As *the* American city, New York has an obligation to execute a counter-radicalization plan that is in the spirit of American values and freedoms. Although it may seem counterintuitive to combat a cancer such as radicalism with openness and free exchange, it is the very medicine that will flush it out- our freedom and unity.

## EXHIBITS

### A. *Inspire* Magazine (2010)



Exhibit A: *Inspire* Magazine published by Samir Khan. This is the cover issue with the article on homemade bombs titled "Make a Bomb in the Kitchen of Your Mom". (<http://azelin.files.wordpress.com/2010/06/aqap-inspire-magazine-volume-1-uncorrupted.pdf>)

**B. New York Plotters since 9/11**



**Shahawar Matin Siraj  
(Herald Square)**



**James Eshafay  
(Herald Square)**



**Bryant Neal Vinas  
(LIRR)**



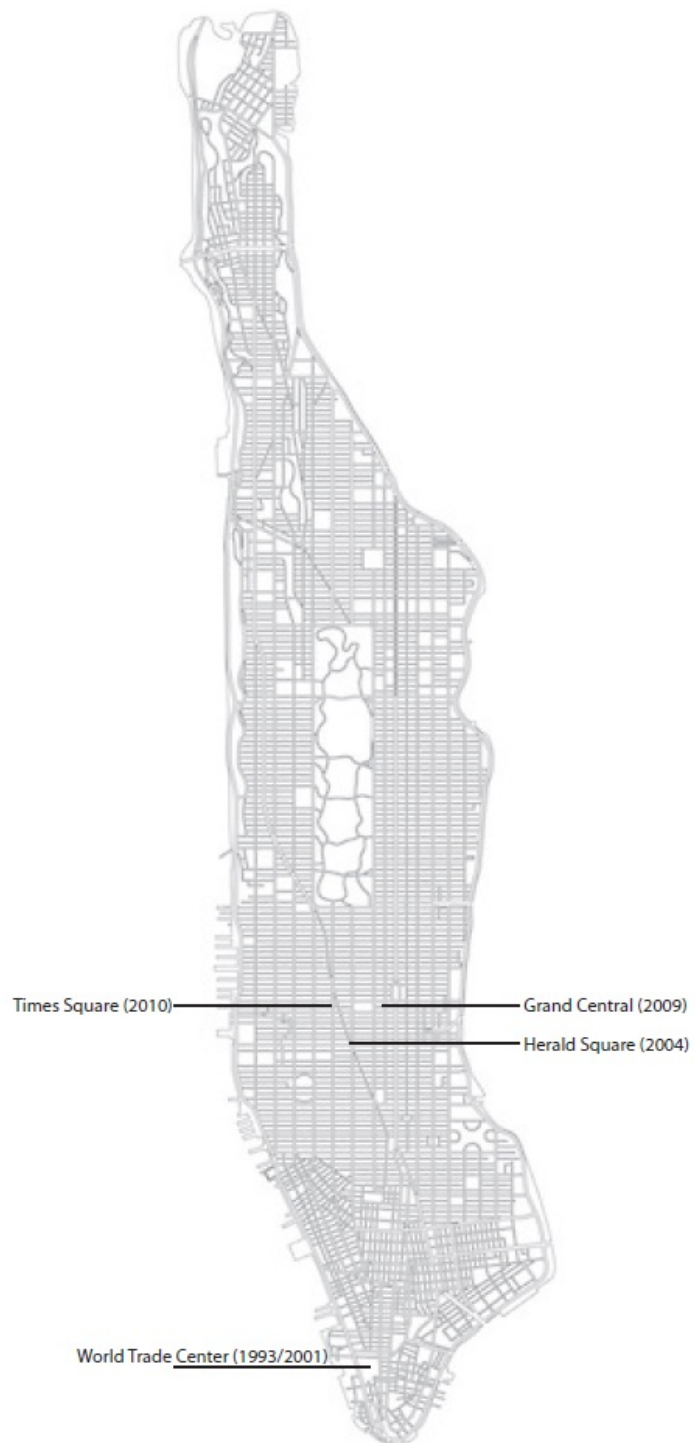
**Najibullah Zazi  
(Grand Central)**



**Faisal Shahzad  
(Times Square)**

**Exhibit B: Convicted NYC-based plotters (Clockwise: James Eshafay, Bryant Neal Vinas, Faisal Shahzad, Najibullah Zazi, Shahawar Matin Siraj)**

### C. Map of Major Terror Plots and Attacks (WTC)



**Exhibit C: Map of Manhattan with major foiled plots (Times Square, Herald Square and Grand Central), and actual attacks (World Trade Center)**

## D. Herald Square Transcript

Section of an August 23, 2004 video recording presented by the prosecution as evidence in the case of United States v. Shahawar Matin Siraj. Elshafay and Siraj are the two co-conspirators, under the belief that Eldawoody is their mentor and facilitator. Eldawoody, as it would turn out, was a paid informant of the NYPD.

**ELSHAFAY:** If I'm going to do 34th Street, I want to go there a few more times. I want to check it out a little more. And if they can get someone better qualified than me to do it, then I think they should, because I'm not really experienced in this and might not know what to do. Is that okay?

**ELDAWOODY:** Okay. Whatever you feel. Whatever.

**ELSHAFAY:** I'll do it.

**SIRAJ:** The time to check out the station is in the morning from three o'clock to five o'clock. When the train stops, how many people get out? Find out which car is empty, so people have a chance to survive, you know. That way, it will be nice.

**ELSHAFAY:** I have an idea. If I go in to do it, I'll dress like a Jew. I'll have the bomb on me so it looks like a belly. I'll take it out and put it in the garbage can. I'll tuck in my shirt and walk out the 34th Street entrance.

**SIRAJ:** Don't put it in the belly.

**ELSHAFAY:** But I'm going to dress like a Jew. That way no one will check me.

**SIRAJ:** Jews do carry bags. See what bags they carry. What kinds of things they carry. Maybe it could be a Macy's bag.

**ELSHAFAY:** They'll never check a Jew, 'cause they know Jews aren't the ones doing it.

**ELDAWOODY:** Okay, are you going to be with him, Matin?

**SIRAJ:** Yeah, I can be with him.

**ELSHAFAY:** No. It's better if I just go in myself. Walk down there, *inshallah*, and everything will go the way Allah planned it. But I gotta get Jewish garb.

**SIRAJ:** The ponytails too?

**ELSHAFAY:** Yeah, those curls too. I gotta have 'em. Is there any way they can make the bomb look like something different?

(“Band of Brothers”, 2006)

## E. Wij Amsterdammers



Exhibit E: Wij Amsterdammers Posters part of a public education campaign to promote anti-discrimination measures, civic engagement and mutual respect and understanding amongst different groups. (Wij Amsterdammers, 2008)



## Glossary of Commonly Used Names and Terms

**al Qaeda** (القاعدة) (AQ)- “The Base” is a global network of Salafi-jihadist organizations founded by Osama bin Laden in the late 1980s (1988/1989). It is most notorious for planning and orchestrating the September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 attacks, the 1998 US Embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania and the 2002 Bali Bombings. Al Qaeda’s main goals are to sever foreign influence and intervention in Muslim countries and establish a new Islamic worldwide caliphate. Al Qaeda consists of the following organizations:

- ❖ al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)
  - al Qaeda in Saudi Arabia
  - Islamic Jihad of Yemen
- ❖ al Qaeda Organization in the Islamic Maghreb (North Africa)
- ❖ al Shabab (Somalia)
- ❖ Egyptian Islamic Jihad (Egypt)
- ❖ Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (Libya)
- ❖ East Turkestan Islamic Movement (China)

**Afghan Taliban-** Islamic militant and political group that ruled a majority of Afghanistan from September 1996 to its fall at the hands of the US led coalition in October 2001. Played host to al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden during the planning of the 9/11 attacks.

**Anwar al-Awlaki-** American born of Yemeni descent imam who became the public face of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. Provided inspiration to the Fort Hood shooter, Nadal Malik Hasan and the underwear bomber, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab. Killed in the autumn of 2011 by a CIA drone over Yemen.

**Ayman al-Zawahiri** (Ayman Mohammed Rabie al-Zawahiri)- Egyptian born physician turned theologian and current head of al Qaeda after the death of bin Laden. Started his career in the Egyptian Islamic Jihad which he merged with al Qaeda in the 1980s.

**Bryant Neal Vinas-** American Muslim convert from Long Island who travelled to Pakistan and trained at al Qaeda camps in Waziristan. Plotted to bomb the Long Island Rail Road line.

**CIA-** The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency is the primary foreign intelligence gathering agency in the United States. Has been very active in intelligence collection measures in Afghanistan against al Qaeda and Afghan Taliban forces.

**Dari-** Afghan Persian language spoken in Afghanistan. Shares official language status alongside Pushtu in Afghanistan

**Faisal Shahzad-** Pakistani-American father of two who was the lone wolf plotter and attacker in the Times Square Plot of 2010. His bomb laden SUV parked in Times Square did not go off. Currently serving a life sentence at the Super MAX prison in Florence, Colorado.

## **Glossary of Commonly Used Names and Terms (Continued)**

**FBI-** The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation is the primary domestic intelligence and law enforcement agency on the national level. Responsible for investigating terror activities and plots domestically and assists foreign governments abroad.

**Imam-** An Islamic leadership position, most often the worship leader or head of a mosque, and by extension the head of a Muslim community.

**Inspire Magazine-** The English language magazine published by AQAP. Distributed electronically as a tool to radicalize individuals in the US and Western nations. Notable articles include “Make a Bomb in the Kitchen of Your Mom”.

**James Elshafay-** 19-year-old co-conspirator in the 2004 Herald Square Bombing. Converted to Islam at age 12 at the insistence of his Egyptian father. Raised by his Irish-Catholic mother.

**Jihad-** An Islamic term meaning ‘struggle’. A religious duty amongst Muslims. Three different struggles exist:

- A believer’s internal struggle to live out the Muslim faith as well as possible
- The struggle to build a good Muslim society
- Holy war: the struggle to defend Islam, with force if necessary

**Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF)-** Partnership between U.S. law enforcement agencies on local, state and the national level. Headed by the FBI to support subordinate (local) law enforcement agencies fight terrorism.

**Khalid Sheikh Mohammad-** Considered to be the 9/11 ‘mastermind’. A senior al Qaeda official and decision maker. Captured by Pakistani intelligence agents and is currently being tried in the US for his crimes.

**Metropolitan Police-** The Greater London Metropolitan Police Service is the police force responsible for the London area.

**Michael Bloomberg-** Mayor of New York City (1 Jan 2001 - ). Currently the 12<sup>th</sup> richest man in the US.

**Mujahedeen-** The term became popularized during the Soviet incursion in Afghanistan as local Afghan and Arab fighters would form bands of jihadist fighters called mujahedeen or “people doing jihad”.

**Omar Abdel-Rahman-** The “Blind Sheikh”, Egyptian Muslim leader who promoted and cultivated violent Salafi-jihadist ideology in the United States. Primarily operated out of New York City mosque. Arrested in implication to the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.

**Osama bin Laden (Osama bin Mohammad bin Awad bin Laden)-** Saudi head and founder of al Qaeda. Started his career in Jihad during the fight against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. Killed in a US raid while hiding in Pakistan on May 2, 2011.

## Glossary of Commonly Used Names and Terms (Continued)

**Osama Eldawoody** (AKA Dawadi)- Paid informant of the NYPD who tracked the activities of James Elshafay and Shahwar Matin Siraj during the Herald Square Plot in 2004.

**Najibullah Zazi**- Afghan-American immigrant who attended an al Qaeda training camp in Waziristan, Pakistan. Plotted to bomb Grand Central Station in New York City. Pled guilty conspiring to use weapons of mass destruction, conspiring to commit murder in a foreign country and providing material support to a terrorist organization. Originally recruited by al Qaeda for a suicide bombing mission.

**Pakistani Taliban** (TTP)- An umbrella organization for various Islamist organizations operating in the tribal border regions shared between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Primarily operate inside Pakistan against domestic targets.

**Pushtu**- Language spoken in Afghanistan by the Pashtun majority. Shares official language status alongside Dari in Afghanistan

**Raymond Kelly**- Current Commissioner of the New York City Police Department. Also served a term under Dinkins during the first World Trade Center bombing attack. Former U.S. Marine Corps Colonel during the Vietnam War.

**Ramzi Yousef**- One of the main perpetrators of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. Currently serving a life term at the Super MAX prison in Florence, Colorado.

**Salafist Jihadism**- Jihadist movement amongst Salafis, Muslims who look to the earliest Islamic traditions and way of life as a model to life and religious expression. Most often associated with a legalistic, literalist, strict and puritanical approach to Islamic theology.

**Samir Khan**- 26 year old editor Pakistani-American editor of Inspire magazine. Radicalized in the US and fled to Yemen to join up with AQAP. Killed in the autumn of 2011 by a CIA drone.

**Sayyid Qutib**- One of the founding members of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. His works, *Milestones* and *In the Shade of the Quran* influence and inspire Islamists today.

**Shahawar Matin Siraj**- Pakistani born illegal immigrant who was the prime suspect in the 2004 Herald Square bombing plot. Sentenced to 30 years in prison.

**Shia Islam**- The second largest branch of Islam primarily practiced in Iran.

**Sunni Islam**- The largest branch of Islam practiced in the Arabian Peninsula, Africa and South East Asia.

**Wahhabi**- A conservative interpretation of Sunni Islam that is similar to Salifism and is widely practiced in Saudi Arabia.

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