Manufacturing the Muslim Menace

Private Firms, Public Servants, and the Threat to Rights and Security

A publication of Political Research Associates by Thomas Cincotta
Political Research Associates (PRA) is a progressive think tank devoted to supporting movements that are building a more just and inclusive democratic society. We expose movements, institutions, and ideologies that undermine human rights.

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Private Firms, Public Servants, and the Threat to Rights and Security

A petition to Congress and relevant federal and local agencies to ensure that counterterrorism skills training delivered to public servants is accurate, consistent with national security policy, and respectful of constitutional rights.
Advance Praise for
Manufacturing the Muslim Menace

“‘Manufacturing the Muslim Menace: Private Firms, Public Servants, & the Threat to Rights and Security’ is a ‘must read.’ Thom Cincotta’s heavily documented critical study uncovers and exposes the dangers to national security posed by a group of private security firms operating outside officially accredited systems. These firms offer anti-terrorism training programs, driven by an ideological agenda that trade facts for fiction and promote Islamophobic conspiracy theories that demonize mainstream Islam and Muslim communities.”

–John Esposito
Founding Director, Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding,
Professor of religion, international affairs and Islamic studies Georgetown University

... 

“When the virus of Islamophobia is spread in courses and conferences for police and intelligence officers, as the report reveals, this does not bode well for cooperation and a relationship of trust between law enforcement and American Muslim communities. Most disconcerting is the revelation that those events are sponsored or condoned by federal and local agencies and that participant fees are paid by taxpayers.”

–Brigitte Nacos
Professor of Political Science,
Columbia University
Preface

WITCH HUNTS BY ANY OTHER NAME

By Chip Berlet

“Kill them, including the children.”

That’s how to solve the threat of violent militant Muslims?

The above quote is from what one official involved in homeland security said was how she understood the underlying theme of a speech by Walid Shoebat at an anti-terrorism training in Las Vegas in October 2010. Our investigator had turned around after Shoebat’s speech and asked the woman seated one row back what she thought was the solution offered by Shoebat.

“Kill them…including the children…you heard him,” was the full response.

Shoebat’s speech was described by our source as “frightening.”

Thom Cincotta’s report, “Manufacturing the Muslim Menace” skillfully exposes how speakers like Shoebat are teaching our public servants to fear Islam and hate Muslims. Cincotta shows how private counterterrorism training groups utilize a network of biased speakers to train law enforcement at every level and in all parts of the country. The response to these trainings has been, unfortunately, quite positive. After reading this groundbreaking report, you will likely have a negative response to this post-September 11, 2001 phenomenon.

George D. Little, Director of the Institute for Criminal Justice Studies (ICJS) at Texas State University, in San Marcos, TX, also attended the Las Vegas training where Shoebat spoke. When first contacted by e-mail after the ICTOA conference, Little responded, “I believe there are good Muslims like there are bad ones just like there are good Christians and bad ones.” Little, however, dodged repeated questions about what he specifically thought of the content of Shoebat’s speech, and has since refused to comment altogether.

Shoebat is popular in Texas, having helped organize an anti-Islamic event near Fort Hood; spoken at an evangelical church; and been featured in ads for a statewide law enforcement training: “Preparing Law Enforcement Executives for the Future,” co-sponsored by the state’s Attorney General, Greg Abbott. Shoebat is also periodically interviewed as an expert on Islam on Fox News and is extensively quoted by the right-wing conspiracy website, World Net Daily.

Another Las Vegas conference attendee, Edwin Urie, praised Shoebat’s ICTOA speech. “From my perspective, Mr. Shoebat's presentation was so much on the mark, so specific, and so correct that I was concerned that he would be the target of those about whom he spoke. Maybe the objections are merely a part of that,” wrote Urie in an e-mail. Urie is an adjunct professor at Henley-Putnam University and a specialist in counterterrorism.

Keith Davies, Director of the Walid Shoebat Foundation, claims that the Islamic “definition of Jihad quoted in Sharia law is clear and means struggle but is used in context of holy war to conquer infidels.” Davies continues:

This is the standard interpretation recognized by all schools of thought in Sunni and Shia Islam.” [Not] every Muslim practices his religion to the letter but all that do are required to practice Jihad....So if say for argument 10% of Muslims actually practice their religion properly (figure is probably much higher) that would be 150 million terrorists. Even if it were 1% that is 1.5 million terrorists.
This interpretation of Islamic Law and its religious demands is an outlandish distortion; and yet it is being taught to our homeland security personnel. Davies disagrees with my criticism, and suggested that if I “hate this country and its constitutional values of individual freedom and respect Islamic people so much, maybe Saudi Arabia could be a good place for you to live....”

Shoebat's speech in Las Vegas was sponsored by the International Counter-Terrorism Officers Association (ICTOA). Michael Riker, president of the ICTOA, said that “numerous public safety personnel along with military personnel heard from Walid Shoebat” at the event. Then Riker defended Shoebat's bigoted tirade in a blog post:

What you hear from Walid is the TRUTH. The attendees were glued to what [Walid] had to say and the majority of them agreed. The liberal media is afraid to hear what the truth really is. Who has been planning attacks on our country? We are in a war of ideology and if you don't know that you need to get you head out of the sand. Before you make judgment see what is really going on then make an educated decision for yourself.

Shoebat has claimed that Islam is not the religion of God, but rather Islam is the devil, according to the Springfield News Leader. Shoebat revealed he was “shocked to find so many parallels between the Antichrist and Islam.”

Religion writer Richard Bartholomew has written that “Shoebat is a pseudo-expert on terrorism, Islamic extremism, and Biblical prophecy, and he teaches that Obama is a secret Muslim and that the Bible has prophesied a Muslim anti-Christ.” This means for some apocalyptic Christians that Muslims then would be allies of Satan in the End Times battle between good and evil. In this script, the battle ends when Jesus returns and with a vengeful God kills all those deemed to be non-believers in Christianity. This bloody and bigoted version of apocalyptic prophesies is rejected and condemned by the Catholic and Orthodox churches and every major Protestant denomination.

Abdus Sattar Ghazali wrote about Shoebat and other anti-Islamic bigots in an article on the website of Muslim Military Members, an organization that networks Muslims serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. "Walid Shoebat has built a lucrative speaking career by manipulating the fears and whipping up hatred between Jews and Muslims," wrote Ghazali

Federal and state agencies have turned to right-wing “experts” on “subversion” throughout U.S. history. These experts have included informers, who have surfaced to spin their tales in public, or converts, who claim to have been involved in skullduggery and now are sounding the alarm. In both cases, the alarmist stories these self-dramatizing demagogues tell tend to be exaggerated or even invented.

The fear that there is a conspiracy to undermine the government emerges periodically throughout our history as a nation. This hunt for an exaggerated subversive enemy “Other” is dubbed a “counter-subversion” panic. One government official involved in deporting thousands of innocent Italians and Russians during the “Palmer Raids” panic in the 1920s described it as a “delirium.” Most of us just call it a “Witch Hunt.” Whatever we call it, this countersubversion tendency has fueled episodes of political repression by government agencies and right-wing “patriotic” groups.

Shoebat may be the most outlandish example of the coterie of anti-Islamic bigots and fear mongers who are training law enforcement officials and anti-terrorism agents, but the problem is corrosive. Why are tax dollars being spent to peddle prejudice against Muslims in the United States? This report documents the problem. The solution will depend on a thorough and public review of this sad situation by government officials, elected representatives, a vigilant media, and public outrage.
Acknowledgements

This report arose out of Political Research Associates’ investigation into new relationships developing between local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, such as collaborative bodies like Fusion Centers and Joint Terrorism Task Forces. Wary of a re-ignition of the police intelligence abuses that reached a peak during the FBI’s counterintelligence program of the 1960-70s, and mindful of the widespread repression of Muslim, Arab, South Asian, and Middle Eastern communities after 9/11, PRA sought to identify potential sources of ideological indoctrination that could trigger or intensify violations of civil liberties. We noticed that a variety of private actors spread inflammatory messages aimed directly at members of the infrastructure who are officially engaged in a mission to make all Americans safer and more secure, while safeguarding fundamental freedoms.

This report exposes Islamophobic messages and their means of transmission while criticizing such frames from religious, civil liberties, and counterterrorist perspectives. The author deeply appreciates the opportunity to shed light on just one key aspect of this growing problem in the hopes that lawmakers, law enforcement executives, and community members will act to prevent religious discrimination and political, racial, or ethnic bias from poisoning the ranks of America’s public servants. Public funds must be spent only on proven, evidence-based research that truly improves professionals’ ability to protect safety.

The author wishes to thank all of the staff and volunteers at PRA who assisted with this report including, Megan Henry, James Heuttig, Amy Hoffman, Kapya Kaoma, Val Kalende, Alex Lach, Cindy Savage-King, Jean Smith, Jon Sussman, and Aramis Tirado. Hilary McConnaughhey coordinated public records requests. Pam Chamberlain reviewed multiple drafts, checked out library books, and talked through research challenges. Able field investigators attended industry conferences and interviewed participants. Aram Boghosian proofread several drafts and analyzed works by Nonie Darwish, Henry Morgentern, and Mark Gabriel. Chip Berlet wrote the Preface and provided key insights on the role of conspiracism. Maria Planansky coordinated editing and production. Abby Scher assisted with editing and structuring our approach, as well as providing analytical insight. Tarso Luís Ramos provided guidance at every step of the process. Thank you to Kica Matos at Atlantic Philanthropies for support of this project. Thanks also to Debbie Hird for graphic design. I am deeply grateful to my wife, Kari, for being a sounding board, unwavering supporter, and partner in fun.

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Finally, many thanks to the community-based and national organizations who shared their strategic thinking on how we can work collectively to prompt government agencies to address the problems identified herein.

— Thom Cincotta
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Executive Summary

Since the September 11, 2001 attacks by al Qaeda on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, the federal government has mobilized law enforcement agencies at all levels into a coordinated national defense against future terror attacks. To meet this challenge, the growing ranks of the domestic security apparatus—including local police, transit, port, and other agencies not traditionally involved in counterterrorism—require training. The George W. Bush administration’s declaration of “war on terror” bolstered a private counterterrorism training industry that offers courses on topics ranging from infrastructure reinforcement to terrorist ideology.

A nine-month investigation by Political Research Associates (PRA) finds that government agencies responsible for domestic security have inadequate mechanisms to ensure quality and consistency in terrorism preparedness training provided by private vendors. Public servants are regularly presented with misleading, inflammatory, and dangerous information about the nature of the terror threat through highly politicized seminars, industry conferences, trade publications, and electronic media. In place of sound skills training and intelligence briefings, a vocal and influential sub-group of the private counterterrorism training industry that offers courses on topics ranging from infrastructure reinforcement to terrorist ideology.

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Islamophobic statements like those above have the effect of demonizing the entirety of Islam as dangerous and “extremist,” denying the existence of a moderate Muslim majority, or regarding Islam generally as a problem for the world. The private sector speakers and trainers PRA investigated routinely invoke conspiracy theories that draw upon deeply-ingrained negative stereotypes of Muslim duplicity, repression, backwardness, and evil. Islamophobia is “an outlook or world-view involving an unfounded dread and dislike of Muslims, which results in practices of exclusion and discrimination” and may include the perception that Islam is inferior to the West and is a violent political ideology rather than a religion.

The notion that a generalized Muslim menace poses an existential threat to the United States and
western democracy contradicts official national security doctrine and undermines both domestic security and the constitutional rights of our citizens and residents. Nonetheless, PRA’s investigation finds that public resources are being used to propagate this dangerous falsehood to the nation’s first responders, intelligence analysts, and other public servants.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has primary federal responsibility for providing counterterrorism training to federal, state, and local emergency responders. DHS has developed a menu of government terrorism readiness and prevention courses designed to give first responders the analytical and practical skills to enhance community safety. However, a significant share of such training appears to be provided by private firms not vetted by government experts. DHS maintains a list of peer-reviewed private courses eligible for use with grant funds administered by the National Training and Education Center (NTED), a sub-division of the DHS’ Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). This quality control mechanism is an exception to the rule; agencies can apply for a wide array of federal grant programs, often without notifying local government officials about how grant funds are used.10 Recipients of such funds may contract with private training firms of their choice and are often not required to report so much as the names of companies used to train their personnel.11 The resources available to underwrite private, unregulated, training firms are substantial. Two grant programs that support training programs—the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) and Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI)—made $1.67 billion available to states in 2010.12 In addition to widespread quality control and transparency shortcomings of federal and other government programs, our investigation revealed examples of actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including the use of DHS and other public agency logos to promote private training events that were disavowed by those very agencies.13

PRA’s investigation into counterterrorism training for public servants focused on three organizations and, where relevant, their affiliated trainers/faculty. This report describes both the qualitative differences among their approaches and some basic commonalities. All of these entities benefit from taxpayer dollars that underwrite the attendance of government employees at the events and seminars described herein:

International Counter-Terrorism Officers Association (ICTOA), a nonprofit corporation founded by New York Police Department personnel, provides a variety of speakers with a platform to address a cross section of law enforcement officials.

Security Solutions International, LLC (SSI) is a Florida-based privately held company. SSI claims to have provided training to over one thousand agencies and companies and produces The Counter Terrorist magazine.14

The Centre for Counterintelligence and Security Studies (CI Centre), a for-profit company launched by a former national security officer, functions as a training academy and speakers bureau in the D.C. beltway. Here, veteran Cold Warriors mingle with academics, a self-described Muslim reformer, and a convert from Islam, and deliver a course on the “Global Jihadist Threat Doctrine.” According to CI Centre, they train “approximately 8,000 students per year,” the majority of whom are “current employees of the U.S. national security community.”15

Each of these organizations occupies a different niche in the counterterrorism training industry. Although different from each other in many regards, all three groups, or their affiliated trainers and spokespeople, propagate dangerous Islamophobic themes and stories to personnel charged with public safety and national security. By presenting themselves as law enforcement and intelligence specialists, these organizations and spokespeople lend their credentials to religious bigotry. The problem of private sector provision of Islamophobic training to public servants is not limited to these three groups. Additional research, including vigilance on the part of federal and local government agencies, is needed in order to define and address its full dimensions.

MANUFACTURING THE MUSLIM MENACE: FIVE FRAMES

PRA’s research has identified five important frames which are often utilized by trainers to deliver an Islamophobic message to those undergoing training in counterterrorism, and some or all of which are utilized by individuals associated with the
three organizations studied who are responsible for the training:

1. **Islam is a Terrorist Religion**
   Islamophobic counterterrorism training often brands Islam as the enemy in the “war on terror.” Private security groups and their speakers define the threat using ideological and theological terms that link Islam inextricably to terrorism. Within this frame, the problem is not simply terrorists who are Muslim but an “evil” Islam itself. ICTOA guest speaker Walid Shoebat, a self-described “former Islamic terrorist” and convert to an apocalyptic form of Christianity, suggests Islam is the fake religion of the “anti-Christ” and implies that Muslims bear the “Mark of the Beast.” He describes Islam and Muslims as inherently violent and savage, recounting an endless litany of violent acts committed by individuals in a manner that implies an irredeemably violent culture.

2. **An Islamic “Fifth Column,” or “Stealth Jihad,” is Subverting the U.S. from Within**
   This frame posits an existential threat to the United States even greater than that posed by al Qaeda: The domestic rise of political Islam aims to transform the United States into a Muslim country ruled by Sharia law. The argument is supported by a conspiracy theory in which Muslim-American advocacy groups act as front organizations for foreign Islamists, such as the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. Another version substitutes the puritanical religious movements Wahhabism or Salafism as the foreign puppetmaster. The argument encourages law enforcement to focus on alleged front organizations, chilling the exercise of constitutional freedoms and potentially diverting attention from illegal, terrorist activity. The theme resurrects McCarthy-era anti-Communist counter-subversion doctrine, substituting a current Muslim menace for the former Communist one, and justifying once-discredited witch-hunting practices.

3. **“Mainstream” Muslim Americans Have Terrorist Ties**
   Islamophobic counterterrorism trainers routinely categorize such civil rights groups as the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), and Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) as a support network for terrorists. For this charge they lean heavily on guilt by association, citing a few instances of members or former members with troublesome associations as evidence of organizational complicity. In spite of extensive and ongoing scrutiny, none of these organizations have ever been convicted of terrorism or formally charged with providing material support to terrorists. Islamophobic story lines characterize the widespread support for Palestinian statehood and opposition to the continuing Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands among Muslim-American leaders as evidence of sympathy for terrorism.

4. **Muslim Americans Wage “Lawfare”: Violent Jihad by Other Means**
   The “lawfare” frame holds that Muslim extremists use litigation, free speech, and other legal means to advance a subversive agenda and silence opponents — using democracy to subvert democracy. “Lawfare” utilizes a kind of Orwellian double-speak in which “terrorism” is not the use of terror, but the use of legal procedures. Law becomes warfare when used to oppose Islamophobia or assert Muslim-Americans’ civil rights. According to The Lawfare Project, a group led by one-time SSI guest speaker Brooke Goldstein, the term denotes “the abuse of the law and judicial systems to achieve strategic military or political ends.” Some of the trainers profiled in this Report use the lawfare charge to recast Muslim Americans’ claims that their rights are being violated as crafty tactics to keep their subversive agenda hidden from the public.

5. **Muslims Seek to Replace the U.S. Constitution with Islamic, Sharia, Law**
   This frame raises the specter of a repressive Islamic Caliphate ruling over America and suggests that support for Sharia, rather than kinetic violent terrorism, is the “most dangerous threat.” Like the Islamic “Fifth Column” conspiracy theory, this Sharia one evokes Cold War fears of global Communism. The menace of a global Islamic dictatorship stands in for the former Soviet one. Sharia is a set of ideas that define a properly constituted Islamic existence. Selective interpretations of Islamic jurisprudence are used by some terrorists to mobilize recruits with the ultimate goal of establishing a global Islamic government, or Caliphate. This frame is used to stigmatize civil rights advocates who fight religious discrimination by vilifying religious accommodation as capitulation to Islamic rule. No such process is actually underway. Further, the demonization of Sharia ignores the ongoing domestic transformation and accommodation of Islam to American legal, cultural, social, and economic norms.
These five frames and the stories told to illustrate and support them rely on factual inaccuracies (or, at the very best, highly controversial interpretations of empirical data), as well as on the attribution of behaviors or beliefs evinced by some members of a religious group to most or all members of that group. Beyond such inaccuracies and distortions, the overwhelming focus on alleged religious motivations of terrorists by the groups and trainers we investigated belies an additional troubling bias. Empirical studies of counterterrorism by experts like Robert Pape, Mark Juergensmeyer, Marc Sageman, and others demonstrate that across religions—and not just Islam—the majority of terrorists and suicide bombers are primarily driven by political grievances. Religion is most often used to recruit, legitimate, and motivate.

**THREATS TO SECURITY AND RIGHTS**

To the extent that Islamophobic counterterrorism training is successful in influencing the behavior of law enforcement and domestic security personnel, the biased themes and stories described in the preceding section are likely to undermine both domestic security and constitutional rights. Probable outcomes include confrontational or otherwise non-cooperative relations between police and local Muslim and Arab communities. Safety is sacrificed if community members become less likely to report crimes or access public services, such as healthcare or emergency services, out of fear that they will be mistreated or subject to arbitrary, intrusive questioning.

The Islamophobic messages conveyed by biased and ideologically rigid trainers associated with the three groups examined in this report risk fostering resistance to the integration of Muslims into the fabric of American society. They often treat public expressions of devout, fundamentalist, or “pure” Islam as evidence of belief in a theology that supports terrorism. If adopted by law enforcement, the ideological, Islamophobic approach of these trainers and firms is likely to yield a number of unconstitutional and otherwise negative outcomes:

**Biased Intelligence Analysis**
The false and damaging equation of Islam with terrorism could taint intelligence analysis by grossly distorting and exaggerating the threat factor and targeting innocent activity. Cultural and personal bias and outright politicization can lead intelligence units to collect data on the wrong targets and increase the probability of analytical failure by analysts who lack the benefit of evidence-based training.

**Stereotyping and Profiling**
Indoctrinating police officers and intelligence personnel to distrust the motives of Muslim Americans is a recipe for racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination and unconstitutional profiling. Islamophobic training content encourages officers and analysts to rely on religious speech as a proxy for evidence of criminal intent. Conspiracy theories about “stealth jihad” encourage employment discrimination against Muslims in public service occupations. Feedback from participants in trainings on the “Jihadist Threat” suggests increased suspicion of potential recruits and Muslim colleagues.

**Unlawful Searches and Illegal Surveillance**
Messages that render suspect certain religious beliefs (such as support for Sharia law), expressions of political sympathy for Palestinians’ cause, or association with legal advocacy groups may spur indefinite surveillance of innocent persons and houses of worship without a criminal predicate. Warrantless surveillance chills political participation in civil society and strikes at the heart of the First Amendment’s guarantee of freedom from religious persecution. Islamophobic messages vilifying legal advocacy basically endorse political spying and disruption.

**Physical Violence and Hate Crimes**
The religious and racial prejudice that could result from biased Islamophobic training potentially could lead to deadly responses, such as police officers being more likely to shoot in an ambiguous situation. It might also result in more assaults against people identified rightly or wrongly as Muslim or Arab. Propagation of the “Lawfare” myth may cause law enforcement executives or officers to doubt and under-investigate complaints of hate crimes or civil rights violations from members of Muslim, Arab, Middle Eastern, and South Asian communities.

**Chilling Free Speech**
Speakers associated with the CI Centre and Security Solutions International characterize public criticism of Islamophobia as “lawfare,” or, as CI Centre faculty member Clare Lopez puts it, the “offensive use of democratic legal systems by those whose intent is to destroy democracy.” The lawfare frame represents a
dangerous nadir in the conflation of free speech and terrorism, wherein terrorism is transformed from indiscriminate violence against civilians to filing a lawsuit. This not-so-subtle slight of hand stigmatizes opponents of anti-Muslim training, tarring them as the moral equivalent of terrorists in order to silence dissent.

RECOMMENDATIONS*

The federal government has a particular responsibility to ensure that the analytical and skills training delivered to public servants is accurate, consistent, in accordance with national security policy, and respectful of constitutional rights. Based on the findings of this investigation, Political Research Associates calls upon Congress, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Justice to:

1. Investigate Existing Programs to Ensure That Counterterrorism Trainings are Accurate and Free from Bias. Congress should ask the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to undertake an evaluation of all private vendors that provide counterterrorism training to federal, state, or local agencies, including through conferences, seminars, and courses. The GAO should consult with experts identified by the Departments of State, Defense, Justice, and Homeland Security to identify any inaccuracies, religious/racial/ethnic bias, or contradiction of national counterterrorism policies. U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder, DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano, and appropriate Congressional oversight committees in both branches should investigate whether all federally sponsored counterterrorism training programs, seminars, and conferences utilize experts whose messages are accurate and free from bias. The problem of Islamophobia in counterterrorism training must be acknowledged and addressed by government agencies at the federal, state, and local level. Additional research is needed to ascertain the level of anti-Muslim sentiment in both law enforcement and the domestic security bureaucracy.

2. Substitute Private Counterterrorism Training of Public Employees with Government Programs. The privatization of core intelligence activities reduces public accountability, oversight, and control. Federal agencies should incentivize and prioritize government-sponsored trainings, and phase-out reliance on private counterterrorism training for public servants.

3. Establish Standards For Private Counterterrorism Training Firms and Experts. To the extent that private contractors and firms offer expertise not available from government sources, the DHS and DOJ should establish standards to certify anti-terror training course providers. These standards should prohibit religious discrimination and emphasize respect for civil liberties. Groups or speakers who do not meet these guidelines should not be invited to address public servants, and should be ineligible for public funding.

4. Improve Reporting of Federal Funding for Counterterrorism Training The Office for Grants and Training (G&T) is the principle DHS agency providing counterterrorism and WMD training to states and localities, through both DHS training institutions and partners. Congress should direct G&T to assume responsibility for tracking all federal counterterrorism training, including the training FEMA provides to first responders. All federal expenditures for counterterrorism training—whether through grantees, sub-grantees, or federal agency budgets allocations—should be reported and available to the public.

5. Work with (Rather than Vilify) American Muslim Community Organizations. In evaluating existing training opportunities and setting standards for trainers and courses, investigators should be alert for programs that appear to single out Muslim Americans or their constituency groups and community institutions. “Radical Islam Tests” should never be used as a prerequisite for cooperating with any Muslim, Arab, or Middle Eastern groups; such exercises presume guilt and are based on unacceptable stereotypes. DHS and DOJ should support training that fosters community-oriented policing efforts based on respect and parity between parties. Enhancing channels of communication should not, however, serve as a pretense for intelligence gathering.

6. Improve the Cultural Competency and Religious Understanding of Intelligence and Law Enforcement Personnel. The DOS and DOJ should develop and support training courses that promote an understanding of a wide variety of religious practices and faith traditions in order to root out the Islamophobia identified in this Report. PRA supports baseline counterterrorism training that includes, as part of its curriculum, awareness of indicators for violent ter-

* Full Recommendations on p. 52
terrorism based on a variety of ideological or religious sources. However, prior to teaching about Islamic-inspired terrorists’ ideological motivations, training courses should foster a basic understanding of Islam and Muslims. Such training should not be mere window dressing. They should aim to substantially correct harmful misconceptions about Islam and Muslims.

7. Congress Should Enact Legislation to Prohibit Racial, Ethnic, and Religious Profiling. The End Racial Profiling Act (ERPA) is necessary to protect the rights of Arabs, Muslims, Middle Easterners, and South Asians—those communities most harmed by Islamophobic counterterrorism training—and counteract the impression that Muslims are not full citizens entitled to protection under the United States Constitution.

OUR SOURCES

5. Phares, Future Jihad, 147.
6. Supporters of Shoebat have challenged our characterization of Shoebat’s remarks at the 2010 ICTOA training; and even the veracity of our sources.
7. The Runnymede Trust’s influential 1997 report identified eight main features of anti-Muslim prejudice:
   1) Islam seen as a single monolithic bloc, static and unresponsive to new realities,
   2) Islam seen as separate and other,
   3) Islam seen as inferior to the West – barbaric, irrational, primitive, sexist,
   4) Islam seen as violent aggressive, threatening, supportive of terrorism, engaged in ‘a clash of civilizations’,
   5) Islam seen as a political ideology, used for political or military advantage,
   6) criticisms made by Islam of ‘the West’ rejected out of hand,
   7) hostility toward Islam used to justify discriminatory practices towards Muslims and exclusion of Muslims from mainstream society, and
   8) anti-Muslim hostility accepted as natural and ‘normal.’

9. Encyclopedia of Race and Ethnic Studies (Routledge: 2003), 218. “The Runnymede Trust has been successful in that the term Islamophobia is now widely recognized and used, though many right-wing commentators either reject its existence or argue that it is justified.” See also Runnymede Trust, Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All (1997), p. 5, cited in Muzammil Quraishi, Muslims and Crime: A Comparative Study (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.: 2005), 60.
12. The Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) funds are awarded to State Administrative Agencies or local and county governments which, in turn, sub-grant or award funds to sub-reipient vendors. The entities under this request [such as CCI, CI Centre, FFMU, ICTOA] would have been awarded as sub-recipients of an HSGP award. FEMA does not maintain information on sub-recipients or vendors. You may contact State and local governments to carry out this request.
17. Walid Shoebat, Presentation at ICTOA’s 8th annual conference (October 20, 2010). Reported by PRA Investigator.
19. Center for Security Policy, Shariah: the Threat to America (Oct. 2010), p. 24. "Yet, al Qaeda and other Islamist groups who perpetrate terrorist acts are not the most dangerous threat. These threats, regardless of their brutality, cannot bring America to submit to shariah – at least were they to act alone. While the terrorists can and will inflict great pain on the nation, the ultimate goal of shariah-adherent Islam cannot be achieved by these groups..."
solely through acts of terrorism, without a more subtle, well-organized component operating in tandem with the.” The co-authors of this report include Clare M. Lopez and Stephen Coughlin. See www.shariathethreat.com

20 The Department of Homeland Security has already implicitly acknowledged this problem. In 2009, the DHS Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) felt compelled to re-train authors of inappropriate and flawed intelligence reports that unfairly targeted non-violent advocacy groups. DHS sent officials to conduct remedial training after the North Texas Fusion Center released an intelligence bulletin that warned that freedom of speech was being exploited by Islamic groups to advance their Islamic-based goals. See David Gersten, Acting Deputy Officer for Programs and Compliance, Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Speech delivered at Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center, Roxbury, Massachusetts (March 25, 2010). For example, in 2007 DHS intelligence analysts conducted an eight-month study of the Nation of Islam, even though they later admitted the organization neither advocated nor engaged in violence. Spencer S. Hsu and Carrie Johnson, “Documents show DHS improperly spied on Nation of Islam in 2007,” Washington Post (Dec. 17, 2009) http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/12/16/AR2009121604096.html A DHS analyst at a Wisconsin fusion center prepared a report about protests on both sides of the abortion debate, despite the fact that no violence was expected at the protest. http://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/61104 A number of similarly faulty reports were produced at DHS-funded fusion centers. American Civil Liberties Union of Texas, ACLU of Texas TOURS North Texas Fusion Center (Oct. 9, 2009) http://www.aclutx.org/projects/article.php?aid=785&cid=21

21 The Washington Post recently reported that local police departments and fusion centers are hiring their own trainers to develop terrorism expertise, including Walid Shoebat and other “self-described experts whose extremist views are considered inaccurate and harmful by the FBI and others in the intelligence community.” Dana Priest and William M. Arkin, “Monitoring America,” Washington Post (Dec. 20, 2010), stating that the Center for Security Policy, Frank Gaffney, Walid Shoebat, and Ramon Montijo have each provided training to law enforcement or published views that about Islam that are considered “inaccurate and counterproductive” by government terrorism experts.

22 Clare M. Lopez, “SEALs Case Shows How Terrorists Use ‘Lawfare’ to Undermine U.S.,” Human Events (Mar. 8, 2010). “When frivolous lawsuits are brought against those who speak against Islamic jihad in an attempt to close down criticism of Islam altogether, that is lawfare. When the Organization of Islamic Conference sponsors a resolution that urges criminalization of any free speech that criticizes Islam, that is intended lawfare. When a Western government puts its own citizen on trial for “hate speech” against Islam, as is happening right now in the Netherlands with the courageous and very popular Freedom Party leader, Geert Wilders, that is lawfare.”
Introduction

Since September 11, 2001, the “war on terror” has given rise to a panoply of companies that offer training in SWAT tactics, cyber-security, bomb detection, school safety, and infrastructure reinforcement. The same national security concerns have bolstered a class of self-proclaimed terrorism experts who equate Islam with terrorism and effectively brand Muslims as primitive, venal, duplicitous, and belligerent people who oppress women and gays, and possess values that are irreconcilable with “western Judeo-Christian civilization.”

A nine-month investigation by Political Research Associates (PRA) finds that these two phenomena overlap in a distinct and influential group of self-described security specialists who market Islamophobic conspiracy theories to law enforcement professionals — audiences charged with shaping and implementing U.S. counterterrorism policy.

According to the Runnymede Trust, Islamophobia is “an outlook or world-view involving an unfounded dread and dislike of Muslims, which results in practices of exclusion and discrimination” and may include the perception that Islam is inferior to the West and is a violent political ideology rather than a religion.1 The mainstreaming of Islamophobia was everywhere evident in media headlines this past summer, as plans for an Islamic center proposed by the Cordoba Initiative for a site in lower Manhattan drew ferocious public opposition laden with bigoted rhetoric.

Mark Williams, then-chairman of the Tea Party Express, called the proposed prayer space “a mosque for the worship of the terrorists’ monkey god.” Protest signs showing the words “Sharia Law” written as though in dripping blood on the streets of lower Manhattan echoed themes from the Islamophobic blogosphere, such as right-wing author Robert Spencer’s Jihad Watch and David Horowitz’s FrontPage magazine.

Inflammatory and inaccurate claims about Islam capture headlines, fuel public debate, and foster discrimination and even assaults against Muslims, including vandalism of mosques. Our investigation finds that, out of the limelight, speakers for counterterrorism training firms present law enforcement and other public servants with hyperbolic and destructive claims about Muslims and Islam very similar to those witnessed at anti-Muslim rallies in lower Manhattan and around the country.

This report exposes a segment of the counterterrorism training industry whose influence risks spreading Islamophobia and harming civil liberties. PRA researched three organizations that occupy different niches and have varied approaches to their material: Security Solutions International, LLC (SSI), The Centre for Counterintelligence and Security Studies (CI Centre), and International Counter-Terrorism Officers Association (ICTOA).

In the course of our investigation, PRA secured a wide variety of primary source material related to counterterrorism trainings offered by these three organizations. We observed presentations by Walid Shoebat, David Gaubatz, John Giduck, Det. Ebrahim Ashabi, and Maj. Joseph Bail at conferences sponsored by SSI and ICTOA, and interviewed participants at these events. We analyzed information obtained through public record requests, as well as material freely available on those organizations’ own websites.

To identify the recipients, cost, and content of private counterterrorism trainings, PRA examined numerous websites of private firms and filed public record requests with approximately eighty law enforcement agencies from around the country. Our research focused on the states of Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Massachusetts, Michigan, and Washington. Due to strong state public record laws, Washington and Florida-based agencies were most
responsive to information requests. Torrance and
Anaheim, California are also notable for their respon-
siveness. Public records and web searches revealed
that agencies use the services of a diverse range of
private training corporations and send employees to
a multitude of conferences on “terrorism preven-
tion.” The three organizations examined in this
report presented the terrorism threat in a manner
that included non-criminal activity (i.e., religious
practices, attending Middle Eastern graduate studies
programs, legal strategies for defense of civil rights).

PRA thoroughly analyzed all materials we could
obtain from or about these organizations. We found
and analyzed associated trainers’ writings, public
appearances, web postings, and client testimonials.
We analyzed the writings and statements of affiliated
faculty members, including those produced and
made in their capacities as representatives of the
training firms with which they are associated.

PRA experienced specific limitations regarding
the type of materials available with regard to the CI
Centre. The company denied our request to review
course materials and to attend its training, “Global
Jihadist Threat Doctrine (361)”. Notwithstanding
those obstacles, we were able to review course
descriptions published on the CI Centre website, as
well as the writings and speeches of individuals who
teach “Global Jihadist Threat Doctrine (361)” (Tawfik
Hamid, Walid Phares, and Stephen Coughlin) and
other CI Centre offerings related to “jihadist” threats,
including “Iranian Intelligence” (Clare Lopez) and
“Informant Development” (Tawfik Hamid and David
Major). We paid careful attention to statements by
Clare Lopez, who indicated that she played a role in
developing curriculum related to “jihad” and “sharia”
as a CI Centre instructor. Although we cannot con-
firm her role in conceiving of Course 361 specifically,
Lopez’s comments raise concerns. We were able to
glean a good deal of insight into the content of CI
Centre courses from the dozens of unattributed com-
ments by participants published on CI Centre’s web-
site. These comments indicate significant overlap
between course themes and topics and those evident
in the writings and speeches of CI Centre’s faculty.
We also reviewed Islam 101 by Gregory Davis, at least
at one point advertised as “required reading” for CI
Centre’s Course 361. Some CI Centre faculty mem-
bers regularly appear as speakers at other organiza-
tions’ events and write for other outlets. We note
where speakers or writers were specifically identified
as being affiliated with CI Centre. Where not so
noted, we do not assume the speaker or author to be
acting as a representative of CI Centre. Our research,
at the very least, raises concerns that comments
made by these individuals associated with the CI
Centre reflect what is said in the CI Centre course.

Further research and investigation into the
sources of financial support for problematic training
are needed. The lack of reporting requirements for
various government grant programs was a significant
limiting factor. The use of public funds to send pub-
lic servants to private counterterrorism trainings is
not centrally monitored or reported electronically.
Very few public agencies were willing or able to pro-
vide this type of information. Others requested
unreasonably large search fees to search through
paper files. (Where possible, PRA worked to narrow
the scope of requests to manageable and affordable
limits.) In some jurisdictions, copyright protections
were asserted to deny access to the firms’ training
materials. In spite of numerous information requests
to public agencies, we obtained few documents per-
taining to the financing of such trainings.

PRA sent investigators to three counterterrorism
conferences for law enforcement professionals in
2009 and 2010.

1) The International Counter-Terrorism
Officers Association 8th Annual
Conference at the Flamingo Hotel in

2) The 5th Annual Homeland Security
Professionals Conference & Exposition at
Palace Station Hotel and Casino in Las
Vegas October 25-29, 2010 hosted by
Security Solutions International and
The Counter Terrorist magazine.

3) The 2009 International Terrorism and
Organized Crime Conference in Anaheim,
CA, to observe speeches by Richard
Hughbank of Extreme Terrorism, LLC
and Detective Ebrahim Ashabi for
Security Solutions International.

Requests to observe trainings by SSI and CI
Centre were rejected. One of our investigators was
refused entry to SSI’s Boston program, “The Islamic
Jihadist Threat” in May 2009 on grounds that the
event was restricted to law enforcement officials.
Henry Morgenstern, President of SSI, has defended
the exclusion of non-law enforcement personnel
from SSI’s seminar, raising concerns about trans-
parency and public accountability.
A request to the CI Centre for access to training materials and interviews with principals was rejected. PRA requested interviews with CI Centre faculty, participant data, and an opportunity to send an investigator to observe the “Global Jihadist Threat Doctrine” course at PRA’s expense. CI Centre has responded to PRA’s assertion that Centre spokespeople employ Islamophobic narratives by threatening legal action and denying PRA’s assertion. For this investigation, we closely analyzed the writings and speeches of CI Centre instructors Walid Phares, Clare Lopez, Tawfik Hamid, and Stephen Coughlin, combined with the extensive attendee feedback published on CI Centre’s website reflect the firm’s stated focus and course descriptions.

ENDNOTES


Early one evening in December 2009, a police dispatcher in suburban Henderson, Nevada, alerted officers on patrol to watch for suspicious people spotted “kissing the ground” in a gas station parking lot. Within minutes, police pulled into the Rebel Mini Mart lot and began to interrogate seven Muslim men of Middle Eastern and South Asian descent for doing nothing more than praying at sunset next to their legally parked van. Police detained the group of friends for forty minutes, searched the van, and questioned them about their schooling, jobs, and countries of origin. In response, one of the men asked an officer, “Any time Muslims pray, is that suspicious activity? Just being Muslim?” The officer, recorded by one of the seven, responded, “So here’s the thing, I’ll be honest with you. Based on the studies, the classes that I have gone to, and based on the events that happened around the world, can you fault people who don’t understand something for being concerned?”

The Los Angeles Chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, a nationwide civil rights organization, filed a lawsuit on behalf of these individuals (known as the “Henderson Seven”) to remedy the violation of their Constitutional rights to be free from warrantless search and seizure.

What kind of “studies” and “classes” taught this officer to be suspicious of mere prayer? Post 9/11, public agencies are turning to an unregulated industry of private contractors and firms to develop counterterrorism expertise. Private counterterrorism training companies draw on public dollars to instruct public servants—including police officers like those in Henderson, Nevada—with messages implying that Muslim identity is sufficient grounds for suspecting potential involvement in, or support for, terrorism.

The messages that emanate from some private training contractors offer a reflection of what these courses teach. This report examines three prominent training entities—Security Solutions International (SSI), The Centre for Counterintelligence and Security Studies (CI Centre), and International Counter-Terrorism Officer’s Association (ICTOA). Each group, in its own way, has the effect of demonizing Islam to front-line law enforcement, defense, and intelligence professionals. Given the inflammatory and inaccurate content of such trainings, abuses like the Henderson Seven case are bound to multiply in number and severity. Through a variety of channels, these three groups and the instructors they utilize (who often speak in settings outside their organizations) influence the mindset of security and law enforcement professionals in a manner that will distort intelligence analysis and render innocent people suspect—thereby endangering fundamental freedoms as well as community safety and national security.

Just as the Judeo-Christian tradition, which once supported divine right of monarchs, was reinterpreted to accommodate the democratic ideals, Islam as practiced in America continues to undergo transformation through interaction with American political and cultural norms. In direct contrast to this process of accommodation, which other religious groups have experienced throughout American history, the private counterterror trainers and speakers profiled in this report risk fostering resistance, suspicion, and confrontation. A milieu of distrust and fear may fuel unconstitutional deprivations of civil liberties, racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination, and the marginalization of communities who are portrayed as latent supporters of terrorism.
Each group, in its own way, has the effect of demonizing Islam to front-line law enforcement, defense, and intelligence professionals.

One trainer praised a recent book, *Shariah: The Threat to America*, which argues that “America’s most critical national security threat is not kinetic terror violence, but rather civilization jihad as practiced by Sharia-adherent organizations like al Qaeda, the Muslim Brotherhood, and its offshoot Hamas.”

“Militant action is not the immediate objective,” says Walid Phares, faculty member at The Centre for Counterintelligence and Security Studies (CI Centre). “The most important mission is to further recruit and grow their numbers until the ‘holy moment’ comes,” says Phares. Such trainers promote the conspiracy theory that more than twenty national Muslim American organizations are front groups for the Muslim Brotherhood. The “jihadists within the West pose as civil rights advocates, interested solely in the ‘rights’ of their immigrant communities,” writes Phares. “Radicals” sweep into community institutions “using petrodollar funding,” until “[a]lmost all mosques, educational centers, and socioeconomic institutions fall into their hands.”

Walid Shoebat, the popular “ex-Muslim” tapped by multiple training outlets, recently told a law enforcement audience, “Islam is a revolution and is intent to destroy all other systems. They want to expand, like Nazism. It is a common theme with Nazis and Communists that the end justifies the means.”

John Giduck, president of Archangel Anti-Terror Training, told a Homeland Security Professionals Conference, “Going back to the time of Mohammed, [Muslims’ goal has] been to take over the world. They’re looking for lifestyle impact as well as legal impact.” The CEO of a major training firm, who likens Muslim American groups to a hostile “Fifth Column,” told the press, “I can’t take the responsibility of my course linking their religion to terrorism. I think their religion got linked to terrorism a long time ago.”

These self-described terrorism experts market an unfounded “stealth jihad” conspiracy theory whose assertions, if taken seriously, threaten to undermine policing units and intelligence professionals at every level of the American security apparatus. Islamophobic messaging by counterterrorism trainers may inflame prejudices against innocent Muslims. Counterterrorism trainers, including David Gaubatz (an author promoted by SSI) and Sam Kharoba (ICTOA guest speaker and president of Counter Terrorism Operations Center), implicate mainstream Muslim-American civil rights advocacy groups such as Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), and other community-based organizations in the stealth jihad conspiracy, casting suspicion on Muslim-American civil society and crowding out oppositional voices from the public square. In the words of University of Chicago constitutional law professor Aziz Huq, “This kind of policing tactic has the effect of imposing a disproportionate burden on, say, Muslim youth that has the effect of excluding their voices from the public sphere.” Furthermore, over the long term there is a risk of self-fulfilling prophecies of the kind that terrorism groups openly try and induce; that is, more alienation makes it easier for actual terrorists to recruit. To be sure, these negative effects are also experienced by non-Muslim persons from Middle Eastern, Arab, South Asian, and Sikh backgrounds.

Such messages will likely result in a more confrontational posture between police and local communities, jeopardizing both community safety and national security. Safety is sacrificed if community members become less likely to report crimes or access public services, such as healthcare or emergency services, out of fear that they will be mistreated or subject to arbitrary, intrusive questioning.

National security may be undermined if community partnerships deteriorate. Such partnerships have been identified by law enforcement and leading scholars as helpful for addressing all forms of crime, including violent terrorism. For example, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) have stressed the effectiveness of working with communities to detect terrorist threats.

According to Special Agent Brett Hovington, the FBI’s Community Relations Unit Chief, the process of engagement “requires building trust within the community, followed by creating strong and open partnerships” that can “positively influence change in the community and alter the path towards violent radicalization.” Although the FBI broke off formal relations with CAIR in 2009, FBI field offices continue to identify and develop relationships with community leaders who may serve as conduits of information to the community at large.

Despite some agencies’ efforts, federal government “engagement” with Muslim communities has
been a vehicle for unjustified spying in mosques, intrusive interrogations, and other pre-emptive measures that violate constitutional rights. However, there are many counterterrorism training programs and guides that do adopt a pragmatic approach that respects the civil liberties and civil rights of potential suspects. Yet the conservative counterterrorism trainers examined in this report are part of a growing and organized trend of demonizing and scapegoating Muslim citizens who, in response to anti-Muslim sentiment following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, sought a role in American public life. This trend has been called “the backlash against the response to the backlash.”

A LAW ENFORCEMENT CONDUIT FOR ISLAMOPHOBIA

The Runnymede Trust, a leading race equality think tank, defines Islamophobia as an outlook or world-view involving an unfounded dread and dislike of Muslims, which results in practices of exclusion and discrimination. Islamophobia may include the perception that Islam is inferior to the West and is a violent political ideology rather than a religion. Counterterrorism trainers frequently insist that their instruction focuses on the ideology of violent terrorists or vaguely-defined “radical” Islam. Such caveats notwithstanding, Islamophobic trainings tend to paint the entirety of Islam and its history as “extremist,” deny the existence of a moderate Muslim majority, or regard Islam generally as a problem for the world. Moreover, they deploy conspiracy theories which implicitly draw upon deeply-ingrained negative stereotypes of Muslim duplicity, repression, backwardness, and evil.

For purposes of this study, we address Islamophobia not as a personal psychological disorder, but as societal anxiety about Islam and Muslims. We use the term not to assail the motives of any individual or organization, but to assess the disturbing content and consequences of some training provided to our public servants. Our concern lies with the perhaps predictable outcomes of such teaching, namely to instill Islamophobia among the ranks of our nation’s law enforcement and counterterrorism professionals. Worse still, evidence indicates that at least in some instances, the Islamophobic messages examined in our investigation are supported with public resources that fund attendance at conferences and other events.

Local, state, and federal law enforcement regularly utilize the private market for training to enhance the skills of their officers. Since the September 11th attacks by al Qaeda on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, the federal government has drawn law enforcement agencies at all levels of government into the national defense against terrorism. The Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) each play a role in ensuring the competence, professionalism, and readiness of America’s first responders, intelligence analysts, and law enforcement in the field of counterterrorism.

Federal counterterrorism training programs are varied and are provided by numerous federal agencies and departments. Some of these departments and agencies include the Departments of Defense (DOD), Energy (DOE), Homeland Security (DHS), Health and Human Services (HHS), Justice (DOJ), Transportation (DOT), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Each department and agency provides specific training targeted to given categories of recipients, from airport screeners to medical personnel. Training recipients include federal, state, and local government personnel, emergency responders, and private and public critical infrastructure personnel. The Department of Justice provides training for law enforcement personnel, both directly and through grants.

The Department of Homeland Security has primary federal responsibility for providing counterterrorism training to federal, state, and local emergency responders. DHS has developed a menu of government terrorism readiness and prevention courses designed to give first responders the analytical and practical skills to enhance community safety. However, a significant share of such training appears to be provided by private firms not vetted by government experts. To augment courses offered by the federal government, DHS vets counterterrorism training courses offered by private institutes and state agencies to ensure efficacy and compliance with civil liberties. Courses by Security Solutions
International (SSI) related to building safety and training for SWAT forces have been approved by DHS administrative agencies at the state level. However, private counterterrorism firms often reach intelligence professionals and law enforcement via seminars, industry conferences, trade publications, and electronic media that lack proper civil liberties oversight or peer review. A federal inspector found in 2009 that DHS did not have proper conference approval or tracking processes and has no way to measure whether attendance at meetings and conferences is “mission critical” as prescribed in management directives and other policies. Speakers for large state homeland security gatherings are often chosen through informal networks, rather than official systems.

The Department of Homeland Security, Terrorist Screening Center, and Federal Bureau of Investigation have implicitly sanctioned these un-vetted private offerings by participating in the very same conferences where problematic messages are delivered to public servants.

All government agencies entrusted with training intelligence professionals and law enforcement in the field of counterterrorism should prohibit (where possible) and discourage public agencies from utilizing trainings that have not been certified by DHS’s National Training and Education Division or the DOJ’s Office of Justice Programs. All government agencies should withhold public funding to attend conferences or seminars where counterterrorism instruction has not been subject to peer review. Further, the government should discourage public agencies’ sponsorship or attendance at events where blatantly Islamophobic messages are likely to be heard.

In a social and political context as polarized as post 9/11 America, bringing terrorists’ religious motivations to the attention of law enforcement—even if done in a dispassionate and well-balanced manner—can have the unintended effect of spreading Islamophobia. It is an unfortunate by-product of 9/11 that non-Muslim line officers are susceptible to bias against Muslim groups and individuals. It is the responsibility of trainers to ensure that those biases are not reinforced, which could result in violations of civil liberties and infringement on protected freedoms.

Our investigation found that certain private contractors utilize speakers who employ inflammatory, seriously flawed, and/or dangerously inaccurate approaches that cross the line into Islamophobia. PRA’s investigation into counterterrorism training for public servants focused on three organizations and, where relevant, their affiliated trainers/faculty. This report describes both the qualitative differences among their approaches and some basic commonalities. All of these entities benefit from taxpayer dollars that underwrite the attendance of government employees at the events and seminars described herein:

International Counter-Terrorism Officers Association (ICTOA), a nonprofit corporation founded by New York Police Department personnel, provides a variety of speakers with a platform to address a cross section of law enforcement officials.

Security Solutions International, LLC (SSI) is a Florida-based privately held company. SSI claims to have provided training to over one thousand agencies and companies and produces The Counter Terrorist magazine.

The Centre for Counterintelligence and Security Studies (CI Centre), a for-profit company launched by a former national security officer, functions as a training academy and speakers bureau in the D.C. beltway. Here, veteran Cold Warriors mingle with academics, a self-described Muslim reformer, and a convert from Islam, and deliver a course on “Global Jihadist Threat Doctrine.” According to CI Centre, they train “approximately 8,000 students per year,” the majority of whom are “current employees of the U.S. national security community.”

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The Industry

The war on terrorism has been a boon for the security and surveillance industry. The United States’ domestic security apparatus is estimated to employ 854,000 individuals. Another 800,000 or more police, sheriff, tribal law enforcement, and emergency personnel are being mobilized to respond to terrorism threats both real and perceived. The ranks of the growing surveillance network include intelligence analysts at regional Fusion Centers, emergency medical technicians, border patrol, security guards, state homeland security chiefs, utility plant guards, dock chiefs, and police intelligence units.24 Specialized terrorism prevention training has emerged as a priority for law enforcement and homeland security executives. Although state and federal programs, such as the Department of Justice’s State and Local Antiterrorism Training (SLATT) program and the Department of Homeland Security, train law enforcement in terrorism-related skills, an existing private industry of both for-profit and non-profit agencies has expanded to meet the demand.25

The antiterrorism training industry consists of a panoply of companies that offer instruction in surveillance tactics, cyber-security, bomb detection, schoolsafety, and reinforcing critical infrastructure. In addition to the three groups profiled in this report, Chameleon Associates performs seminars on predictive profiling and questioning;26 Ken Sanz & Associates offers a three-day course on intelligence for law enforcement and domestic security taught by Merle Manzi, a retired 30-year law enforcement veteran;27 The Anti Terrorism Accreditation Board (ATAB), in conjunction with the International Society of Antiterrorism Professionals, certifies first responders who pay $695 and review a series of DVD and power point presentations as “Certified Antiterrorism Specialists” or “Certified Master Antiterrorism Specialists.”28 The list of entities selling their expertise to public agencies, most run or owned by former law enforcement and military veterans, is seemingly limitless.29

Private counterterrorism training firms capitalize on plentiful public grant funding. Agencies can apply for a dizzying array of federal grant programs, often without notifying local government officials about how grant funds are used.30 The DOJ’s Office of Justice Programs offers funding opportunities for counterterrorism training.31 DHS maintains a list of peer-reviewed private courses eligible for use with grant funds administered by the National Training and Education Center (NTED), a sub-division of the DHS’ Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). This quality control mechanism is an exception to the rule;32 recipients of such federal grant programs may contract with private training firms of their choice and are often not required to report so much as the names of companies used to train their personnel.33 In addition to widespread quality control and transparency shortcomings of federal and other government programs, our investigation revealed examples of actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including the use of DHS and other public agency logos to pro-
mote private training events that were disavowed by those very agencies.34

The resources available to underwrite private, unregulated training firms are substantial. Two grant programs that support training programs—the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) and Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI)—made $1.67 billion available to states in 2010.35

Homeland Security Grant Program funds are awarded to State Administrative Agencies or local and county governments which, in turn, sub-grant or award funds to sub-recipient vendors.36 In order for a private vendor to receive such federal funds, its course must be approved by the DHS-affiliated State Administrative Agency. FEMA maintains a list of Federal-sponsored courses that fall within the mission of preparing state and local personnel to prevent, protect against, respond to, or recover from acts of terrorism. FEMA’s NTED sub-division and its state administrative counterparts constantly review proposed trainings that are not provided by FEMA.37 None of the courses identified in this report, such as courses related to “radical Islam” or “jihadist doctrine” were listed in the Federal or State-sponsored course catalogs as of November 2010.38,9

Government standards for homeland security professionals’ certification appear undefined. The Counter-Terrorism Training Coordination Working Group convened by the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs promotes training opportunities offered by both the federal government and by private for-profit and non-profit organizations. The Working Group’s website promoted all three of the conferences where PRA investigators witnessed problematic speakers.19

International Counter-Terrorism Officers Association (ICTOA)

The ICTOA is a New York-based nonprofit association established by members of the New York Police Department and is comprised of law enforcement personnel, firefighters, military, first responders, private/corporate security, and other related professionals. Its mission is to provide “first responders with the skills-set required to identify, detect, deter, and when necessary, respond to a terrorist attack.”40

Since its founding in 2002, ICTOA has been led by Executive Director Brian J. Corrigan, an active counterterrorism coordinator and commanding officer with the New York City Police Department who holds the rank of Lieutenant Special Assignment.41 With a reported annual budget of under $100,000, ICTOA reaches the law enforcement community through seminars, an annual conference, and its newsletter, Counter-Terrorism Quarterly.42 ICTOA members also receive Security Solutions International (SSI)’s The Counter Terrorist magazine for free.

Past speakers at ICTOA’s annual conference include founder and president of the Union of Former Muslims Mark Gabriel and Sam Kharoba, president of Counter Terrorism Operations Center, LLC, a Florida-based private training firm. Gabriel, who was invited to speak to the group’s 6th Annual Conference in 2008 on “The Mindset of the Islamic Terrorist,” is known for his conclusion that followers of Islam, if they truly understand the religious, cannot coexist peacefully with non-believers.43 Kharoba, a software developer born and raised in Jordan who now trains law enforcement, was invited to speak at ICTOA’s 7th Annual Conference (2009) at Disney World. Kharoba spoke to ICTOA’s audience on three topics: “Understanding Sharia Law and Militant Ideology,” “Developing Intelligence Assets within Arabic/Muslim/Middle Eastern Communities,” and “Militant Islamist Signs and Indicators—Differencing Moderate Muslims from Extremist.”44 Following his 2009 speaking engagement, Kharoba led a series of seminars in summer 2010 for more than fifty employees of the Pasco County Sheriff’s Office in Florida.45

ICTOA’s 2010 annual conference was promoted by the federal government at counterterrorismtraining.gov and by private universities that offer counterterrorism certification, such as St. Leo’s University. About one hundred peace officers from the United States, Canada, and New Zealand attended the 8th Annual International Counter-Terrorism Officers Association Conference.46 The event was held from October 19 to 21, 2010 at the Flamingo Las Vegas, and included government and industry regulars; the FBI staffed a table on site.

Conference speakers came from a range of agencies and organizations including Stephen Landman of the Investigative Project, the FBI’s Jason Truppi, and keynote speaker Walid Shoebat who leads the Forum for Middle East Understanding (FFMU). During Shoebat’s October 20, 2010 presentation to law enforcement officers attending ICTOA’s annual conference, he claimed that the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) and Council of American Islamic Relations (CAIR) are “the terrorist arms of
the lawmaker: Sharia, Koran and Hadif.” According to Shoebat,

They collectively believe that the state was erected by Mohammed in Medina and he was persecuted. The Muslims moved in to the Jewish city and they all became Muslim Immigrants. They shared the wealth, which is socialist. Islamic equals Socialist ideologies. Progressives agree with the Islamic concepts. Islam equals socialist. Islam believes that there is no life at conception. Muslims bank on progressives to advance the teachings at the university. The Koran, the Big Bang Theory. They collaborate to defend the Islamist Slick Willies. They have infiltrated from the Muslim Brotherhood.47

In his well-received six hour presentation on “The Jihad Mindset and How to Defeat it: Why We Want to Kill You,” Shoebat described Islamists as violent extremists and pedophiles. One conference participant from the Southern Nevada Fusion Center told a PRA investigator in attendance that Shoebat’s presentation was “spot on.” The staffer continued, saying that government officials should be saying the same things as Shoebat, but they will not due to fear of “political correctness.”

The predominantly male audience also included George D. Little, Director of the Institute for Criminal Justice Studies at Texas State University, who responded by saying, “I’m confounded. I’m not sure what the answer is. I served twenty years for the United Nations and now I’m at Texas State University. Maybe it is to kill them.”48

Audience members included Alabama Fusion Center analyst Sean P. Collins, representatives from Nevada area Fusion Centers (Carson City), Henley Putnam University, U.S. Marines, and U.S. Army, California Highway Patrol, San Diego Police Department and San Diego Sheriff’s Office. PRA’s investigator also noted that in attendance was Sandra Manderson, superintendent, New Zealand Police Attaché to the USA, Canada, and South America.

Other presentations at ICTOA’s annual conference included one from the Terrorist Screening Center geared to the beat officer. The presentation warned officers that possessing a library card could be grounds for suspicion of terrorism; for example, an officer might infer the person used a library card to anonymize his or her communications. Examples of methods to identify a “person of interest” included inferring an individual’s Arabic descent or survivalist inclinations from viewing food-stuffs wrapped in an Arabic language newspaper.

Weeks after the 2010 conference, the ICTOA helped organize a “competing memorial service” for victims of Major Nidal Malik Hasan’s tragic shooting spree at Fort Hood, Texas in November 2010, billing their event as an alternative to the official “politically correct” memorial held on November 5.49 ICTOA co-sponsored the event with CI Centre faculty member Stephen Coughlin, Walid Shoebat’s Forum for Middle East Understanding, and Jihad Watch director Robert Spencer. The Killeen, Texas, Chamber of Commerce issued a letter to its members stating that they did not support the ICTOA event.50

One conference participant from the Southern Nevada Fusion Center said that Walid Shoebat’s presentation was “spot on.”
Security Solutions International, LLC (SSI)

SSI, Security Solutions International, LLC (SSI) is a Miami-based privately-held training and communications company with wide reach into the homeland security field. SSI’s carefully crafted image as a “hands-on” training provider masks its ideological agenda, while it trades on the reputation of Israeli counterterrorism expertise by using Israeli veterans as trainers. SSI employs an aggressive, entrepreneurial approach to training law enforcement professionals. SSI has trained over seven hundred law enforcement agencies since 2004. The company’s publication, The Counter Terrorist magazine, has a claimed subscriber base of 15,000, with further exposure to 65,000 homeland security professionals.51

SSI recently created a digital training network for first responders; Homeland Security Network, LLC, is an “intelligence and communication network for homeland security” produced by SSI president Henry Morgenstern with the goal of reaching more than 3 million personnel. The network aims to supply interactive training and open source intelligence through a web portal delivered through secure channels.52

SSI taps into public funds for its trainings through Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) grants and FEMA-issued state grant money; the company also markets emergency management-related products for purchase by homeland security and police agencies. It is the sole source provider for UTarps (a self-adhering laminate roof tarp), FloodsAX (a sandless sandbag), and Elmridge Protection Products (which sells an Evacuation Fire Escape Hood).53

Courses and Trainings

SSI’s seminars for peace officers include courses that train professionals to secure maritime facilities and respond to mass casualty incidents like disasters and school shootings, as well as courses and seminars that evince a pronounced ideological agenda, notably courses on “The Islamic Jihadist Threat,” “Jihad 2.0,” and a conference entitled, “Allah in America.” During a course on “Middle Eastern Culture and Terrorism,” instructors devote time to teach police about alleged Islamic conspiracies like the “Legal Wing of Jihad in America.” SSI’s go-to “expert” on Islam, Long Beach Police Department Detective Ebrahim Ashabi, augmented his teaching with videos of terrorists beheading a hostage at a 2009 keynote address at T RexPO West, a conference sponsored by Police magazine. SSI officials claim their courses “stress that racial, ethnic, or religious profiling is wrong but also poor counterterrorism technique.”54

SSI claims to teach first responders to protect all Americans, and maintains that they train to avoid ethnic and racial stereotypes. Morgenstern defended Ashabi’s actions at the conference, saying “[Ashabi’s] presenting a very coherent program. Unfortunately, you know, the members of CAIR do not like the fact that he’s showing Americans being beheaded and issues like this which are very fundamental to understanding the threat.” Morgenstern told a talk show host,

Our course deepens a police officer’s, or in this case a port officer’s, understanding of what radical Islam is, as opposed to the Islamic faith. And I think it emphasizes the fact that we’re talking about a threat to the world which is...you know, this is substan-

SSI officials claim their courses “stress that racial, ethnic, or religious profiling is wrong but also poor counterterrorism technique.”
ated by acts, not by my imagination. I mean, if you look at incidents in the United States, [like shootings in malls and Jewish centers], are all believers or converts to radical Islam.\[55\]

Following civil liberties advocates’ criticism of SSI’s courses on “Radical Islamic Culture” in 2008, SSI intensified its promotions for the course. SSI Chief Executive Officer Solomon Bradman responded to criticism by saying, “I can’t take the responsibility of my course linking their religion [Islam] to terrorism. I think their religion got linked to terrorism a long time ago.”\[56\] SSI planned to expand the reach of its “Islamic Jihadist Threat” seminar, holding it in even more venues, including Detroit, Minneapolis, Washington, DC, Dallas, Kansas, and Boston.

Morgenstern has also faulted the federal government for advocating “peer-group-reviewed scholarly training.”\[57\] Peer review is widely accepted as a method for maintaining standards, improving performance, and establishing credibility in most industries and professions. Morgenstern’s statement that “all our people are hands on trainers, they’re not academics”\[58\] raises concerns that SSI’s analysis of the causes of terrorism and similar topics may not be tested against rigorous research studies.

The Counter Terrorist Magazine

The Counter Terrorist magazine, part of SSI’s media offerings that include a bi-weekly newsletter and webinars, was launched in 2008 at the ICTOA’s Annual Conference in San Antonio, Texas.\[59\] Marketed as the official journal of the homeland security professional, The Counter Terrorist has approximately 15,000 subscribers, and reaches thousands more through distribution at industry conferences. Morgenstern said in 2007 that he hoped the magazine would offer advertisers such as Protective Systems and Adams Industries the opportunity to speak to a “hard-to-reach industry.”\[60\] The Counter Terrorist increased its subscriber base by 25 percent and its advertising revenues by 30 percent in 2009.\[61\]

The Counter Terrorist’s coverage includes infrastructure protection, school shooting threat assessments, intelligence gathering and what SSI calls “the Radical Islamic Threat.” Articles like “U.S. Prison Recruitment for Jihad”—a piece by M. Zuhdi Jasser and Raphael Shore, founder of the Clarion Fund, a nonprofit organization “that aims to alert Americans about the real threat of Radical Islam”—reinforce an image of Muslims as menacing militant fundamentalists.\[62\] The magazine’s regular inclusion of such articles allows the publication to function as a credentialed law enforcement outlet for authors who exaggerate and distort terrorist threats.

SSI’s Professional Conferences

These events give participants the opportunity to network with fellow professionals and experts on security topics. They also provide a stage to promote a political agenda that exaggerates threats and paints Muslim-American groups as supporters of terrorism. This year’s annual convention was kicked off by SSI President Henry Morgenstern, who authored a chapter on “Global Jihad” for his textbook on suicide attacks.
SSI also organized an “Allah in America Day” as part of its 3rd Annual Gulf Coast Terrorism Prevention Conference, sponsored by the Sarasota Sheriff’s Office, with “Allah” supplanting “Islamic Jihadism” as the named threat in this 2008 conference. “Allah in America” featured speaker Andrew Whitehead, whose group, Anti-CAIR, claims that “the Council on American-Islamic Relations, CAIR, is a clear and present danger to our Constitution and our way of life.”

This year, SSI moved its annual Gulf Coast Terrorism Prevention conference from Sarasota, Florida to Las Vegas, Nevada “due to high demand.” In fact, the event did sell out, with nearly 300 representatives from law enforcement and federal agencies attending.


SSI Sponsorships

SSI has claimed conference sponsorship by prominent governmental agencies, though several reports suggest SSI may display agency logos to lend the appearance of credentialing, even if the company lacks express authority to do so.

The official seal of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was prominently emblazoned on the website for SSI’s 2010 Homeland Security Professionals Conference where DHS was identified as a “Silver Sponsor.” Although representatives of the DHS Division of Science and Technology participated in the conference, officials from the DHS Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties said that DHS did not sponsor the conference or give SSI permission to use its logo.

Likewise, in May 2010, SSI displayed the badge of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority Transit Police on print and online advertising for a course on “Middle Eastern Culture and Terrorist Strategies.” MBTA Transit Police Deputy Chief Donald O’Connor told Political Research Associates that the MBTA had no formal agreement with SSI; rather, it allowed SSI to hold its training at the MBTA’s Quincy academy in exchange for a few free seats.

The Centre for Counterintelligence and Security Studies (CI Centre)

With a staff full of veteran Cold War intelligence officers, CI Centre, a for-profit company based in Alexandria, Virginia, posits radical Islam as a new global ideological menace on the order of the old communist threat from the Soviet Union. CI Centre offers “in-depth and relevant education, training and analysis on counterintelligence, counterterrorism and security.” Its highly-credentialed staff of “seasoned veterans” demonstrates extensive experience with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Department,
Military Intelligence, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

CI Centre is operated by its finance manager and president, David G. Major, who founded the company in 1997. Of the groups profiled in this report, CI Centre possesses the most “mainstream” image and bona fides. It is the largest entity and exhibits close ties to the federal law enforcement and intelligence establishment. It is a subsidiary of David G. Major Associates, Inc. (DGMA), which does business as CI Centre. DGMA’s website describes Major’s background in senior intelligence and security circles:

Mr. Major is a retired, senior FBI Supervisory Special Agent who spent his career (1970-1994) working, supervising, and managing counterintelligence and counterterrorism cases. Since 1976, he has become a nationally recognized counterintelligence educator and speaker to government and corporate audiences. During the Reagan administration, Mr. Major was appointed the first Director of Counterintelligence Programs to the National Security Council staff. Mr. Major briefed and advised President Reagan, Intelligence Community leaders, and cabinet secretaries on counterintelligence policy and operational matters.75

CI Centre is a corporate member of the Association of Former Intelligence Officers (AFIO), a conservative organization founded in 1975 by CIA officer David Atlee Phillips; Major sits on its Board.77

According to Major, the CI Centre trains “approximately 8,000 students per year and provided training to approximately 67,500 students in the past 11 years,” the majority of whom are “current employees of the U.S. national security community.”78 The CI Centre’s Training Academy offers over fifty commercial off-the-shelf training courses that law enforcement, policy, industry, or intelligence organizations can purchase. The CI Centre offers federal government employees a reduced rate and free classes through the General Services Administration (GSA), an independent agency of the U.S. government that supplies products to federal employees. Course offerings range from counterintelligence strategy and skills training to security awareness and investigations.

The CI Centre called its course “Global Jihadist Threat Doctrine” “powerful” and “eye-opening,” saying that the course “will completely change the way [attendees] do their job.”79 As detailed in the Introduction to this report, CI Centre denied our request to review course materials and observe the

WHAT SATISFIED CUSTOMERS OF CI CENTRE’S COURSE 361 ON “GLOBAL JIHADIST THREAT DOCTRINE” SAY

“A true wake-up call to the fact that the threat is NOT just an overt attack from armed terrorists but a subtle threat of subversion of our own system to use against us. Truly scary s—!”

“An eye-opener. Especially how many Muslim Brotherhood front organizations there are and that the government doesn’t get it.”

“I never realized how much Europe [especially England] and the U.S. has [sic] bowed to the demands of Muslims and Islam.”

“Thank you for enlightening us about the hijacking of Middle Eastern programs at colleges and universities – this will make me think twice about the bias graduates of those programs bring to the job.”

“The doctrine’s ideology is the threat – terrorism is a side effect.”

“This has changed my views on the compatibility of Islam and democracy. Sharia law says they cannot co-exist...I will be more vocal to prevent the passage of laws in American [sic] that effectively submit to Islam.”

CI Centre, “Read what attendees say about this course.”
training. CI Centre’s course description, feedback from attendees, and statements of trainers all suggest that “Global Jihadist Threat Doctrine” uses a Cold War framework and substitutes the threat of communist aggression with a new existential threat based on religion. The main themes evident in presentations by CI Centre trainers Walid Phares, Stephen Coughlin, Tawfik Hamid, and Clare Lopez, as well as in articles or books by these individuals, raise serious concerns about the content of the CI Centre’s instruction to public servants.

The CI Centre’s description of this course hints at the group’s signature approach—the application of Cold War analytical models to explain Islamic-inspired terrorism:

In all wars and conflicts, the doctrines of the enemy are studied in order to defeat them. During the Cold War, the Soviet Threat Doctrine—their ideology—was extensively studied by all levels of Western intelligence professionals, the military services and policymakers. They read the writings of Communist founders and leaders such as Marx and Lenin. They studied Soviet statements and sources. They knew Soviet history, ideology and goals. They understood the threat. Now, a new threat doctrine, the Global Jihadist Threat Doctrine, demands our attention. We must study and know this doctrine as much as we studied and knew the Soviet Doctrine.

This five-day course costs public agencies $39,280, or $23,000 for three-days, for up to thirty students (a 14% discount is available through the GSA). “Global Jihadist Threat Doctrine” covers “what [Jihadists] believe, who they are learning their beliefs from, the roots of their beliefs, their worldview, and why their ideology has such a strong, motivating hold on them.” In addition, “the concepts of taqiyya and deception are covered including cases of infiltration by Jihadists and what this means to investigators.” Students are taught about Muslim Brotherhood front organizations, the history and doctrine of the Islamic faith and law, and how Middle Eastern programs at colleges and universities are “hijacked” to influence how Americans interpret Islam. Counterterrorism professionals learn “[the true history of Islam] and how “jihad is not an ‘inner struggle’ as the Islamic movement would like for us to believe.” Attendees of the “Global Jihadist Threat Doctrine” have heaped praise on Tawfik Hamid, Walid Phares, and Stephen Coughlin for the course teachings.

According to Islam 101 by Gregory Davis—a book recommended by CI Centre to participants of this course — taqiyya, or religious deception, is “systematic lying to the infidel.” Davis asserts that a “state of war” exists between the Muslim and non-Muslim world, and argues that “the parroting by Muslim organizations throughout dar al-harb [generally speaking, non-Muslim world] that ‘Islam is a religion of peace,’ or that the origins of Muslim violence lie in the unbalanced psyches of particular individual ‘fanatics,’ must be considered as disinformation intended to induce the infidel world to let down its guard.” Davis recognizes that individual Muslims “may genuinely regard their religion as ‘peaceful’—but only insofar as they are ignorant of its true teachings.” Davis projects a conspiracist view of a secret war in which Muslims are either bent on destruction of the West or ignorant of the evils or obligations of their faith.

The CI Centre covers the “Muslim Brotherhood’s covert influence operations against the West including front groups and agents of influence.” While teaching in-depth how “Islamic Sharia Law” operates “as the main guide to Jihadists” and “differs from the U.S. Constitution,” CI Centre faculty discuss the concept of Professional Responsibility “to emphasize the need for professionals to have a deep, comprehensive
and realistic understanding of the modern-day Jihadist movement (mindset and motivation) in order to successfully conduct their job, plan strategy and formulate policy."

The CI Centre operates a training academy where counterterrorism professionals can learn from prominent faculty members, such as Walid Phares, a contributor to Christian Broadcast News and Fox News and the author of three books since September 11th, including *Future Jihad: Terrorist Strategies Against America* (2005); and Clare Lopez, a retired Central Intelligence Agency officer, currently a principal of the Iran Policy Committee, a hard line militaristic group in Washington calling for regime change in Iran.

In settings beyond the CI Centre courses, Walid Phares, Clare Lopez, Nonie Darwish, Tawfik Hamid, and Stephen Coughlin regularly appear on both right-wing talk shows and mainstream news programs, publish books, speak at intelligence community seminars, and present at conferences. For example, David Major and Tawfik Hamid appeared at the Kansas Homeland Security Summit in December 2009; Stephen Coughlin presented “Jihad: The Political Third Rail” at the 2010 Conservative Political Action Conference.  

The CI Centre’s high profile faculty members attract media attention as experts while forging connections with senior thinkers from neoconservative foundations, many of whom join the CI Centre on its annual “Spy Cruise.” On the CI Centre’s espionage-themed cruise, passengers can sail the Caribbean and discuss “everything you wanted to know about intelligence” along with dozens of former spies.  

An avenue for showcasing the CI Centre’s close relationship with the American security apparatus, the November 2010 cruise booked former Congressperson and CIA Director Porter Goss, who was slated to discuss how “Radical Fundamentalism and (Judeo-Christian) Western Civilization are Irreconcilable.” Former CIA Director Michael Hayden was also scheduled to be aboard the annual charity boat trip. These cruises began in 2002 to raise money for the CIA Officers Memorial Foundation.

**Credentialing Religious Bigotry**

Each of these organizations occupies a different niche in the counterterrorism training industry. Although different from each other in many regards, all three groups, or their affiliated trainers and spokespeople, propagate dangerous Islamophobic themes and stories to personnel charged with public safety and national security. By presenting themselves as law enforcement and intelligence specialists, these organizations and spokespeople lend their credentials to religious bigotry. The problem of private sector provision of Islamophobic training to public servants is not limited to these three groups. Additional research, including vigilance on the part of federal and local government agencies, is needed in order to define and address its full dimensions.
In 2010, opposition to the Park51 Islamic Community Center proposed in Manhattan exposed disturbing levels of Islamophobia in public discourse. In Lower Manhattan, protestors carried signs with “Sharia Law” written as though dripping in blood. One measure of the heightened hysteria is that neo-conservative Frank Gaffney and right-wing blogger and activist Pamela Geller even accused the Conservative Political Action Conference of infiltration by the Muslim Brotherhood. 94

Such alarming Islamophobic messages bare striking resemblance to the Islamophobic frames PRA has identified in public statements by trainers associated with the firms profiled in this report.

Private counterterrorism training courses themselves are difficult to assess because their private status shields them from public scrutiny, similar to private industry’s vast role in the national security apparatus as a whole.95 The heightened secrecy associated with counterintelligence techniques, plus asserted commercial interests in protecting the proprietary nature of instruction also inhibit public access. The conclusions of this report are, therefore, ultimately limited by the lack of access to the full curriculum of any of the firms profiled herein.

Nevertheless, PRA has examined videos, transcripts, articles, and books by the speakers and instructors used by these groups. These extra-curricular materials echo, complement, and reinforce PRA’s firsthand observations, such as statements by the CI Centre’s own evidently-satisfied customers, videos by select speakers on the firm’s YouTube channel, and the company’s own descriptions of its course material. Our investigators attended conferences sponsored by ICTOA and SSI. One investigator observed a brief public speech by SSI’s expert on Islam, Det. Ebrahim Ashabi, but did not witness SSI’s full seminar. Based upon these observations, PRA discovered five Islamophobic frames that permeate right-wing messaging on counterterrorism. These frames are described in a later section of this report. The speakers described below used such language in their conference and off-site remarks.

Mark A. Gabriel – ICTOA guest speaker

Mark A. Gabriel (adopted name) spoke on “Culture Clash” and the “Mindset of the Islamic Terrorist” at ICTOA’s 6th annual convention in 2008. Gabriel is the founder and president of the Union of Former Muslims. He is a former Imam and lecturer at Al-Azhar University in Egypt who, following his conversion to Christianity, now authors books and delivers lectures that are severely critical of Islam. Gabriel contends that Islam is inherently bigoted: “Islam is full of discrimination — against women, against non-Muslims, against Christians and most especially against Jews. Hatred is built into the religion.”96

Gabriel describes Muslims as falling into one of three groups: secular (rejecting jihad and following only parts of the religion), traditional (who have a stumbling block with the concept of jihad), and fundamentalist (those who perpetrate terrorism and hatred).97 However, the ultimate goal of Islam is to establish Islamic authority over the entire world, argues Gabriel, and Muslim spokespersons who falsely present Islam as a “religion of peace” are distorting the truth to make it palatable to Western ears and also with a view to attracting possible converts.

Adoption of the Christian faith, argues Gabriel, is the only solution capable of fully addressing the security challenges posed by Islam: “Political and military actions have a role to play, but they will not take this evil away. There is only One to rescue us: He is the source of peace and the prince of peace, the Lord Jesus Christ.”98 This point is further emphasized with regard to the context of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: “No political or military power can bring reconciliation between Muslim Arabs and Jews except for the blood of Jesus Christ.”99

While Gabriel calls for dialogue with the Muslim community, it is difficult to reconcile this suggestion with his broader conclusion that Islam, properly understood, is incapable of a peaceful co-existence with non-believers. Those who do not accept Islam, he argues, must be killed based on the commands of jihad.100 He stresses the centrality of deception as a tool of war in Muslim’s belief system. Gabriel trades on his status as a “former Muslim,” which lends his decidedly unorthodox interpretations of Islam an air
of authenticity, at least to audiences pre-disposed to believe Islam is “evil.”

David Gaubatz – SSI guest speaker

David Gaubatz, the star speaker at SSI’s 2010 convention, is a former civilian staffer of the U.S. Air Force Office of Special Investigations and fluent Arabic speaker. He built a career post-9/11 alleging that Muslim civil rights organizations are actually secret terrorist front groups. He began his October 27 lecture at SSI’s 2010 conference with the bold statement, “CAIR is a terrorist organization. And I’m not saying that because I have a political agenda. This is not about politics, not about being a Republican or a Democrat. Everything I say here today and everything contained in my book is backed up with evidence.”

Credible news organizations have found the evidentiary basis of Gaubatz’ sometimes astonishing claims to be lacking. He was the source for a 2007 piece for the British magazine Spectator wherein he claimed to have personally found bunkers where Saddam’s elusive weapons of mass destruction were stored in Iraq, but “the [Bush] administration failed to act on his information, ‘lost’ his classified reports and is now doing everything it can to prevent disclosure of the terrible fact that, through its own incompetence, it allowed Saddam’s WMD to end up in the hands of the very terrorist states against which it is so controversially at war.” Gaubatz claims Saddam’s WMD are now in the hands of Syria and the world has been fooled into believing that he had none.

The Bush administration told Congress, the United Nations, and the American public that Iraq possessed significant stores of WMD in violation of UN Resolutions and was poised to use them to justify the 2002 invasion of Iraq.

In 2006-2007, Gaubatz directed the Society of Americans for National Existence (SANE), where he launched a project called “Mapping Sharia in America” with the aim of creating a comprehensive map of every mosque and Islamic school in the United States. SANE, which is led by lawyer David Yerushalmi, proposed a law to forbid entry into the U.S. by Muslims who follow Sharia law, stating, “Adherence to Sharia is prima facie evidence of an act in support of the overthrow of the U.S. Government.” The law would make it a felony punishable by 20 years in prison to “to knowingly act in furtherance of, or to support the, adherence to Sharia.”

In Muslim Mafia: Inside the Secret Underworld that’s Conspiring to Islamize America, his book with coauthor Paul Sperry, Gaubatz claims to provide a “clear road map to the criminal conspiracy by CAIR, the Islamic Society of North America, and other outwardly benign Muslim organizations to support violent jihad and undermine law enforcement—with the ultimate goal of ‘eliminating and destroying’ American society ‘from within.’” In his talk on “Inside Islamic Based Terrorist Organizations,” Gaubatz endorsed counterintelligence operations against American civil rights organizations, Muslim groups, and mosques, even when no specific facts indicate that a crime is being committed.

Gaubatz had five researchers work undercover with CAIR for six months, three of whom were women who wore Muslim garb. Gaubatz described how he directed his associates to act “Sharia compliant,” such as having the men grow beards, but not mustaches. One of Gaubatz’ undercover agents, his son Chris, worked as security for one of CAIR’s banquet groups. Although Chris submitted himself to a conversion ceremony to express his devotion to Islam, he worked alongside many non-Muslim interns at CAIR’s national office. Gaubatz also sent an individual pretending to be blind into CAIR; of the move, he said, “We knew the mindset of its executive leaders and we have 12,000 documents. CAIR gets hundreds of thousands of dollars from Saudi Arabia to carry out treason and sedition here in the U.S.” Gaubatz’ evidence for this alleged treason apparently will be published as part of a 23-part comic-book-style magazine series.

CAIR sued over the theft of the records, and a judge ordered Gaubatz to return them in November 2009 while the case is being considered. The FBI then demanded the records under a grand jury subpoena.

It is unclear whether the records Gaubatz’ agents took from the CAIR offices support his most damning accusations of the organization as a front group for terrorists. Although Muslim Mafia promised to unveil “whoppers” detailing the criminal conspiracy alleged by Gaubatz and Sperry, its viewpoint is tinted by Islamophobia. Gaubatz reads sinister intent into the ordinary actions of an advocacy group. Filing a legal appeal means “trying to spring [someone] from prison.” Advising a legal client to exercise his constitutional right to remain silent becomes “secretly coaching terrorism suspects and witnesses to with-
hold information from FBI investigators.” Legal settlements become “shake downs.” Interns are “Islamist spies in congressional offices,” and lobbying is “running an influence operation.”

While *Muslim Mafia* contains insights into CAIR’s internal struggles as a non-profit organization, the evidence does not support Gaubatz’ claims that CAIR supports terrorist attacks on America. Gaubatz accuses CAIR of inflating membership data, presenting the Islamic faith in a positive light, and over-estimating the numbers of anti-Muslim hate crimes. Relying heavily on guilt by association, Gaubatz uses wrongdoing by individual members or former members to impugn the entire organization. If any of the records seized by Gaubatz prove a direct documented link between CAIR and the Egypt-based Muslim Brotherhood, one would expect his book or speeches to address it. However, he has produced no such “smoking gun.” In Las Vegas, Gaubatz held up a flyer that he claimed was handed out in seventy-five percent of mosques, which advised about what to do if you’re arrested and offered it as evidence of CAIR’s alleged support for terrorists. He did not share a single “secret” internal document linking the Muslim Brotherhood to CAIR.

At the 2010 SSI Conference, Gaubatz urged listeners to have zero tolerance for Islamic-American lobbyists, politicians, and intellectuals. Gaubatz claimed that “many of our politicians” are involved with CAIR. He identified Larry Shaw (a State Senator from N. Carolina) and Keith Ellison (a Congressman from Minnesota) as being on CAIR’s board, although Ellison is not on CAIR’s board. In an apparent allusion to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Gaubatz added “And there are many airline pilots who have close relationships with CAIR,” promising that future documents would reveal their names.

**Walid Phares – CI Centre Faculty**

Walid Phares is a Lebanese-American “terrorism expert” with a PhD in International Relations and Strategic Studies from the University of Miami. In addition to his position at the CI Centre, Phares is a Senior Fellow and the director of the Future Terrorism Project at the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies in Washington, a neoconservative think tank. Since 2007, Phares has taught Jihadist Global Strategies at National Defense University, a school funded by the U.S. Department of Defense. His academic pedigree and prominence in government circles would suggest that he brings a scholarly approach to the field of counterterrorism. A contributor to the ultraconservative Christian Broadcast News, and Fox News, Phares has published three books since September 11, 2001 describing a long-term, global conspiracy by various Islamic movements to subvert the U.S. government and establish an Islamic state. Phares’ seven pre-2001 publications consisted of studies of Middle Eastern conflicts and area studies. Following 2001, Phares wrote *Future Jihad: Terrorist Strategies against America* (2005); *The War of Ideas: Jihadism against Democracy* (2007); and *The Confrontation: Winning the War against Future Jihad* (2008); in these works, Phares identifies a new global ideological menace based on claims of a long-term *jihadist* strategy spawned by conservative Wahhabists in Saudi Arabia, Khomeinists in Iran, and the Egyptian-based Muslim Brotherhood. The sinister plan involves a steady decades-long infiltration of key institutions in the United States, including academia, the defense sector, and community organizations, in preparation for a future overthrow to impose Sharia law. While Phares is often very cautious in his characterization of Muslims, on the whole, his narrative distorts the nature of Islam, misstates the role of the overwhelming majority of Muslim Americans, and reinforces cultural stereotyping of Arabs and Islam.

Phares regularly briefs and testifies before Congressional committees and the European Parliament. He leads seminars for government employees, and addresses law enforcement and homeland security conferences. On April 24, 2010, Phares joined Robert Spencer and Brigitte Gabriel, the president of ACT! for America to discuss “Radical Islam: How and Why It Threatens America.” An ACT! for America advertisement for this conference warned, “City Council and County Commission members need to understand how Islamists are suing local jurisdictions to demand excessive rights (such as the Muslim policewoman in Philadelphia who sued for the right to wear her hijab as part of her uniform).”

Drawing extensively on the thesis of *Future Jihad*, Phares’ courses at the CI Centre examine the common ideological roots of what he calls the “Salafist world movement.” Phares explains, “It is very important for people in the national security field, law enforcement, intelligence, defense, and others to
understand the ideological roots of movements that are as diverse as one can find,” yet “share a common ideological root, which we examine.”119 Like Future Jihad, CI Centre’s Course 361, “The Global Jihadist Threat Doctrine,” looks at “the strategies by the jihadists’ movements on intellectual, cultural, ideological levels. How they indoctrinate? How do they create a vast pool of individuals who can be recruited by various militant or terrorist organizations?”120

Future Jihad was included on summer reading lists for Republican members of the U.S. Congress, and the UK’s House of Commons in 2007.121 Phares’ popularity extends well beyond the Beltway. In 2001, Phares gave a seminar to statewide law enforcement in Florida on the threat of Radical Islam.122 In 2009, Paula Gordon, speaking at a FEMA Higher Education Conference about integrating “all hazards” homeland security perspectives into training for emergency management personnel, recommended including Phares’ materials in training curricula.123

In September 2008, Phares joined local sheriffs, state homeland security officials, and U.S. Congresswoman Sue Myrick at a joint North and South Carolina conference to “educate first responders on the threat of Domestic Terrorism and Radical Islamic Jihadists and the danger they pose to both the Carolinas and the entire southeast.”124 Author Paul Sperry, who warns against “those trying to mainstream Islam,” also spoke at this conference.125 Sperry wrote Infiltration: How Muslim Spies and Subversives have Penetrated Washington, an Amazon bestseller and Conservative Book Club feature selection, which spins a conspiracy theory about covert Muslim infiltration that dovetails neatly with Phares’ claims.

Phares uses jihad to connote a long-range strategy of conquest. In doing so, he follows closely the path of intellectuals like Robert Spencer who promote the Islamophobic idea that Islam is innately extremist and violent.126 In its most generic meaning, “jihad” signifies the battle against evil and the devil, the self-discipline to follow God’s will, to be better Muslims. It is a lifelong struggle to be virtuous, to be true to the straight path of God.127 Professor Jonathan Zartman of the U.S. Air Force Air Command and Staff College writes that Phares “briefly acknowledges” how jihad represents an inner spiritual cleansing to many followers, but he “moves on to discuss jihad as a policy used by elites for political ends.”128

Phares’ view of jihad as encompassing a variety of non-violent and legal tactics makes his call to outlaw the “ideology of jihadism” particularly problematic from a civil liberties perspective.129 Muslims in nearly every community, academic, cultural, and governmental institution could conceivably be subjected to McCarthyistic interrogations about their belief systems, associations, and loyalties.

Clare M. Lopez – CI Centre Faculty

Clare M. Lopez is a strategic policy analyst with CI Centre who focuses on the Middle East, homeland security, national defense, and counterterrorism issues.130 She is also a principal of the Iran Policy Committee, a hard line group in Washington that calls for regime change in Iran through support of the Iraq-based People’s Freedom Fighters.131 Lopez began her career as an operations officer with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), serving domestically and abroad for twenty years in a variety of assignments, and retiring in 2000. Lopez has been interviewed by a variety of media outlets, including al-Hurra and Al Jazeera TV, Russian (RTVI) TV, the Japanese Kyodo News and JIJI Press, United Press International (UPI), the Washington Times, the Christian Broadcast Network (CBN), and TalkRight radio, and by online websites including American Thinker, Global Politician, and Israel Insider.

At the CI Centre, Lopez has developed and presented original curriculum on the influence of jihad
and Sharia in Europe and the U.S., and also a full-day course on the Iranian intelligence and security service, according to a biographical statement posted at the website Patriot Symposia.134 In her writings for the conservative magazine Human Events and at speaking events for groups like the Sons of Liberty Riders, Lopez warns of Muslim Brotherhood infiltration in America.135 Lopez often decries the undue influence of the Iran lobby over U.S. foreign policy. In a 2009 interview, wherein she is identified as a “CI Centre Instructor,” Lopez seizes on Saudi financial donations to Middle Eastern studies programs at major universities to suggest that graduates of those programs since the 1970s are beholden to foreign interests:

And what did they do with that oil money? They exported their influence through building of mosques, through publications, through staffing of mosques with their preachers and imams. And as well, they endowed American universities; they bought shares in Middle East programs at our top Ivy League universities. And when you have that kind of influence coming in, there are strings attached. So I would argue to you that the graduates of the top programs of these universities … where do they go when they graduate? They go into the government. They go into the Department of State. They go into the intelligence community. They also go into the think tank community, and the NGO community. That’s been going on now for thirty, thirty-five years or more. And so, when you say, “how did this happen so quickly?” It didn’t happen quickly. This has been going on, planned and funded carefully for many, many decades.136

Lopez is a regular speaker for and vice president of the Intelligence Summit, an annual forum of intelligence and military experts to discuss counterintelligence and counterterrorism. Its advisory council includes Tashbih Sayyed (adjunct fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies) and Brigitte Gabriel, founder of the American Congress for Truth, now ACT! for America, an Islamophobic group that fights “Islamofascism.”141 Of the Intelligence Summit forum, legal analyst Victoria Toensing says, “This is not a mainstream conference with recognized names in the field. I’ve been in the intelligence and terrorism world a long time, and I would not suggest going to this conference for intelligence or terrorism information.”136

In her role as Senior Fellow for the Center for Security Policy, Lopez recently helped author Shariah: the Threat to America along with a group of analysts who call themselves “Team B II.”137 The book, says Lopez, argues that America’s most critical national security threat is not kinetic terror violence, but rather civilization jihad as practiced by sharia-adherent organizations like Al Qaeda, Muslim Brotherhood, and its offshoot Hamas. Team B II shows plainly that there is a link between the most virulent enemies of America and the pre-violent stealth jihad being waged by the Brotherhood through our security and intelligence institutions, and that link is mainstream Islamic law, or Sharia.138

The co-authors of Shariah: The Threat include CI Centre instructor Stephen Coughlin, former CIA director R. James Woolsey and former deputy under-secretary of defense for intelligence Lt. Gen. William G. Boykin, who also addressed SSI’s 2010 conference. Frank Gaffney Jr., director of the center, reportedly said his team has spoken widely, including to many law enforcement forums, such as intelligence, homeland security, state police, National Guard units and the like. Gaffney told the Washington Post, “We’re seeing a considerable ramping-up of interest in getting this kind of training.”149 However, government terrorism experts call the views expressed in the center’s book inaccurate and counterproductive, saying DHS should increase its training of local police, using teachers who have evidence-based viewpoints.140

Tawfik Hamid – CI Centre Faculty

Dr. Tawfik Hamid is a self-described “Muslim reformer” and faculty member at CI Centre who “speaks out against Islamic Fundamentalism.”145 Hamid says that he belonged to the terrorist organization Gama’a al Islamiyya during medical school in Egypt, where he befriended and prayed with Dr. Ayman Al-Zawaheri (later second in command of al Qaeda). After Hamid discovered the evil of these groups, he
experienced a conversion and set out to create a new sector or new way of thinking in Islam.\(^{142}\)

Hamid’s articles and op-ed pieces have appeared in publications like the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Daily News*, and *Jerusalem Post*, as well as in ultraconservative media like David Horowitz’ *FrontPage* magazine.

Although Hamid identifies himself as “a Muslim by faith … Christian by spirit … a Jew by Heart,” he characterizes Islam as inherently violent and oppressive.\(^{143}\) Hamid states that he is criticizing “radical Islam,” as opposed to all Muslims, though that distinction is obscured when he characterizes “radical” or “fundamentalist” teachings as the “dominant version” in Islamic universities and nations.\(^{144}\) For example, *Tikun Olam* blogger Richard Silverstein asserts that Hamid told an Ireland National Independent radio program, “The vast majority of Muslims were against any peaceful understanding. And they prefer this violent traditional teaching of Islam.”\(^{145}\) In a transcription of that interview, Hamid is quoted as saying:

> What they teach in the mosque, for example, is that Jews are the sons of pigs and monkeys. This is traditional teaching in most of the mosques and the classical teachings in most of the books. And about the Christians, this is what they taught us – they are infidels who will go to Hell and will be tortured forever. And they describe to you the way of torturing these Christians.\(^{146}\)

British talk show host Michael Coren asked Hamid, “You would assume that those with medical knowledge and medical aspiration would question fundamentalism and not be natural candidates for violent religious revolution.”\(^{147}\) Hamid replied, “The answer is simply that our way of education generally does not encourage critical thinking. It’s sort of rote learning. This is one factor that made us probably unable to critique what we learned… If you don’t have critical thinking, you could be brainwashed.”\(^{148}\) Hamid continued,

But when it is only in certain sector, you should think deeply that there is something wrong with this sort of teaching [sic]. This doesn’t mean Islam couldn’t be understood peacefully, but the current, dominant version and teaching in the mosque, in Islamic University, in areas like Saudi Arabia, certainly promote a lot of violent things. For example, it’s now basic to this traditional Salafi Islamic the following: killing the apostates, beating women, calling Jews pigs and monkeys, still now in our mosques, and it is in the teachings still now, declaring wars on non-Muslims to force them on being Muslims or to force them to pay tax, or killing them. So, this sort of teaching is still now, fundamental.\(^{149}\)

Hamid spoke at the University of Colorado at Boulder in March 2010 as part of his tour sponsored by the 5280 Coalition, the Denver chapter of ACT! for America, which advertises the Islamophobic movie “Obsession” on their website.\(^{150}\) In his talk, Hamid described the suppression of sexual desires in the Jamaat Islamyya as he argued that suicide bombing is a result of sexual suppression—a theory debunked by Marc Sageman, a forensic psychiatrist and former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operations officer who studies terrorism, in *Leaderless Jihad*.\(^{151}\) Sophia Rose Shafī, a doctoral student in Religion at University of Denver and Iliff School of Theology, attended the event, writing:

> Although it is difficult to think of anything worse than categorizing all Muslim men as either sexually obsessed automatons or sexually repressed sociopaths, it actually went downhill from there. Hamid claimed that all schools of shari’ah advocated stoning women and killing gays, that there had been 15,000 attacks by militant Islamicists in recent years, that the “majority” of Muslims in the world (all 1.2 billion) were radical (even if they seemed nice, they would turn on you in an instant), and that a “mainstream teaching” in Islam is the belief that Jews are “pigs and monkeys.”\(^{152}\)

Shafī recounts how following Hamid’s statement that “Hitler was not defeated by peace, love, security and interfaith dialogue,” and following his advocacy for attacking Iran, the audience applauded with enthusiasm; when Hamid mentioned Muslims killing other Muslims, several members of the audience laughed.\(^{153}\)
Stephen Coughlin – CI Centre Faculty

CI Centre faculty member Stephen Coughlin holds a Masters degree in Strategic Intelligence, with a focus on global terrorism and Jihadist movements, and a law degree from William Mitchell School of Law. He worked as a Joint Chiefs of Staff intelligence analyst; he left the Pentagon in 2008 after superiors did not renew his contract. In 2007, Coughlin wrote a thesis for the National Defense Intelligence College entitled “To Our Great Detriment: Ignoring what Extremists Say about Jihad.” This thesis, which analyzes the role of Islamic law in violent terrorist ideology and strategy, informs the CI Centre’s curriculum on “Jihadist Threat Doctrine.”

In his thesis, Coughlin took issue with President George W. Bush’s assertion that “the terrorists are traitors to their own faith.” According to Coughlin, Bush, Rice, and other Administration officials were wrong to declare Islam a religion of peace that had been hijacked by a few violent extremists for an agenda that has nothing to do with Islam. To Coughlin, these officials ignored all evidence that Islamic law obligates Muslims to use violence in the name of spreading or defending the faith.

Coughlin has asserted that top foreign policy strategists and the White House pander to Islamic sensitivities in an effort to demonstrate tolerance and respect. Statements, such as, “holding Islam harmless,” says Coughlin, have a chilling effect on “unconstrained threat analysis.” Speaking alongside Park51 Islamic Center opponents Pam Geller and Robert Spencer at the 2010 Conservative Political Action Conference, Coughlin cited Islamic law texts to construct a profile of the “enemy mind,” implying that moderate Muslims are not good Muslims.

Nonie Darwish – CI Centre Faculty

CI Centre faculty member Nonie Darwish is the founder of Arabs For Israel and the director of Former Muslims United. The daughter of an Egyptian intelligence officer who was assassinated by the Israeli Defense Force while supporting the Palestinian fedayeen in Gaza, Darwish eventually immigrated to the United States, converted to Christianity, and began to publicly denounce Islamic values in her published works and frequent lectures. Although CI Centre lists Darwish as a staff member, her precise role as an instructor is not known to PRA.

She is the author of the bestselling Now They Call Me Infidel: Why I Renounced Jihad for America, Israel and the War on Terror as well as Cruel and Unusual Punishment: The Terrifying Global Implications of Islamic Law. Darwish has stated that, contrary to the assertions of Muslim feminists such as Dr. Laleh Bakhtiar, “Sharia law does not protect women. It’s the stumbling block, it’s what’s making Islam impossible to change.” Speaking of the political situation in Egypt, where the Muslim Brotherhood’s influence is likely to expand, Darwish shares Coughlin’s position that violent jihad is a core tenet of mainstream Islam: “The Brotherhood’s basic ideology is equal to basic Muslim ideology, where Jihad is a centerpiece duty of the Muslim head of state.” Darwish wrote in February 2011 that the uprising in Egypt demonstrated President Obama’s empowerment of Islamists overseas and within the domestic security apparatus. This situation, Darwish says, means, “Whoever takes office after Obama will have to weed out from our government the Sharia loving Muslims who refuse to call Hamas a terrorist organization and who sympathize with the Brotherhood. This must be done if we are to protect ourselves from getting sucked into Islam’s orbit of no return.”

Her criticism of Islam as an inherently violent ideology, as well as her call for hard line action, reflects one of CI Centre’s emphases: employing experts who reject treatments of Islam as a mainstream religion that should not routinely be subjected to heightened scrutiny by policymakers and law enforcement agencies.

Det. Ebrahim Ashabi – SSI Trainer

Detective Ebrahim Ashabi is SSI’s expert on matters related to violent terrorism. He left Iran in 1982 and joined the Long Beach, CA Police Department in 1997. Ashabi holds a Bachelor’s degree in Public Administration from the University of La Verne and is working toward a Masters degree at California State University. SSI calls him “one of America’s foremost experts on radical Islam and anti-terror security practices.” Ashabi and Henry Morgenstern lead SSI’s training course on “The Threat of Islamic Jihadists to the World,” which SSI bills as “a unique training course that has been expertly designed to bring world-class counter-terrorism training to First
Responders and federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies across the country. In 2005, Ashabi joined the LBPD Office of Counter Terrorism—which is responsible for collecting, analyzing, and investigating criminal intelligence related to terrorism—and worked closely with the FBI’s Joint Terrorism Task Force. At a daylong conference on domestic terrorism at Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles on March 19, 2009, the Anti-Defamation League awarded him the Sherwood Prize for Combating Hate because he “developed a four-day course attended by hundreds of law enforcement officers all over the country.”

Walid Shoebat – ICTOA Guest Speaker

When he was sixteen, says Walid Shoebat, he was recruited by a Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) operative to carry out an attack on a branch of Bank Leumi in Bethlehem. He was supposed to detonate a bomb in the doorway of the bank, but when he saw a group of Arab children playing nearby, he says, his conscience was pricked and he threw the bomb onto the roof of the bank instead, where it exploded causing no fatalities. This is the story Shoebat has told on tours around the United States and Europe since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

Shoebat has lived in the United States since the late 1970s and converted from Islam to Christianity in 1993. Shoebat’s version of apocalyptic Christianity pictures an End Times of Biblical prophecy in which Muslims fight alongside Satan and his agents on Earth. This idiosyncratic theological script of the battle of Armageddon creates a fearful atmosphere that is condemned by every major branch and denomination of Christianity.

Shoebat’s web site says his is an assumed name, used to protect him from reprisal attacks by his former terror chiefs, whom he says have put a $10 million price on his head. While this story casts Shoebat as a courageous and mysterious figure, as a public speaker, the details of his story would surely identify him to anyone who sought to find him. Shoebat’s financial remuneration for his appearances is obscured in complicated financial arrangements he claims are needed to protect him from terrorism. Shoebat also solicits donations to the Walid Shoebat Foundation to help fund speaking tours and to “fight for the Jewish people.”

During Shoebat’s October 20, 2010 presentation to law enforcement officers attending ICTOA’s annual conference, he claimed that the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) and Council of American Islamic Relations (CAIR) are “the terrorist arms of the lawmaker: Sharia, Koran and Hadith.” According to Shoebat, they collectively believe that the state was erected by Mohammed in Medina and he was persecuted. The Muslims moved in to the Jewish city and they all became Muslim Immigrants. They shared the wealth, which is socialist. Islamic equals Socialist ideologies. Progressives agree with the Islamic concepts. Islam equals socialist. Islam believes that there is no life at conception. Muslims bank on progressives to advance the teachings at the university. The Koran, the Big Bang Theory. They collaborate to defend the Islamist Slick Willies. They have infiltrated from the Muslim Brotherhood.
The Muslim Menace: Islamophobic Frames for Law Enforcement and Homeland Security Professionals

This cottage industry approaches counterterrorism with a focus on the religious inspiration of terrorists and the supposed sea of supporters upon which they rely and from which they draw. It is perfectly reasonable to study the ideology of violent terrorist organizations, however, SSI, CI Centre, and ICTOA use trainers who go beyond the religious motives for violent terrorism. Instead, trainers identify a range of constitutionally-protected activities, including religious practices and free speech, as the most dangerous threat, as described by Clare Lopez and Stephen Coughlin in Shariah: The Threat to America. In many cases, these purported terrorism experts promote demonizing conspiracist claims about the supposed Muslim threat. The conspiracy theories manufacture scapegoats in the public consciousness, instilling a heightened level of vigilance against domestic threats by law enforcement and intelligence professionals that can spill over into generalized anti-Muslim prejudice.

Such training will potentially lead law enforcement officials to scrutinize or interfere with individuals based on mere belief, as opposed to criminal conduct. Rather than “waste time on finding evidence for this crystal clear situation,” as a trainer advises, there should be “preventative measures” such as “weakening Islamic radicalism at both the psychological and ideological levels...to interrupt the transformation process that makes one become a terrorist.”

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mer members with troublesome associations as evidence of organizational complicity.

4. Muslim Americans Wage “Lawfare”: Violent Jihad by Other Means

The “lawfare” frame holds that Muslim extremists use litigation, free speech, and other legal means to advance a subversive agenda and silence opponents—using democracy to subvert democracy. Some of the trainers profiled in this Report use the lawfare charge to recast Muslim Americans’ claims that their rights are being violated as crafty tactics to keep their subversive agenda hidden from the public.

5. Muslims Seek to Replace the U.S. Constitution with Islamic, Sharia, Law

This frame raises suggests that support for Sharia, rather than violent terrorism, is the greatest threat to the United States. Selective interpretations of Islamic jurisprudence are used by some terrorists to mobilize recruits with the ultimate goal of establishing a global Islamic government, or Caliphate. This frame is used to stigmatize civil rights advocates who fight religious discrimination by vilifying religious accommodation as capitulation to Islamic rule.

These five frames and the stories told to illustrate and support them rely on factual inaccuracies (or, at the very best, highly controversial interpretations of empirical data), as well as on the attribution of behaviors or beliefs evinced by some members of a religious group to most or all members of that group. The assertion that particular Muslim-American community groups are front organizations for the Muslim Brotherhood and are using civil rights advocacy as a tactic of warfare is factually wrong with respect to particular groups described in this manner. The contention that a violent form of jihad against non-Muslims is an obligation of all Muslims under Sharia, or Islamic law, applies the views of some relatively few Muslims to all adherents of Islam. Beyond such inaccuracies and distortions, the overwhelming focus on alleged religious motivations of terrorists by the groups and trainers we investigated belies an additional troubling bias. Empirical studies of counterterrorism by experts like Robert Pape, Mark Juergensmeyer, Marc Sageman, and others demonstrate that across religions—and not just Islam—the majority of terrorists and suicide bombers are primarily driven by political grievances. Religion is most often used to recruit, legitimate, and motivate

1. Islam is a Terrorist Religion

Islamophobic counterterrorism training often brands Islam as the enemy in the “war on terror.” Private security outfits and their speakers define the threat using ideological and theological terms that inextricably link Islam to terrorism. The groups profiled in this study are part an uncomfortable trend which conflates religious belief with tactics. Religion is overestimated when the tenets of the theology are assumed to have predictive power. Within this frame, the problem is not simply terrorists who are Muslim but an “evil” Islam at the root of violent ideology. The omission and derision of non-religious factors that trigger violent terrorism increase the potential that audiences hear an anti-Muslim message.

Trainers such as ICTOA’s Walid Shoebat and CI Centre’s Tawfik Hamid regularly employ this storyline in their lectures and seminars. Shoebat, a self-described “former Islamic terrorist” and apocalyptic Christian convert, regularly speaks at universities and conferences, and has appeared before the U.S. Air Force Academy. In dozens of YouTube videos, Shoebat suggests Islam is the fake religion of the “anti-Christ” and implies that Muslims bear the “Mark of the Beast.” He denounces Islam and Muslims as inherently violent and savage, recounting an endless litany of (non-terrorist) violent acts committed by individuals in a manner that suggests an irredeemably violent culture.

Private security outfits and their speakers define the threat using ideological and theological terms that inextricably link Islam to terrorism.
Shoebat’s presentation at the International Counter-Terrorism Officers Association October 2010 conference in Las Vegas seemed to intensify suspicion, fear, contempt, and hatred of Islam. Shoebat’s presentation on “The Jihad Mindset & How To Defeat It; Why We Want To Kill You” kept his audience in rapt attention for some six hours. He charged that Muslim men rape women, children, and even little boys. “They are pedophiles!” he shouted. He challenged the audience to cite one instance when a Christian behaved violently, while seldom citing sources for his allegations against Muslims. “The Muslim beheads with a smile,” explained Shoebat, “You can see it on YouTube, on TV; the Afghan child trained to execute Christians. Mom holds the head and dad holds the leg and the ten year old hacks the person being decapitated while smiling. The worst torture is supposed to be in Yemen and Saudi Arabia.” “You say that Islam is a peaceful religion? Why? It hates the West. It hates Israel,” said Shoebat.

Shoebat explicitly described an execution to audience members, saying “They place a bamboo pole into the anus with a smile and twist it all the way up the spinal column. Then they put the body on a pole and let him dangle until he is dead. They kill all beyond repair. [sic] It is tribal law.” Shoebat’s graphic descriptions are classic methods of demonizing “the Other,” drawing on fears of violent, licentious men threatening a nation’s women:

In Germany and Sweden, they sell chastity belts because there were rapes committed by Muslim gangs. They went to the Muslim leaders who said they would handle the problem. The Muslim clergy said, ‘You leave meat out, the cat will eat it. Cover your girls. They should wear the Hijab and look like Muslims.’ The ambulance drivers fear Muslim youth. In Australia, the Muslim males harass and beat. Lebanese Muslims started rapes. In Germany they use concubines. They are taught in mosques.

Although Shoebat’s presentations are unusually graphic and biased, other counterterrorist trainers routinely brand Muslims as a primitive, vengeful, two-faced, and belligerent people who oppress women, are anti-gay, and possess values that are irreconcilable with “Western Judeo-Christian civilization.” Dr. Tawfik Hamid, a self-described “Muslim reformer” and faculty member at the CI Centre has declared on radio broadcast that “the vast majority of Muslims were against any peaceful understanding. And they prefer this violent traditional teaching of Islam.” Hamid regularly characterizes Islam as inherently oppressive.

If Hamid’s video presentation “ABC’s Test for Radical Islam” on the CI Centre’s YouTube channel gives an indication of the content of the firm’s training for law enforcement, it would appear the Hamid does not tone down his presentation for intelligence and law enforcement audiences. His attacks on Islam are influenced, Hamid claims, by the views he was exposed to during his past membership within a terrorist organization; Hamid applies these views and experience to the entire Islamic religion. In his video presentation, Hamid identifies backwardness, oppression, antisemitism, and bellicosity as normative in Islam. In his “ABC’s Test for Radical Islam,” Hamid advises officials to ask Muslim and Arab groups to unambiguously denounce these “vital concepts”:

Apostates (killing of Apostates)
Beating women (stoning them to death)
Calling Jews Pigs and Monkeys
Declaring war on non-Muslims
Enslaving female war prisoners
Fighting Jews before End Days (and killing them)
Gays (killing them)
According to Hamid, a mosque leader’s failure to publicly agree to denounce these principles “should be interpreted as clear evidence that they must be considered radical.” This “loyalty-oath” approach was common during the Red Scare of the 1950s, where loyalty oaths were administered to all Federal employees. He writes that the above ABC-style teachings are “taught in mainstream Islamic books in America.”

Hamid’s views reflect an anti-Islamic bigotry not supported by a balanced review of the text in the Quran. In the words of former CIA Operations Officer and counterterrorism consultant Marc Sageman, “the Quran contains far more verses supporting peace than the very few that support violence. These scriptures have been the crucial opening that some Muslim authorities have used to show the captured terrorists that their violent way is misguided.” Moreover, Hamid’s ABC’s Test for Radical Islam represents a tendency to lift up the worst expressions of theological texts or oppressive religious practices and put them forward as characteristic of the mainstream religious practice. To be sure, one cannot conclude that everyone who subscribes to a Wahhabi, Salafist, or conservative brand of Islam is violent and dangerous. “There are millions of observant Muslims who follow Wahhabist teachings, who are non-violent, and who are opposed to terrorism,” says John L. Esposito, director of the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University.

The CI Centre has, in the past, recommended that students read Islam 101 by Jihad Watch staffer Gregory M. Davis, where he quotes selectively from Islamic texts to illustrate why, in his words, “Islam’s violent nature must be accepted as given; only then will we be able to come up with appropriate policy responses that can improve our chances of survival.” In Islam 101, Davis equates all of Islam with fascism and totalitarianism:

The attractive power of fascist ideas has been proven through history. Islam combines the interior comfort provided by religious faith with the outward power of a world-transforming political ideology. Like the revolutionary violence of Communism, jihad offers an altruistic justification for waging death and destruction.

Security Solutions International (SSI) also argues that the terrorist threat to the United States derives from religious beliefs. SSI’s course on “Suicide Terror and the Threat of Explosives” covers the technical aspects of bomb construction, and also includes “the tenets of Islam applied to the modern world and how organizations were founded on religious fundamentalism.”

SSI’s forty-minute video webinar on “The Evolution of Radical Islam” includes a derogatory cartoon image of a Muslim slicing the neck of an ostrich with its head in the sand, and the image of Satan. The ostrich presumably represents those in denial as to the purportedly satanic nature of Islam.

Major Joseph Bail, a SWAT Commander for the Chester, Pennsylvania Police Department, told the 5th Annual Homeland Security Professionals Conference hosted by SSI:

Guys come up to me and ask all the time: We can’t get our bosses to listen to us when we tell them [a Mumbai style attack] will and can happen here. LET [Lashkar-e-Taiba, a Pakistan-based terrorist organization] is already here in the U.S. They’re in the final years of war that started in 1095 with goal to create Pan Islamic world by 2095. Someone tell me whether in those 85 years, or even 10 years, if U.S. will be prepared ... The 2001 9/11 attacks were chosen to announce to us that they’re in final chapters of their 1,000 year war. Islam is an expansionist religion like Christianity. This war is real.

Bail is also a senior consultant and trainer for the Archangel Group, which offers training to national and international special operations personnel in how to prepare for terrorist events.

When challenged to defend its course “The Threat of Islamic Jihadists to the World,” SSI president Henry Morgenstern said, “If I had a sect of...IRA [Irish Republican Army] members, we would be justified at looking at the extremists who are using...
that religion, justified at looking at the extremists who are using that connection.” When pressed, Morgenstern admitted that such a course would not delve into all of Catholic history. However, SSI’s course promises to take participants through “the formative phases of the Islamic religion” to understand the “different branches of Islam, understand how these were formed, and on what ideology they are based.” Course topics on “Understanding the Culture of Jihad” and “Where Does the Hatred Come From”, suggest that SSI is training police to handle more than violent terrorism. Instructor Ebrahim Ashabi encourages officers to learn as much as they can about Islam and about the types of attacks terrorists plan to carry out “based on scripture.”

Speaking at a conference sponsored by Police magazine, Ashabi’s presentation, “Brief History of Radical Islam,” addressed the history of conflicts involving Muslims and Muslim countries from the religion’s inception up to the modern day, covering its many wars and the split between Sunnis and Shiites. “Shiites and Sunnis have been killing each other for 1,400 years. They aren’t doing it just because we are in Iraq,” Ashabi said. Ashabi included graphic videos of attacks perpetrated by radical Islamists, including the beheading of an American truck driver in Iraq. As with other speakers, Ashabi’s emphasis on violence serves to characterize Islam as inherently violent.

The focus on ancient rivalries and modern conflicts accentuates difference and paints Muslims as the “Other.” The shared theological roots and visions of the Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition are routinely omitted by SSI. This view is shared by another SSI speaker, David Gaubatz, who also identifies Islam as the problem:

Sharia is the key. Many people will ask, “what is Sharia?” And that is a whole seven-day course we could do on Sharia, but I will tell you that Sharia law is all—encompassing 24-hours a day way of life. 90 percent very peaceful, absolutely nothing to worry about. The ten percent is what I’m concerned about. And to be a Muslim, you cannot pick and choose. Just It’s like as a Christian, you cannot say I want commandment one, two and four, but I don’t like seven, eight, nine and ten. You can’t do it. Under Sharia law, you are an apostate if you do not accept all of Sharia, and that includes the violent jihad, physical jihad.

In his book Suicide Terror, Morgenstern draws conclusions about the nature of the “Global Jihadist threat” through analysis of writings by Osama Bin Laden (al Qaeda), Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri (al Qaeda), and Sheik Hassan Nasrallah (Hezbollah) that justify suicide bombing and the killing of non-Muslims on religious grounds. He dismisses Director of the Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism (CPOST) Robert Pape’s contention that suicide terror attacks are primarily driven by foreign occupation. Pape has found, for example, that 22 successful suicide attackers in Lebanon from 1982 to 1989 were communists and socialists with no commitment to religious extremism and five were Christian. Pape has also noted that Hezbollah suicide attackers did not follow the Americans to New York, or the French to Paris, or even the Israelis to Tel Aviv after those nations left Lebanon.

Statistics do not support Morgenstern and SSI CEO Solomon Bradman’s view that terrorism is inherent to Islam. The 1970s experienced a level of terrorist activity on U.S. soil 15 to 20 times higher than that seen in most years since September 11,
2001, and few of the attacks during the 1970s appear to have involved individuals motivated by violent jihadist ideas. Furthermore, this view ignores data regarding bombings done by individuals and groups motivated by a variety of political goals, from the Jewish Defense League to anti-abortionist Eric Rudolph, from Croatian Freedom Fighters to United Freedom Front, Red Guerilla Resistance, Volunteers for the Puerto Rican Revolution, Aryan Nations, and American Front Skinheads. The mastermind of the Oklahoma City bombing, Timothy McVeigh, was a home-grown White supremacist.

This rejection of non-religious or non-ideological explanations for terrorism is exemplified in an exchange between Hamid and talk show host Michael Coren. When Coren asked Hamid why middle class students such as himself would be drawn to violent teachings, Hamid answered,

It's actually catastrophic to assume other causes for this problem other than Salafist teaching itself. Because if it was poverty or education or such things, it would have affected all people in the society – either Muslims or Christians – to the same degree. So we would have expected to see some suicide bombers in Egypt or in other countries who are Christian. But this never happened. It's always Muslims.

Pauletta Otis, professor of strategic studies at the United States Marine Corps Command and Staff College at Quantico, writes that religion “seldom provides more than a general guidance for understanding individual/group behaviors." The tenets of Islam do not explain how predominantly Muslim countries like Indonesia, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Tunisia vary widely in their legal systems and forms of governance. Otis says it was assumed that all Muslims, therefore all Iraqis, were primarily motivated by their religion and “if you understood Islam, you would understand Iraq.” Otis says this approach was “misleading, faulty, and dangerously simplistic thinking.”

According to Otis, in the current strategic environment, the so-called war of ideas, pits the Western (Christian) way against the Islamic world and the Muslim way. This approach is a dead-end for intelligence analysis and policing:

There are assumed to be two paths to fight this religious ideology—either by a “better idea” or by defeating the source of the idea—in this case assumed to be centered somewhere in the Middle East. Within the war of ideas, there is an implicit assumption that reason, persuasion, influence, perspective, and ultimately truth will persuade the peoples of the Middle East to abandon their atavistic lifestyle, give up their religious ideologies, and join the modern world. Islam, as theology, is often cynically described as backward, traditional repressive, and prone to violence, and although the people of the Middle East might be OK, the theology of Islam holds them back, or worse, propels them to violence. In this scenario, so-called moderates are encouraged to help others understand the error of their ways. Alternatively, there is a suggestion that Islam go through a reformation, like Christianity, to “get with the program.”

The counterterrorism trainers profiled here fail to adequately explain how knowledge of ideology should apply in day-to-day counterterrorism work by law enforcement. Teaching counterterrorism in this way could generate counterproductive fear that draws attention away from actual terrorist threats. The selective prism of the “Jihadist Threat” fuels ignorance instead of knowledge. It narrows perspectives and feeds paranoia about Muslims instead of opening the way to new solutions and new relationships.

2. An Islamic “Fifth Column,” or “Stealth Jihad,” is Subverting the U.S. from Within

Islamophobic counterterrorism training commonly advances a conspiracy theory that asserts that Muslim-American advocacy groups act as front organizations for Islamist groups. This theory asserts that Muslim-American advocacy groups act as front organizations for Islamist groups, such as the Muslim Brotherhood. Another version points the finger at two revivalist or puritanical movements: Salafism and Wahhabism.

Counterterrorist trainers who peddle this view may distract law enforcement from the search for
specific preparations for violent acts, encouraging them to focus on mere membership in alleged front organizations. These supposed front organizations are purported to influence credulous politicians, and stifle the “free speech” of those aware (the endorsers of the stealth jihad theory) of the global conspiracy of Muslims by claiming that such speech is Islamophobic.

ICTOA speakers, SSI, and the CI Centre’s ideologues all teach police that Muslims are like a “fifth column” seeking to take over the country. A fifth column refers to a group of people who secretly undermine a larger group, such as a government, from within, to help an external enemy. Although their speakers often insist that they support the six to seven million mainstream Muslims in America, they simultaneously paint most mosques and advocacy groups with a sinister brush. According to Walid Phares, who teaches the CI Centre’s marquee course on the “Global Jihadist Threat:”

With the power of “community representation,” they [jihadists] established a net of connections with the Arab civil rights movements and civic associations. Amazingly enough, while their comrades oppress millions of people overseas, the jihadists within the West pose as civil rights advocates, interested solely in the “rights” of their immigrant communities.

By gagging those whom they claimed to represent for years via institutional control, Wahhabis and Salafis have become the sole or dominant social activists of these constituencies. This layer of additional protection, very important to most Americans (or westerners in general) who are attached to the idea of civil liberties, has allowed them to strengthen their initial representation with government even further.

Like the Cold War Red-Baiting, which targeted and immobilized the militant leadership of the American Labor Movement, security firms’ Islamophobic scapegoating silences Muslim Americans by separating leaders from their community base and weakening grassroots organizations. The Islamophobia documented in this study has effectively supplanted the Red-Baiting form of anticommunism that swept the nation during the McCarthy Era’s witch hunts. Rather than articulating legitimate criticisms of communism or socialism as a theoretical or governmental system, Red-Baiting was a form of demonization that suggests that certain ideas, individuals, or groups on the Political Left stand outside appropriate political discussions and may involve subversion or treachery against the homeland. In the 1950 anticommunist book The Front is Everywhere, William R. Kintner claimed that the primary communist style of subversion was through a “Communist Fifth Column” involved in otherwise legal “political activity.”

The witch-hunting allegations of Red-Baiters are independent of a serious consideration of the actual political ideas, individuals, or groups being demonized. Anticommunist Red-Baiting was often based on claims of a vast, insidious conspiracy on the verge of undermining the country and installing a foreign ideology. This trope of impending subversion and betrayal is common throughout U.S. history and is widely used among a small segment of right-wing apocalyptic Christian evangelicals, especially those that fear Islam is the prophetic false religion of the End Times.

In 1978 historian and civil liberties attorney Frank Donner warned that right-wing countersubversives were moving from an anticommunist witch hunt to a new frame with “The Terrorist as Scapegoat.” Terms like Wahhabist (i.e., the “Wahhabi Lobby”), Salafist, and Muslim Brotherhood (or Ikhwan) have supplanted “communist” as the new boogeyman in these retooled Cold War conspiracy theories. Fear and ignorance of these Islamic movements and various theological lines, of which there is a diversity of leaders and forms, have made it easy for private counterterror firms to portray those movements’ followers as the enemy, conflating all devout or fundamentalist Muslims with al Qaeda bomb-makers and hijackers. This demonization process could lead law enforcement to incorrectly profile and target an entire community and take resources away from productive counterterrorism measures.

The Muslim Brotherhood

A common strand of the “Stealth Jihad” position asserts that Muslim-American advocacy groups are part of an ongoing network created by the Muslim
Brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood was established in Egypt in 1928 by Hassan al-Banna who believed Islam’s decline and the Islamic world’s societal ills stemmed from increased secularism. He formed the Muslim Brotherhood to return Muslims to the origins of the faith by imitating its founders. Private counterterror firms routinely label the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist organization. “While there are many terrorist groups in the Middle East and elsewhere,” writes John Esposito, “it is misleading to refer to the Muslim Brotherhood today as a terrorist group.” There is no evidence which supports the proposition that the Muslim Brotherhood in the U.S. has been or is involved in terrorist or violent activity, says Esposito.

The support for this specific conspiracy theory is thin; it rests upon a 1991 Memorandum which supposedly lays out the Muslim Brotherhood’s “plan for conquering America.” This document surfaced in discovery during the Holy Land Foundation case [for an explanation of the case, see p. 44 of the report], and has been attributed to Mohamed Akram for the Shura Council of the Brotherhood. An appendix to the 1991 Memorandum listed twenty-nine U.S.-based organizations as the Brotherhood’s “friends” in North America; the list included the Muslim Students Association (MSA), the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), and the Muslim American Society (MAS).

Clare Lopez, writing outside her role as a CI Centre instructor, claims that the Muslim Brotherhood “controls” Muslim-American organizations, which “have achieved unprecedented access to the Department of Defense and even the White House.” Lopez draws on cultural stereotypes of stealthy Muslims who advance their alleged “agenda that prioritizes concealment until it is too late of the true nature of their campaign of conquest, whether by Dawa (persuasion, including by way of deception) or terrorist attack.” Writing for the right-wing publication Human Events, home to the “Jihad Watch” column, Lopez alleges that the United States is unprepared for the “Islamic jihad challenge” because “counterterrorism policy is being formulated under the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB), the lead international jihadist organization charged with ‘eliminating and destroying the Western civilization from within.’”

A lack of compelling evidence has not deterred the likes of David Horowitz, David Gaubatz, Security Solutions International, CI Centre faculty members, and several ICTOA speakers from citing the Memorandum as conclusive proof of a grand scheme. In the July 2010 edition of SSI’s The Counter Terrorist magazine Dean Olson used the 1991 Memorandum to support his claim that the Muslim Brotherhood planned to infiltrate American society through front groups in a “shrewd, multifaceted effort that includes manipulation of academic institutions via large donations, the establishment of secret communities and training camps, and the radicalization of prisons and mosques.” According to Olson, the Muslim Brotherhood’s “target date for transforming the United States into a Muslim Country” is 2050.

With this conspiracy theory, trainers are using government monies to distract law enforcement from real security challenges and instead to draw their attention to “soft jihad” of the Muslim Brothers. As SSI writes:

[Brotherhood] machinations include an ingenious process to desensitize America to the incursion of Islam into the fabric of society. This “soft jihad” is perhaps the most insidious, and potentially the most effective, assault on democratic freedoms.
Holy Land Foundation Case

Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the government labeled many Muslim charities, mostly international aid organizations, as financial supporters of terrorism. In 2001, the U.S. Treasury designated the Holy Land Foundation, once the largest Islamic charity in the United States, as a terrorist organization and, along with the FBI, froze its assets in a legal effort to shut down “American financing for terrorist organizations in the Middle East.”

The government charged five leaders of the Holy Land Foundation with financing terrorism, saying that the foundation sent more than $12 million to charitable groups, known as zakat committees, which build hospitals and feed the poor. The prosecution said these zakat committees were controlled by Hamas, a Palestinian political party designated as a terrorist organization by the U.S. government. The foundation, the federal government claimed, contributed to terrorism by helping Hamas spread its ideology and recruit supporters. Defense lawyers told the jury that their clients did not support terrorism, instead the foundation was concerned with legitimate aid programs for poverty-stricken Palestinians. The Holy Land Foundation may have given money to Hamas, but, the defense argued, that was before the U.S. government designated it as a terrorist organization in 1995. Treasury officials conceded that a “substantial amount” of the money raised by the foundation went to worthy causes, but argued that Holy Land’s primary purpose had been to subsidize Hamas.

The first criminal trial brought against the foundation ended in a mistrial in 2007 due to juror deadlock. The retrial of the case found the Holy Land Foundation guilty on all 108 charges, including conspiracy to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organization and providing material support to a foreign terrorist. During discovery, a 1991 memorandum surfaced supposedly laying out the Muslim Brotherhood’s “plan for conquering America.” An appendix to the 1991 Memorandum listed twenty-nine U.S.-based organizations as the Muslim Brotherhood’s “friends” in North America; the list included the Muslim Students Association (MSA), the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR), and the Muslim American Society (MAS).

The prosecution named the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), as well as the Islamic Society of North America and the North American Islamic Trust as unindicted co-conspirators in the case. The “unindicted co-conspirator” label is a legal designation that, while the organizations and individuals are not formally charged, is used for pragmatic considerations, and evidentiary concerns; federal prosecutors generally should not identify unindicted co-conspirators, according to the United States Attorneys’ Manual. The list of unindicted co-conspirators included more than 300 organizations and individuals.

Following the designation of hundreds of Muslim organizations and individuals as unindicted co-conspirators, the National Association of Muslim Lawyers and National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers sent a letter to the attorney general saying that the move was an effort to smear the entire Muslim community. Additionally, CAIR filed a brief asking for removal of the organization’s name and all others from the list. The brief said the list furthers a pattern of the “demonization of all things Muslim.”

“Most people don’t understand what an unindicted co-conspirator is,” said Parvez Ahmed, CAIR’s board chairman. “They think that being related to a terrorism case means we are terrorists.”

5 United States v. Holy Land Found. for Relief and Dev., 445 F. 3d 771 (5th Cir. 2006).
8 MacFarquhar, “Muslim Groups Oppose a List of ‘Co-Conspirators.’”
9 MacFarquhar, “Muslim Groups Oppose a List of ‘Co-Conspirators.’”
10 MacFarquhar, Muslim Groups Oppose a List of ‘Co-Conspirators.’
Similarly, Fox News guest commentator Steven Emerson told attendees at an industry conference organized by *Police* magazine that the Muslim Brotherhood is now working in America through dozens of organizations. Emerson showed documents that supposedly outline the Muslim Brotherhood’s strategy for subverting the United States to advance Sharia law and establish a worldwide Muslim state called a “Caliphate.”

Top SSI speaker David Gaubatz writes, “Like mobsters, the Muslim Brothers operate an underworld of illegal activities conducted under the cover of fronts with legitimate-sounding names.” He characterizes the Islamic Society of North America as the founding “nucleus” of this hidden movement due to ISNA’s founders’ alleged affiliation with the Muslim Brotherhood within the countries from which they emigrated. Gaubatz and co-author David Sperry call CAIR the ideological cousin of the “notorious” Muslim Brotherhood and allege that its leadership is inextricably tied to the promulgation of an explosively violent “jihadist” agenda.

SSI’s Ebrahim Ashabi told police at a 2009 International Terrorism conference that the Muslim Brotherhood aims “to destroy Western civilization from within, through subversive means, legal, political and non-terrorist means, and by changing laws and U.S. constitution.” Ashabi told fellow officers, “This powerful arm of the Muslim Brotherhood in the U.S. has everybody running scared, from the private sector to elected officials, and even the military and law enforcement.”

The Muslim Brotherhood conspiracy theory fails on at least two counts. First, experts on the Muslim Brotherhood stress that it does not function as a central body for a monolithic global movement. Using the Cold War analogy, Egypt is not Moscow. Lehigh University Professor Ziad Munson concludes, “There are simply too many ideological, religious, and historical barriers for this to be a realistic plot.”

The Muslim Brotherhood theory fails, secondly, because it makes little sense that the Muslim Brotherhood would use front organizations in the United States. Not only does the organization have “little or no organizational capacity here,” according to Munson, but building front organizations “is not in the Muslim Brotherhood’s repertoire.” To Munson, a secret infiltration by the Muslim Brotherhood in the United States “does not pass the sniff test.” Historically, the Muslim Brotherhood runs candidates openly in all cases when permitted by law, even where its supporters and candidates are arrested and harassed. It has formed front groups only out of necessity in predominantly Muslim countries that specifically outlaw religious parties. However, religious parties are not outlawed in the United States. In an interview for this report, Esposito explains, “The Muslim Brotherhood has been subjected to rounds of arrests, imprisonment, harassment, at times torture, and they have not responded radically to repression in the past thirty years.”

Portraying the Muslim Brotherhood as an international subversive group enables people to tar Muslims no matter what their beliefs or actual affiliates. There is concern that government terrorism
prevention funding is supporting this kind of anti-Muslim propaganda, at the expense of effective public safety and strategies that respect civil liberties.

“Wahhabi Lobby”

Another version of the “stealth jihad” conspiracy theory points the finger at religious movements supported by Saudi Arabia, such as Wahhabism and Salafism. Wahhabism and Salafism are revivalist or puritanical movements in Islam with reactionary social views. Al Qaeda and its leader Osama bin Laden have advocated a message of violence that some suggest is an extremist interpretation of puritanical Islam. Anti-Muslim intellectuals exploit this ideological link to promote a witch-hunt against law-abiding Muslims. However, mainstream Wahhabism does not teach violence and terrorism.

Phares, from the CI Centre, is a key proponent of the “Wahhabi lobby” theory. He warns of infiltration to “spread Wahhabism in the U.S. armed forces and ultimately even into the Pentagon” until the global strategic signal is given to launch the final assault. Phares describes a global constellation of forces out of the Middle East who believe that the “United States is the main obstruction to the rise of Islamic fundamentalism,” and thus “all jihadist forces must muster and destroy it.” Rather than focus on violent terrorists, such as al Qaeda in Yemen, who have demonstrated their continued determination to strike European and American targets with bombs, Phares sounds the alarm about “mainstream Islamic fundamentalists” who “control the ability of the infiltrated country to act against jihadism overseas and to increase the influence of the Islamists.”

This infiltration allegedly starts in academia, where universities are seduced with petrodollars. There, Salafis are presented as “reformers” and Wahhabs as “conservatives.” According to Phares, in order to keep the flow of petrodollars coming, academia allegedly opened its doors to Wahhabs, shutting out those who spoke the truth about jihadist ideology, such as his colleagues Daniel Pipes and Samuel Huntington. From the classroom, graduates were picked to serve in the State Department and Congress to aid the jihadists’ long term objective of penetrating U.S. security agencies and military bodies. Consider, for example, CI Centre faculty Clare Lopez’s suggestion that graduating from a Middle East Studies program at Harvard, Yale, or Stanford merits suspicion as a foreign agent.

Phares’ thesis regarding widespread “Wahhabi” funding of academia relies heavily on the arrests of two professors affiliated with a university in Southern Florida who allegedly held terrorist sympathies. His theory casts suspicion on rejection and repudiation of claims by Daniel Pipes, David Horowitz, and other writers widely criticized for expressing anti-Muslim views.

Phares lumps Wahhabs together with the Muslim Brotherhood, writing that waves of Wahhabs from Saudi Arabia have been joined by Muslim Brotherhood front groups. However, Salafists and Wahhabs have never been on good terms with the Muslim Brotherhood. The Brotherhood competes with Wahhabs for power and influence in most Arab states. Treating these separate movements as birds of a feather, says Munson, is “analogous to equating Osama bin Laden with Saddam Hussein.” This ideological conflict makes it highly unlikely that the Muslim Brotherhood would join forces with Wahhabs in a global plot.

Right-wing terrorism “experts” often claim that defense officials are too “politically correct” to identify the enemy and invite local police and intelligence professionals at their trainings to challenge this capitulation of their bosses to “soft jihad.” Coughlin’s 2010 presentation at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) stressed how The 9/11 Commission Report contained few references to “jihad” or “Islamic law.” He blamed the Muslim Public Affairs Council for “undermining” the report.
Clare Lopez suspects that Muslim-American advisors influenced a lexicon as issued by the National CounterTerrorism Center (NCTC) that avoids terms like “jihad” or “ummah” or “caliphate” when describing the enemy. In 2009, Congress rejected a proposed amendment by Peter Hoekstra (R-MI) to prohibit the intelligence community “from adopting speech codes that encumber accurately describing the radical jihadist terrorists.” Clare Lopez opined, “Congressional Democrats would appear to be thoroughly influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood.”

David Gaubatz has effectively accused the FBI of sleeping with the enemy because a number of Muslim agents from the FBI headquarters and the Washington field office attend mosques in Virginia and socialize with CAIR leaders. In a 2009 interview with FrontPage magazine, Gaubatz accused the FBI of intentionally misleading U.S. Representative Frank Wolf because of “how close [the FBI] were with CAIR’s senior leadership.” Despite these and other biased views, Gaubatz is training first responders attending SSI conferences.

Gaubatz says, “FBI agents or any other Law Enforcement officer can’t adhere to following the laws of a ‘man made government’ and the laws under Sharia at the same time. They contradict one another and a Pure Muslim follows Sharia law first, and others lastly.”

Despite these and other biased views, Gaubatz is training first responders attending SSI conferences. At a 2010 conference, Steven Emerson slammed the Obama administration and the Bush administration as “witting and unwitting accomplices” of the Muslim Brotherhood, claiming that the Muslim Brotherhood and the Holy Land Foundation were invited to a White House Iftar (Ramadan) dinner, and Hamas supporters were invited to a Department of Homeland Security counterterrorism conference. Emerson calls this outreach “naive” and criticizes the government for seeing the need for “dialog with radicals as outreach.”

In course evaluations, some CI Centre students appear to believe that the U.S. government has failed to appreciate the real threat to America. One wrote, “CT 361, The War on Terrorism, has been both enlightening and concerning. What is most alarming is that so many of our elected officials and senior level decision makers are ignorant of the extent of the problem. How can you win a war when leaders don’t know who the enemy is? Could we have successfully waged war in 1941-45 if we did not know and understand Nazi Germany and Japan?”

Islamophobic counter-terrorism trainers lean heavily on guilt by association, routinely categorizing civil rights groups such as the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), and Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) as a support network for terrorists.
3. “Mainstream” Muslim Americans Have Terrorist Ties

Islamophobic counterterrorism trainers lean heavily on the use of guilt by association. They routinely categorize civil rights groups such as the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), and Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) as a support network for terrorists. None of these organizations has been convicted of terrorism or formally charged with providing material support to terrorists, but they are frequently impugned due to their alleged sympathy for Hamas and Hezbollah. To varying degrees, Muslim civil rights groups are led by individuals who oppose the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands, and the use of U.S. military operations in predominantly Muslim countries.

It has become a norm to simply define Hezbollah and Hamas as terrorists without recognizing that these groups have become conventional political players in recent years, leading some to distinguish between their military and political branches. Even Homeland Security officials recognize that while Hamas and Hezbollah are both listed as terrorist organizations by the U.S. government and have targeted civilians with bombings, they are distinct from al Qaeda in methods and motivations.

CAIR, in particular, has been the target of reckless accusations. CAIR is a nonprofit organization of American citizens who are Muslim and their “mission is to enhance understanding of Islam, encourage dialogue, protect civil liberties, empower American Muslims, and build coalitions that promote justice and mutual understanding.” It is a legitimate lobbying group for the rights and civil liberties of Muslims in America, who need protection from McCarthyist witch hunts.

The Holy Land Foundation case is used by Islamophobic trainers to impugn the entire Muslim-American community. A Texas grand jury named CAIR and ISNA unindicted co-conspirators in the prosecution of U.S. v. Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, along with 246 other Muslim organizations and individuals. In the Holy Land Foundation case, the government charged five leaders of the Foundation with financing terrorism by sending more than $12 million to charitable groups, known as zakat committees, which build hospitals and feed the poor. The prosecution said the committees were controlled by Hamas, and contributed to terrorism by helping Hamas spread its ideology and recruit supporters. Critics of the government’s case point out that it was based on events that took place before it was illegal for U.S. groups to support Hamas.

A federal court ruled that prosecutors violated the North American Islamic Trust’s due process rights when they publicly released the list of indicted conspirators. Conservative commentators, counterterrorist officials, and lawmakers use the list to target legal groups based on guilt-by-association accusations.

Although the government did not charge CAIR with financing Hamas, David Gaubatz cites the Holy Land Foundation case to conclude that “CAIR is a terrorist organization.” Steven Emerson claims that CAIR ties to the Holy Land Foundation were “extensive” and “its own leadership has multiple ties to Hamas and Hamas-front groups in the United States.” Emerson told police at a recent conference that they need to ask all Muslim American groups to renounce Hamas and Hezbollah as a precondition to working with them. Although Emerson is not affiliated or speaking on behalf of any of the three groups profiled here, his comments are emblematic of the problems we area addressing. ICTOA invited Emerson to speak in 2007, 2008, and 2010, but he did not appear. In the words of Alejandro Beutel from Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), Islamophobes are “failing to see who are the potential enemies and who are the potential allies. Nothing we do is going to be good enough for them.”

4. Muslim Americans Wage “Lawfare”: Violent Jihad by Other Means

“Lawfare” is the “offensive use of democratic legal systems by those whose intent is to destroy democracy.” It is a rhetorical device used to describe “Muslim extremists” alleged use of litigation, free speech, and other freedoms to advance their diabolical agenda and silence opponents. “Lawfare” is used by several trainers, such as Clare Lopez and Security Solutions International characterize lawsuits as a tactic of the purported “stealth jihad.”

“Lawfare” utilizes a kind of Orwellian double-speak in which “terrorism” is not the use of terror, but the use of legal procedures. The practice of law
becomes warfare when used to oppose Islamophobia or assert Muslim-Americans’ civil rights.

According to The Lawfare Project, a group led by one-time SSI guest speaker attorney with the Middle East Forum Brooke Goldstein, “lawfare” denotes “the use of law as a weapon of war” or more specifically, the abuse of the law and judicial systems to achieve strategic military or political ends.”

Counterterrorist trainers claim that this “Lawfare” frame is relevant to law enforcement officials because civil rights advocates manipulate the legal system. Further, this frame claims that civil rights groups use accusations of hate speech to prevent Americans from learning the truth about the global Islamic threat. Thus, this “Lawfare” frame is used to justify Islamophobic speech. Steven Emerson wrote in 1993, for example, “Political correctness enforced by American Muslim groups has limited the public’s knowledge about the spread of radical Islam in the U.S.”

The “Lawfare” frame can be used to attack public advocacy for fair trials of accused terrorists. Emerson criticizes civil rights and advocacy groups who stand up for their members when the government accuses them of wrongdoing, often against waves of negative publicity and presumed guilt for anyone arrested on terrorism-related charges. He derides such “pressure tactics” as “proclaiming the innocence of the government’s target,” “writing press releases and holding press conferences to that effect,” and denouncing investigations and arrests as “anti-Muslim witch hunts.” Emerson appears to have little tolerance for even the small number of voices of dissent opposing the U.S. government’s often pre-emptive prosecutions:

CAIR, and groups like it, has the ability to poison jury pools and to pull the wool over the eyes of some lazy members of the media, giving the impression that there is some kind of focused effort by law enforcement authorities to target innocent Muslims, rather than an effort to safeguard American citizens against actual and legitimate threats from Islamic radicals.

Contrary to Emerson’s worry that jury pools are being “poisoned” to view Muslims favorably, scientific data show strong anti-Arab and anti-Muslim biases among potential jurors.

Moreover, Emerson blames CAIR and similar groups for “radicalizing the domestic Muslim population” by repeatedly claiming “that such prosecutions amount to the federal government’s engaging in what CAIR calls a ‘war on Islam’”—as if the government’s prosecutions themselves do nothing to exacerbate that perception.

Security Solutions International has used “Lawfare” to characterize criticism of its trainings as a form of terrorism. When SSI advertised its course on “Middle Eastern Culture and Terrorist Strategies” in March 2010, it included “the Legal wing of Jihad in America.” The title of this sub-topic alone raises the question of why public dollars are spent training law enforcement to treat “legal” activity as a “radical threat.”

SSI proclaims itself a victim of “Lawfare, a New Kind of Jihad.” CEO Solomon Bradman complained,

What use is the training we have provided more than 500 government agencies if groups like this are allowed to get away with being a Fifth Column in the USA our First Responders will be weakened; we will fight this strategy of using the laws of the freest democratic country on Earth and exploiting our own freedoms to help terrorists.

Speaking in 2009, SSI trainer Ebrahim Ashabi associated terrorism with “on-going threats of lawsuits against police and other law enforcement agencies that offer counter terrorism and race awareness training programs as means of intimidating police departments to stop training programs.” Ashabi explained that “CAIR is a serious threat to U.S. safety” and that the organization continues to permeate

“Lawfare” utilizes a kind of Orwellian double-speak in which “terrorism” is not the use of terror, but the use of legal procedures.
all facets of our society in an effort to undermine it. According to Ashabi, one strategy it seeks to use is “nominating Muslim sympathizers to political office and law enforcement ranks to then gain access to computer databases.”

SSI President Henry Morgenstern also uses Brooke Goldstein’s analysis of “Lawfare.” In Morgenstern’s book *Global Jihad*, Goldstein has asserted:

The Islamic movement has two wings—one violent and one lawful—which can operate apart but often reinforce each other. While the violent arm attempts to silence speech by burning cars when cartoons of Mohammed are published in Denmark, the lawful arm is skillfully maneuvering within Western legal systems, both here and abroad.

SSI’s magazine featured a two-part series by Goldstein on “How Islamic Tactics Are Targeting Free Speech,” which concludes, “the use of western ‘hate speech laws’ and other products of political correctness to destroy the very principles that democracies stand for, must be countered.”

Morgenstern writes that “some of the Muslim organizations dedicated *prima facie* to promoting cultural, economic, and even individual rights issues or warding off hate and discrimination but at heart comprise a very potent arm of the Jihad in the United States because they undermine the very legal foundation of our ability to counter them.”

5. Muslims Seek to Replace the U.S. Constitution with Islamic, Sharia, Law

This frame raises the specter of a repressive Islamic Caliphate ruling over America and suggests that support for Sharia, rather than kinetic violent terrorism, is the “the most dangerous threat.” Like the Islamic “Fifth Column” conspiracy theory, this Sharia one evokes Cold War fears of global Communism. The menace of a global Islamic dictatorship stands in for the former Soviet one. Sharia is a set of ideals that define a properly constituted Islamic existence. Selective interpretations of Islamic jurisprudence are used by some terrorists to mobilize recruits with the ultimate goal of establishing a global Islamic government, or Caliphate. This frame is used to stigmatize civil rights advocates who fight religious discrimination by vilifying religious accommodation as capitulation to Islamic rule. CI Centre faculty member Tawfik Hamid argues that, “Making concessions to Shariah law is a potentially endless process that could ultimately result in the passage of unconstitutional and barbaric laws within the U.S. If every religious group in the U.S. is allowed to practice its own tribal or religious law instead of constitutional law, then the whole notion of a unified country will no longer exist.”

No such process is actually underway. Further, the demonization of Sharia ignores the ongoing domestic transformation and accommodation of Islam to American legal, cultural, social, and economic norms.

At SSI’s October 2010 Homeland Security Professionals Conference, John Giduck of Archangel Anti-Terror Training said, “Going back to the time of Mohammed, Muslims’ goal has been to take over the world. They’re looking for lifestyle impact as well as legal impact.”

“You watch,” Giduck told the crowd of police and federal agents, “in roughly four years, Sharia law will be recognized by our appellate courts and then there will be case law precedent that recognizes Sharia court decisions. . . They will set it up when they think our courts are ready and then police will be required to enforce Sharia law. That’s how they affect change in American society.”

Asked to elaborate by a PRA investigator, Giduck declared, “It’s already happening in the lower courts, with that New Jersey case. This is how things are evolving in this country.”

In the New Jersey case in question, a judge denied a restraining order to a woman who testified that her husband, a Muslim, had forced her to have non-consensual sex. Judge Joseph Charles, Jr. said he did not believe the man “had a criminal desire to or intent to sexually assault” his wife because he was exercising his prerogatives as he understood them under Islamic law. Two months later, a state appeals court correctly reversed that decision. Andrew Silow-Carroll, the editor in chief of the *New Jersey Jewish News*, pointed out that the judge made a bad call and was overturned. In addition, he noted that our system already allows some civil matters—but not crimes—to be settled through other means of arbitration. “Among those alternative mechanisms is the *beit din*, or rabbinic law court,” Silow-Carroll wrote. “Every day, Jews go before *batei din* to arbitrate real estate deals, nasty divorces and business disputes.” Silow-Carroll continued,

[the notion] of a “soft” takeover of our banks, universities, and government agen-
cies, is similarly preposterous. It singles out Islam as the one religion that cannot be accommodated in any of these institutions. It is based on the scare-mongering notion that once a court allows an insurance company to offer Sharia-compliant financing, it’s not long before an imam will be allowed to sentence an adulteress to death by stoning. 282

To many, including those in law enforcement with no formal training on Islam from neutral sources, the word “Sharia” conjures horrors of hands cut off and the systematic oppression of women and sexual minorities. Nonie Darwish, a CI Centre faculty member, emphasizes this pseudo-feminist strand of Islamophobia: “Sharia law does not protect women. It’s the stumbling block, it’s what’s making Islam impossible to change.” 283

Sharia is Islam and Islam is Sharia, and both are for the preservation of seventh-century Arabian culture, politics, and way of life, which could not survive in this day and age except under the sword. Muslims find freedoms of the West to be very seductive, which must be fought by any means – terror, war, jihad, lies, or distortions. For them to keep their stranglehold over the population, America and all free countries must appear evil. 284

This situation, argues Darwish, is of profound importance for the West: “Refusing to comprehend what’s at stake in this conflict could be democracy’s undoing.” 285

The portion of the counterterrorism industry’s teaching on Sharia promotes a selective and biased view of Islamic law and Sharia’s role as a set of ideals that define a properly constituted Islamic existence. Sherman A. Jackson, a Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Michigan, explains that Muslims “tend to speak not of Sharia but of fiqh, which literally means ‘understanding’ and underscores the distinction between God’s prescriptions on the one hand and the human attempt to understand these on the other.” 286 Sharia, meanwhile, includes scores of moral and ethical principles, from honoring one’s parents to helping the poor to being good to one’s neighbor. Most of these “rules,” says Jackson, “carry no prescribed earthly sanctions at all.” 287

Further, for most of its history Islamic law offered comparatively liberal and humane legal principles. Harvard law Professor Noah Feldman says, “Common law long denied married women any property rights or indeed legal personality apart from their husbands. When the British applied their law to Muslims in place of Shariah, as in some colonies, the result was to strip married women of the property that Islamic law had always granted them.” 288 Feldman notes the hypocritical attitude toward Sharia, where the high standards of proof required for harsh punishments are rarely acknowledged and the extremes of the American legal system (such as life sentences for minor drug crimes) are routinely ignored. 289
Conclusion

In the aftermath of 9/11, Arab and Muslim organizations mobilized to demonstrate their commitment to the United States while defending their rights and distancing themselves from the terrorists. In response to hate crimes, widespread discrimination, and repressive government initiatives, these groups asserted themselves, built new alliances beyond their communities, and made a variety of political, social, and legal demands for inclusion and respect.

Through fieldwork and interviews with community leaders, sociologists Any Bakalian and Mehdi Bozorgmehr showed how, in the process of reassessing their collective presence in the United States, a distinct “American Muslim” identity gained new currency as “an identity that seeks to assert its independence from forces abroad, one that combines the essential elements of Islam and the values of American constitutional democracy.” This broader-based renewal has also been accompanied by Islam’s reassertion in public life: an increase in Islamic oriented organizations, banks, social welfare services, and educational institutions.

While a variety of Islamic religious tendencies and movements may challenge many non-Muslim Americans’ religious beliefs, they do not pose a threat to the U.S. Constitution or Americans’ safety. Nevertheless, scapegoats are formulated to turn intelligence analysts and law enforcement professionals against Muslims who express constitutionally-protected religious beliefs, such as the right to wear Muslim garb.

The Islamophobic messages conveyed to a varying degree by trainers associated with the three groups profiled in this report risk fostering resistance to Muslims integration into the fabric of American society. Trainers often treat public expressions of devout, fundamentalist, or “pure” Islam as evidence of belief in a theology that supports terrorism. The ideological link between al Qaeda and fundamentalist Islam is used to justify suspicion of devout expressions of Islam that have nothing to do with crime or terrorism. An Islamic reawakening in personal life does not signify support for violence, intolerance, or anti-democratic views. Yet, Islamophobic counterterrorist experts appear to identify religious conversion as one step in the path to becoming a violent terrorist.

Since 9/11, Muslim Americans have helped thwart eleven al Qaeda-related plots, nearly one-third of all such known planned attacks that threatened the United States. The tip that led to the FBI’s sting of a Washington, D.C. subway bombing plot came from a Pakistani-born man in the Muslim community. If law enforcement has reason to believe that there are potential terrorist threats within the Arab and Muslim communities in the United States, it should seek ways to work with the millions of law abiding members of those communities to help identify the true criminal threats, rather than treating the entire communities as suspect. If adopted by law enforcement, the ideological, Islamophobic approach advocated by the training groups profiled in this Report leads to a number of unconstitutional and otherwise negative outcomes:

Biased Intelligence Analysis: The equation of Islam and terrorism may taint intelligence analysis by grossly exaggerating the threat factor and targeting innocent activity. As reported by the Washington Post, local police departments and Fusion Centers are hiring their own trainers to develop terrorism expertise, including some “self-described experts whose extremist views are considered inaccurate and harmful by the FBI and others in the intelligence community.” In 2009, the DHS Office of
Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) retrained authors of inappropriate and flawed intelligence reports that unfairly targeted non-violent advocacy groups. DHS sent in officials to conduct remedial training after the North Texas Fusion Center released an intelligence bulletin that warned that freedom of speech was being exploited by Islamic groups to advance their Islamic-based goals. Cultural and personal bias and outright politicization can lead intelligence units to collect data on the wrong targets and increase the probability of analytical failure by analysts who lack the benefit of evidence-based training.

Stereotyping and Profiling: Indoctrinating police officers to distrust the motives of Muslim Americans is a recipe for racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination and unconstitutional profiling. Islamophobic training content risks encouraging officers and analysts to rely on religious speech as a proxy for evidence of criminal intent. Conspiracy theories about “stealth jihad” encourage McCarthyistic witch hunts and purges of Muslims from public service occupations. Feedback from participants suggests that trainings on the “Jihadist Threat” increase suspicion of potential recruits and Muslim colleagues.

Unlawful Searches and Illegal Surveillance: Messages that render suspect certain religious beliefs (such as support for Sharia law), expressions of political sympathy for Palestinians’ cause, or association with legal advocacy groups may spur indefinite surveillance of innocent persons and houses of worship without a criminal predicate. Warrantless surveillance chills political participation in civil society and strikes at the heart of the First Amendment’s guarantee of freedom from religious persecution. Islamophobic messages vilifying legal advocacy essentially endorse political spying and disruption.

Physical Violence and Hate Crimes: The religious and racial prejudice that could result from bias by Islamophobic trainers may lead to deadly responses, such as police officers being more likely to shoot in an ambiguous situation. It might also result in more assaults against people identified rightly or wrongly as Muslim or Arab. Propagation of the “Lawfare” myth may cause law enforcement executives or officers to doubt and under-investigate complaints of hate crimes or civil rights violations from members of Muslim, Arab, Middle Eastern, and South Asian communities.

Chilling Free Speech: Speakers associated with the CI Centre and Security Solutions International (SSI) characterize public criticism of Islamophobia as “lawfare,” the “offensive use of democratic legal systems by those whose intent is to destroy democracy.” The Lawfare frame represents a dangerous nadir in the art of conflating terrorism with free speech, wherein terrorism is transformed from indiscriminate violence against civilians to filing a lawsuit. This not-so-subtle slight of hand stigmatizes opponents of anti-Muslim training, tarring them as the moral equivalent of terrorists in order to silence dissent.

The ideological approach advocated in some counterterrorism training appears to conflate Islam with terrorism, encourages stereotyping that stigmatizes innocent Muslims and hurls security services into ignoring genuine threats that do not fit the alleged ideological, religious, or ethnic pattern. Marc Sageman found that most of the global Islamist terrorists in Western Europe and North America “were not intellectuals or ideologues, much less religious scholars.” He calls it “dangerous” for counterterrorism to focus on Islamic ideology; in part because the face of terrorism can change rapidly from Muslim fundamentalist one day to a White separatist the next.

In fact, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has expressed the importance of word usage in defining the terrorist threat. In 2008, DHS, under Secretary Michael Chertoff, met with a group of influential Muslim Americans to discuss how U.S. Government officials describe terrorists who invoke Islamic theology in planning, carrying out, and justifying their attacks. Subsequently, the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) consulted
with a broad range of Muslim-American community leaders and scholars to develop insight into how terminology could be more strategic, that is, “avoid helping the terrorists by inflating the religious bases and glamorous appeal of their ideology.” Muslim American leaders stressed three foundational assumptions: 1) we should not demonize all Muslims or Islam; 2) because some terrorists themselves use theology and religious terms to justify both their means and ends, the terms we use must be accurate and descriptive; and 3) our words should be strategic; we must be conscious of history, culture, and context.

However, the private training entities profiled in this report routinely violate these principles. Muslim community leaders have expressed concern about the information law enforcement authorities are receiving on the subject of Islam. On December 20, 2010, CAIR’s executive director Nihad Awad wrote to U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder to urge the Department of Justice to stop using anti-Muslim private trainers to teach city and state law enforcement. CAIR said that neo-conservative Frank Gaffney’s think tank, Center for Security Policy, was hired by the Department of Justice to educate local, state, and federal cops about how to deal with the Muslim community. Awad said that using trainers who suspect that Muslims are conducting a “stealth jihad” “gives the government “inaccurate information, biased information” and “it’s going to impact negatively the policies, the attitudes, and the practices of the government law enforcement agencies at all levels.”

In August 2010, Reverend Jesse Jackson and the Islamic Circle of North America joined a letter by a coalition of Muslim, Sikh, Asian-American, and other civil liberties groups sent to FBI Director Mueller asking him to explain why Robert Spencer was invited to train state and federal law enforcement officers. Spencer co-founded Stop the Islamization of America, which the coalition described as a “hate group.” Spencer claimed in a blog post that he “gave two two-hour seminars on the belief-system of Islamic jihadists to the Tidewater Joint Terrorism Task Force,” including FBI agents.

When wholly lawful and nonviolent associational activity is villified, such as lobbying by civil rights groups, experts warn we are likely to waste valuable resources tracking innocent people based on their religious and political practices. This will, in turn, make the communities that will inevitably be targeted by such broad-brush measures far less likely to cooperate with law enforcement.

Muslims in the United States have been petitioning government agencies for the redress of grievances based on the implicit bias being tolerated in training of law enforcement officers about the nature of Islam and its alleged inherent tendency for violence and terrorism. Local police executives, when alerted to the bias potential raised by trainings that focus on religion, have canceled such courses. When SSI collaborated with Seattle Port Police to teach “The Threat of Islamic Jihadists to the World” at Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission campus in Burien, WA in 2008, the Washington state chapter of CAIR argued that SSI’s training promoted stereotypes that could lead to prejudicial profiling of Muslims. Arsalan Bukhari, president of the Washington state chapter of CAIR told the Seattle Times,

“Most police officers don’t have a basic grounding in Islam, so before you teach them about Islam, how can you teach them about radical Islam? It just makes you nervous because when a law-enforcement person pulls someone over, when they see a Muslim person or someone who appears Muslim to them—all this information they just learned kicks in.”

CAIR urged the Port of Seattle Police to ensure that the course offered accurate and balanced information on Islam and Muslims. Bukhari says that law-enforcement agencies need to learn about Islam, but not just in the context of terrorism. “Linking any
faith to violence and criminal activity,” said Bukhari, “creates the potential for stereotyping and could lead to an increase in religious and ethnic profiling,” pointing to an incident where two Muslim men traveling on a ferry were profiled as suspicious due to their Middle Eastern appearances. Bukhari emphasizes, “It is our job to let organizations know that they are not getting unbiased information from SSI. They are not buying a high quality product. In fact, buying into the bias will cost the local agency more in the long run.”

When community religious leaders learned that the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) had contracted with Security Solutions International to hold a 3-day course on “Middle Eastern Culture and Terrorist Strategies” on May 10-12, 2010, community advocates from the Muslim American Society, ACLU, and other advocacy partners expressed concern to MBTA Transit Police Chief Paul MacMillan. Community advocates sensitive to the possibility of Islamophobia raised concerns about the possible negative racial profiling outcomes of the course. Chief MacMillan apologized on behalf of the MBTA, canceled and pulled out of the training in March 2010. After the MBTA withdrew all support for the course, Chief MacMillan told advocates with the Bridges program and Muslim American Society that he asked SSI to remove the MBTA transit police logo from its website, which they had not authorized the use of. The MBTA had agreed to sponsor a two-day training on the Islamic Jihadist Threat for the previous year on May 21-22, 2009, but no one from the MBTA Transit Police attended, according to Deputy Chief Donald O’Connor.

In April 2008, CAIR’s Pennsylvania chapter called on police training officials to offer a Muslim perspective in a mandatory police training class because of concerns that the class would present stereotypical views of Islam and Muslims. Also in May 2008, a spokesman for CAIR’s Chicago office said an emergency preparedness drill in Illinois, in which a fake mosque was stormed by law enforcement authorities, sent the “wrong message” that all Islamic houses of worship may be potential security threats. An official later apologized for using the “mosque” in the drill.

The mainstreaming of this anti-Muslim rhetoric threatens both civil liberties and counterterrorism policy interests. If adopted by law enforcement, the ideological, Islamophobic approach by these conservative security firms will lead to a number of unconstitutional and negative outcomes: increased vigilance will be misplaced and will ultimately undermine security objectives.
Recommendations to Counter Islamophobia in Terrorism Prevention Training

The organizations and speakers examined in this report are entitled to their opinions. However, public agencies at all levels of government should reject vendors that foment Islamophobia. The federal government has a particular responsibility to ensure that the analytical and skills training delivered to public servants is accurate, consistent, in accordance with national security policy, and respectful of constitutional rights. Based on the findings of this investigation, Political Research Associates calls upon Congress, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Justice to:

1. Investigate Existing Programs to Ensure That Counterterrorism Trainings are Accurate and Free from Bias. Congress should ask the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to undertake an evaluation of all private vendors that provide counterterrorism training to federal, state, or local agencies, including through conferences, seminars, courses, and foreign tours. The GAO should identify inaccuracy or discriminatory politicization in this training. In the alternative, U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder, DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano, and appropriate Congressional oversight committees in both branches should investigate whether all federally sponsored counterterrorism training programs, seminars, and conferences utilize experts whose message is accurate and free from bias.Islamophobia in counterterrorism training must be acknowledged and addressed by all government agencies—from the federal level down to counties and cities. Additional research must be carried out to ascertain the level of anti-Muslim sentiment in both law enforcement and the domestic security bureaucracy. At the local level, cities and counties should invest in third party independent monitors who can assist victims with their complaints and monitor the way anti-terror training is implemented. Inspectors General and civilian review boards should investigate whether local agencies, including intelligence Fusion Centers, train employees using speakers or curricula that evince anti-Muslim bias.

2. Substitute Private Counterterrorism Training of Public Employees with Government Programs. Counterterrorism training is an inherently governmental function that should not be outsourced. The privatization of core intelligence activities reduces public accountability, oversight, and control. The FAIR Act, passed by Congress in 1998, allows the private sector to compete to perform peripheral activities, such as administrative or janitorial services. However, it forbids federal agencies from outsourcing “Inherently Governmental Functions,” defined as “a function so intimately related to the public interest as to require performance by Federal Government employees.” According to the Office of Management and Budget, inherently governmental activities include “determining, protecting, and advancing economic, political, territorial, property or other interests” and “significantly affecting the life, liberty or property of private persons.” Activities that cannot be outsourced include “the direction and control of intelligence and counter-intelligence operations.” Privatization enables contractors to evade Congressional oversight and legal responsibility and can compromise the integrity of government initiatives. The training of intelligence and law enforcement personnel by private trainers may allow agenda-driven trainers to influence the direction and control of vital counterterrorism efforts. Federal agencies should incentivize and prioritize government-sponsored trainings, and phase-out private counterterrorism training for public servants.

3. Establish Standards For Private Counterterrorism Training Firms and Experts. To the extent that private contractors and firms offer expertise not available from government sources, the Department of
Homeland Security and Department of Justice should establish standards to certify anti-terror training course providers. These standards should prohibit religious discrimination and emphasize respect for civil liberties. Groups or speakers who do not meet these guidelines should not be invited to address public servants, and should be ineligible for public funding. Anti-terror training must be implemented in a manner that does not single out any specific religion or community of believers for collective suspicion or victimization. Policing should be based upon principles of justice, fairness, non-discrimination, and community safety, not the promotion of a political agenda. FEMA’s current course approval process could be audited and expanded to cover all government programs and use of public dollars for training—including conferences to minimize the exposure of law enforcement and domestic security personnel to ideological content that fosters negative perceptions of Islam and Muslims.

4. Improve Reporting of Federal Funding for Counterterrorism Training. The Office for Grants and Training (G&T) is the principle DHS agency providing counterterrorism and WMD training to states and localities, through both DHS training institutions and partners. Congress should direct G&T to assume responsibility for tracking all federal counterterrorism training, including the training FEMA provides to first responders. All federal expenditures for counterterrorism training—whether through grantees, sub-grantees, or federal agency budgets allocations—should be reported and available to the public.

5. Work with (Rather than Vilify) American Muslim Community Organizations. In evaluating existing training opportunities and setting standards for trainers and courses, investigators should be alert for programs that appear to single out Muslim Americans or their constituency groups and community institutions. “Loyalty oaths” or “Radical Islam Tests” should never be used as a prerequisite for cooperating with any Muslim, Arab, or Middle Eastern groups; such exercises presume guilt and are based on unacceptable stereotypes. DHS and DOJ should support training that fosters community-oriented policing efforts based on respect and parity between parties, as recommended in the 2010 report Building Bridges to Strengthen America by the Muslim Public Affairs Council.

Enhancing channels of communication should not, however, serve as a pretense for intelligence gathering. The government must not attempt to control or otherwise influence places of worship. Mosques and Islamic community centers must not be subjected to surveillance absent evidence establishing probable cause of criminal conduct. Muslim charities must not be arbitrarily closed or subjected to stricter surveillance than other charities. Civilian Review Boards should monitor and report on the surveillance activities of local agencies and homeland security bodies.

6. Improve the Cultural Competency and Religious Understanding of Intelligence and Law Enforcement Personnel. Islamophobic trainings encourage officers and analysts to rely on religious speech as a proxy for suspicion. DHS and DOJ should develop and support training courses that promote an understanding of a wide variety of religious practices and faith traditions in order to counter the Islamophobia identified in this Report. PRA supports baseline counterterrorism training that includes, as part of its curriculum, awareness of indicators for violent terrorism based on a variety of ideological or religious sources. However, prior to teaching about Islamic-inspired terrorists’ ideological motivations, training courses should foster a basic understanding of Islam and Muslims. Such training should not be mere window dressing. G&T should aim to substantially correct misconceptions of Islam as supporting terrorism or the view that the Muslim mainstream is trying to establish a caliphate. The government should look to community leaders and respectable scholars for accurate portrayals of Muslim-American communities. Just as government has created public service announcements (PSAs) to encourage preparedness for disasters, government should create PSAs to build cultural competency and prevent hate crimes.

7. Congress Should Enact Legislation to Prohibit Racial, Ethnic, and Religious Profiling. The End Racial Profiling Act (ERPA) is necessary to protect the rights of Arabs, Muslims, Middle Easterners, and South Asians—those communities most harmed by Islamophobic counterterrorism training—and counteract the impression that Muslims are not full citizens entitled to protection under the United State Constitution. Racial profiling is not only unconstitutional, but ineffective and counterproductive, as it undermines safety and alienates Muslim communities.

Phares, Future Jihad, 146.

Phares, Future Jihad, 145.

Walid Shoebat, Speech delivered at International Counter Terrorism Officers Association, 8th Annual Conference, Las Vegas, October 20, 2010.


Aziz Huq, electronic correspondence to Thomas Cincotta (February 15, 2011).


Bakalian and Bozorgmehr, Backlash 9/11, 153.

Encyclopedia of Race and Ethnic Studies (Routledge: 2003), 218. It states, “The Runnymede Trust has been successful in that the term Islamophobia is now widely recognized and used, though many right-wing commentators either reject its existence or argue that it is justified.” See also Runnymede Trust, Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All (1997), 5. Cited in Muzammil Quraishi, Muslims and Crime: A Comparative Study (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.: 2005), 60.

The Runnymede Trust’s influential 1997 report identified eight main features of anti-Muslim prejudice: 1) Islam seen as a single monolithic bloc, static and unresponsive to new realities, 2) Islam seen as separate and other, 3) Islam seen as inferior to the West – barbaric, irrational, primitive, sexist, 4) Islam seen as violent aggressive, threatening, supportive of terrorism, engaged in ‘a clash of civilizations’, 5) Islam seen as a political ideology, used for political or military advantage, 6) criticisms made by Islam of ‘the West’ rejected out of hand, 7) hostility toward Islam used to justify discriminatory practices towards Muslims and exclusion of Muslims from mainstream society, and 8) anti-Muslim hostility accepted as natural and ‘normal.’


For a description of intelligence fusion centers and their role in the wider domestic security infrastructure, see Thomas Cincotta, “Platform for Prejudice” (Somerville: Political Research Associates, 2010).

Among the competitors are Phoenix Group Consultants, Ultra Secure Solutions, Brenni Consulting, National Registry for Counter-Terrorism Professionals, Institute of Terrorism Research and Response (ITRR), CEO Intel Center (Ben Venzke), Innovative Analytics & Training, Gleason Research Associates, Government Training Institute, Extreme Terrorism Consulting, LLC, American Military University, Henley-Putnam Institute, GCOM Consultant, International Institute for Counter-Terrorism, and Halo Corporation. PRA’s landscape review suggests that most private vendors are careful to avoid Islamophobic messaging. Nevertheless, additional research may be necessary for public agencies to ensure that these providers are responsible. For instance, ITRR a $125,000 contract with Pennsylvania state law enforcement agencies to provide intelligence reports on peaceful protests, from an animal rights demonstration to a gay and lesbian music festival. See Laura Rozen, “Rendell ‘Deeply Embarrassed’ over spying on peaceful groups,” Politico (September 14, 2010).

For description of the wider domestic security infrastructure, see Thomas Cincotta, “Platform for Prejudice” (Somerville: Political Research Associates, 2010).

The Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) funds are awarded to State Administrative Agencies or state administrative agencies in Washington and Florida approved trainings by Security Solutions International, one of the private firms profiled in this report, in the fields of Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT), Special Response Team (SRT), and “Building Safety and the Terror Threat.”


Letter from Dr. Anthony Bennett, Disclosure Branch Chief, Records Management Division, Mission Support Bureau, FEMA to PRA, dated Jan 28, 2011.


Federal Emergency Management Agency, Protection and National Preparedness, National Preparedness Directorate, National Training and Education Division, Federal Sponsored Course Catalog (November 22, 2010). https://www.firstrespondertraining.gov/odp95FWebforms/ The December 2010 State-approved Course Catalog describes two potentially problematic California state courses; Terrorism Liaison Officer covers “Understanding Militant Islam,” and a separate course on Inmate Radicalization Awareness covers “Islam fundamentals.” Federal Emergency Management Agency, Protection and National Preparedness, National Preparedness Directorate, National Training and Education Division, State Sponsored Course Catalog (December 6, 2010). https://www.firstrespondertraining.gov/odp95FWebforms/PRA found that state administrative agencies in California and Florida approved trainings by Security Solutions International, one of the private firms profiled in this report, in the fields of Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT), Special Response Team (SRT), and “Building Safety and the Terror Threat.”

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At a cost of nearly $10,000, Kharoba trained Pasco County’s GIS mapping and GIS analysts, patrol officers, honorary deputies, and volunteer safety officers on “how to identify ideological patterns and beliefs common to Islamist extremists,” how to develop information assets,
and to distinguish “legitimate Arabic names” from “namealtering schemes.” Trainings included instruction on “how to assess and evaluate Muslim community trends and growth rates in order to evaluate possible terrorist threats.” Khabora has trained officers to spot “Radical Muslim Terrorists.” In practice, he imputes a “terrorist” motive to mere civil rights and political advocacy on behalf of Muslim-Americans. See also, Counter Terrorism Operations Center. http://ctoc.com/CTOC_TakeATour.php

46 Attendees at past ICTOA annual conferences include members of the Seattle Police Department; Torrance, CA Police Department; and Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

47 Walid Shoebat, Presentation at ICTOA’s 8th annual conference (October 20, 2010). Reported by PRA Investigator.

48 George Little, ICTOA’s 8th annual conference (October 20, 2010). Reported by PRA Investigator. Little now claims he never spoke to our investigator at the meeting.


63 This conference was attended by at least one member of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and officers from Lee County, Florida, and Torrance, California.


65 Broward County sent two officers to SSI’s 4th Annual Gulf Coast Terrorism Prevention Conference in 2009 at a total cost of $2527. Broward County Sheriff’s Office, “Training Announcement” (June 7-8, 2009).
We estimate that approximately eighty percent of attendees were police from around the country, including Kansas City, Missouri, Los Angeles, Orange County, Tacoma, Arizona, Colorado, Texas (Austin, Houston, San Antonio), Georgia, Ohio, Chicago. The attendees included approximately six Marines, forty SWAT agents, four U.S. Army personnel, twenty-five individuals from Sheriff’s Departments, and three officials from DHS.


Henry Morgenthurn spoke on Suicide Terror at the symposium, attended by 479 participants from 200 agencies. A course on “Extreme Islam” by an unnamed FBI Advisor was limited to law enforcement only.


Arsalan Bukhari, President of the Washington state chapter of CAIR, Interview by PRA, October 2010.

Arsalan Bukhari, President of the Washington state chapter of CAIR, Interview by PRA, August 2010. Likewise, Port of Seattle Police Chief Colleen Wilson expressed dismay that SSI used the Port’s logo on its website and Seattle Police Department (SPD) Deputy Chief Nick Metz told local advocates that SPD did not authorize SSI to list SPD as clients after it canceled a webinar.

As of October 2010, the CI Centre’s “World-Class Team of Experts” included David G. Major (former Senior FBI Executive), Connie Huff Allen (former Senior US Army Counterintelligence Special Agent), Susan H. Adams (former FBI Supervisory Special Agent), Bart Bechtel (former CIA Operations Officer), Robert Booth (former Senior US State Department Official), David Charney, MD, Stephen Coughlin (Attorney, Major in US Army Reserves), Nonie Darwish (writer, public speaker), Peter Earnet (former CIA executive), Tawfik Hamid (former member of Islamic terrorist group Jamaa Islamiya), Joel Jones (former Senior US Army intelligence officer), Tony Jordan (former Senior CIA executive), “K” (Middle Eastern counterterrorism operative), Oleg Kalugin (former KGB Major General), “M” (FBI asset working against Russian intelligence targets), John L. Martin (former Senior U.S. Dept. of Justice Executive), H. Keth Melton, Jonna Mendez (former CIA technical operations officer), Tony Mendez (former Senior CIA executive), Waldid Phares (author, Senior Fellow at Future Terrorism Project), John R. Shafer, PhD, Brian Weidner (former Senior FBI Supervisory Special Agent), and Nigel West (former British intelligence and military historian).

CI Centre, “CI Centre Experts” (October 21 2010). http://cicentre.com/experts.html

David G. Major Associates (November 17, 2010). www.DGMA.biz Based on Virginia state corporate filings, CI Centre/David G. Major Associates, Inc. is a registered corporation authorized to issue 5,000 shares of S-type stock. The company’s annual report is not available through the internet.


Association of Former Intelligence Officers, “Board Members” (November 2010). http://www.alfio.com/o1_about.htm


Gregory M. Davis, Islam 101, 14. A copy of Islam 101 had been available at CI Centre’s website in approximately November 2010 at the following URL: http://cicentre.com/required_reading.html The CI Centre website has since been redesigned and certain portions are password protected.

Davis, Islam 101, 14. The term Dar al-Harb (literally “House of War”) classically refers to those countries where Muslim law is not in force or those nations at war with Muslim nations, as contrasted with the Dar al-Islam, or House of Islam. According to Dr. Tariq Ramadan, a Professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies in the Faculty of Oriental Studies at Oxford University, this division of the world into houses does not have any mention in the Quran or other Primary sources in Islamic jurisprudence. The divisions were framed by an early Islamic scholar, Ibn Taymiyyah, in response to the Mongol invasions of Muslim lands during the 13th and 14th centuries. Many contemporary Islamic scholars do not apply these old concepts to contemporary reality. See Tariq Ramadan, To Be a European Muslim: A Study of Islamic Sources in the European Context (Leicester, UK: Islamic Foundation, 1999), 125-130.

Davis, Islam 101, 14.


Manufacturing the Muslim Menace

Channel, YouTube (February 19, 2010). http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TyOx8OyPfY


Ben Smith, “(At Least) Two approaches to Islam at CPAC,” Politico (February 11, 2011). http://www.politico.com/blogs/bensmith/0211/At_least_Two_approaches_toIslam_at_CPAC.html It states, “This is the problem with CPAC. It’s corrupted and compromised by the Muslim Brotherhood,” said Pamela Geller, co-founder of the Freedom Defense Initiative and Stop the Islamization of America.”

Frank Gaffney Bravely Muslim Brotherhood Infiltration to Warn CPAC about Grover Norquist,” Think Progress (February 13, 2011). http://thinkprogress.org/2011/02/13/gaffney-cpac/Neo-conservative Frank Gaffney had vowed to boycott the 2011 Conservative Political Action Conference based on his claim that the Muslim Brotherhood had “infiltrated its ranks.”


Gabriel, Islam and Terrorism.

Gabriel, Islam and Terrorism. 217.

Gabriel, Islam and Terrorism, 218.

Gabriel, Islam and Terrorism. 33.


SANE Staff, “The Truth and Nothing But the Truth” (October 17, 2009). http://www.saneworks.us/indexnew.php?sec=105&catid=188&sid=188&lang=en The society of lawyer David Yerushalmi. On its website, the Society of Americans for National Existence (SANE) proposes legislation to prohibit immigration by Muslims who adhere to Sharia Law. SANE writes, “America ought to develop the notion and legal infrastructure to restrict non-Western and non-Christian immigration so that alien cultures and peoples should never come to threaten the national character of this nation.”


Gaubatz and Sperry, Muslim Mafia, 11.

Gaubatz and Sperry, Muslim Mafia, 11, 86.

Gaubatz and Sperry, Muslim Mafia, 13.

Gaubatz and Sperry, Muslim Mafia, 12. To be sure, Muslim Mafia does not name a single piece of legislation that CAIR has allegedly influenced in an adverse manner.


Walid Phares, “Curriculum Vitae” (December 26, 2010). http://www.walidphares.com


ACT! for America, “Announcing Our Second Fre National Webcast Conference Sponsored by American Congress for Truth.”

“Training Courses taught by CI Centre Professor Walid Phares,” CI Centre Channel, YouTube (April 8, 2009). http://www.YouTube.com/user/cicentrechannel#p/u/x/Hvf0y9Dr76Y Phares explains that he teaches Global jihadist Threat Doctrine (161), Introduction to Hezbollah (267), Iranian Intelligence (270), and Jihad Strategies in Africa (268).

“Training Courses taught by CI Centre Professor Walid Phares,” CI Centre Channel, YouTube.


new_book_muslim_mafia_bigoted_ridiculous_waste_timeHussein Ibish, Executive Director of the Hala Salaam Masoud Foundation for Arab-American Leadership, writes of Paul Sperry. “Of all of the Islamophobes outside of the blogosphere, I don't think there's any question that Sperry is the most reckless, mean-spirited and McCarthyite of the bunch. Infiltration accuses every single Arab and Muslim American who had any prominence in Washington at the time, including stalwart Republican Bush supporters in the administration, of being Islamists, “Islamofascists,” and, as the title says, infiltrators. The man's work is nothing less than a regurgitation of the most hysterical anti-Semitism, redirected towards Arabs and Muslim, seeing disloyalty and treason as an inherent characteristic of anyone from the Arab or Muslim communities.”

Robert Spencer, “Jihad means much more than violence (but it also means violence),” Jihad Watch (February 16, 2007). http://www.jihadwatch.org/2007/02/jihad-means-much-more-than-violence-but-it-also-means-violence.html “Unfortunately, however, jihad as warfare against non-believers in order to institute “Sharia” worldwide is not propaganda or ignorance, or a heretical doctrine held by a tiny minority of extremists. Instead, it is a constant element of mainstream Islamic theology.”


The Intelligence Summit, ”Biography Clare M. Lopez Vice President of the Intelligence Summit.” http://www.intelligencesummit.org/speakers/ClareLopez.php

“International Intelligence Summit,” Right Web (October 11, 2006). http://www.rightweb.irc-online.org/profile/International_Intelligence_Summit


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Coughlin, “Jihad: The Political Third Rail.” Coughlin claims that the historic Islamic understanding of the world is divided into two irreconcilable camps: the world of Islam and peace—the dar
al-Islam—and the world of disbelief and war—the dar al-harb. Perhaps he means that the two camps are irreconcilable.


159 Darwish, “The Brotherhood Among Us.”


162 Long Beach Police Department, “Detective to be Honored for Security Solutions International,” SSISheds Light on the Radical


167 Tawfik Hamid, Presentation at ICTOA’s 8th annual conference. Reported by PRA Investigator.


169 Hamid, “What the U.S. Needs to Do to Avoid Another 9/11.”


171 Paulette Otis, “Armed with the Power of Religion: Not Just a War of Ideas” in Armed Groups: Studies in National Security, Counter-terrorism, and Counterinsurgency, Jeffrey H. Nortwitz, Ed. (U.S. Naval War College, 2008), 215-16; Esposito, Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality, 214. Despite an enormous amount of intelligence and analysis, few seemed to know until the end that the emperor had no clothes. Neither government agencies nor academic think tanks predicted the extent and speed of the disintegration of the Soviet empire. The exaggerated fears and static vision that drove us to take Herculean steps against a monolithic enemy blinded us to the diversity within the Soviet Union and the profound changes that were taking place. Viewing the Soviet and commu


174 Shoebat, Presentation at ICTOA’s 8th annual conference (October 20, 2010). Reported by PRA Investigator.

175 Shoebat, Presentation at ICTOA’s 8th annual conference (October 20, 2010). Reported by PRA Investigator.

176 “Orla Barry Radio Show 2006.”

177 “Orla Barry Radio Show 2006.” Michael Coren Show, “Dr. Tawfik Hamid—The Roots of Jihad 1/6;” Coren, “Hot for Martyrdom.” According to an observer, Dr. Hamid still considers himself a Muslim, although he doesn’t believe that Islam should be allowed to have political power: “Islamic political activity needs to be squashed without apology.” Andrew Bieszad, “The Conference on Secular Islam,” Telos Press Blog (April 21, 2007). http://www.telospress.com/their brutality, cannot bring America to submit to shariah— at least were they to act alone. While the terrorists can and will inflict great pain on the nation, the ultimate goal of shariah-adherent Islam cannot be achieved by these groups solely through acts of terrorism, without a more subtle, well-organized component operating in tandem with the.” The co-authors of this report include Clare M. Lopez and Stephen Coughlin.

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Security Solutions International, “SSI Mounts counterattack to the “Legal Wing of the Jihad” by taking on CAIR.”

Phares, Future Jihad, 146.

According to PRA senior analyst Chip Berlet, the most persistent theoretical underpinning of the FBI’s COINTELPRO-era activity was the notion of the naive front controlled by communist infiltration, or COMINFLN in Bureau jargon. As told by author William W. Keller, the theory behind COMINFLN is that “Communist party members seek to infiltrate or join the ranks of legitimate organizations, rise to positions of leadership, establish effective control of the organization, and ultimately convert it into a vehicle for mass communist revolution.” In this theory, communists are thought to have developed a method of control using surrogates, both willing and unwitting, to actually hold the titular reins of power. See Chip Berlet and Matthew N. Lyons, “One Key to Litigating Against Government Prosecution of Dissidents: Understanding the Underlying Assumptions,” Police Misconduct and Civil Rights Law Report, in two parts, Vol. 5, No. 13, January-February 1998, Vol. 5, No. 14, March-April 1998, West Group; See also Chip Berlet, The Hunt for Red Menace: How Government Intelligence Agencies and Private Right-wing Counterrevolutionary Groups Forge Ad Hoc Covert Spies Networks that Target Dissidents as Outlaws, revised, (Cambridge: Political Research Associates, revised [1987] 1993). http://www.publiceye.org/huntred/Hunt_For_Red_Menace.html


207 According to PRA senior analyst Chip Berlet, the most persistent theoretical underpinning of the FBI’s COINTELPRO-era activity was the notion of the naive front controlled by communist infiltration, or COMINFLN in Bureau jargon. As told by author William W. Keller, the theory behind COMINFLN is that “Communist party members seek to infiltrate or join the ranks of legitimate organizations, rise to positions of leadership, establish effective control of the organization, and ultimately convert it into a vehicle for mass communist revolution.” In this theory, communists are thought to have developed a method of control using surrogates, both willing and unwitting, to actually hold the titular reins of power. See Chip Berlet and Matthew N. Lyons, “One Key to Litigating Against Government Prosecution of Dissidents: Understanding the Underlying Assumptions,” Police Misconduct and Civil Rights Law Report, in two parts, Vol. 5, No. 13, January-February 1998, Vol. 5, No. 14, March-April 1998, West Group; See also Chip Berlet, The Hunt for Red Menace: How Government Intelligence Agencies and Private Right-wing Counterrevolutionary Groups Forge Ad Hoc Covert Spies Networks that Target Dissidents as Outlaws, revised, (Cambridge: Political Research Associates, revised [1987] 1993). http://www.publiceye.org/huntred/Hunt_For_Red_Menace.html


228 Leiken and Brooke, “The Moderate Muslim Brotherhood.”

229 Samuel Helfont, “Politics, Terrorism, and the Sunni Divide,” Foreign Policy Research Institute (September 2009). http://www.fpri.org/enotes/200909.helfonts.sunnidivide.html The Muslim Brotherhood generally understands jihad as resistance to expansionist warfare and imperialism. According to Princeton University Area Studies Fellow Samuel Helfont, the Brotherhood does not consider domestic political violence to be jihad and it condemns attacks on other Muslims. However, the Brotherhood considers jihad to be legitimate is when it takes place on Muslim land that it deems occupied by a non-Muslim force (as in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestinian territories, Chechnya, and Kashmir). Brotherhood leaders have supported the use of suicide bombings, targeting civilians, and the use of women and children, once jihad has been declared.


232 In Future jihad, Dr. Phares refers to an article to Daniel Pipes in support of his argument regarding academic funding. Daniel Pipes, “Jihad: How Academics Have Camouflaged Its Real Meaning,” 141. See also, for example Julie Hollar and Jim Naureckas, eds., “Smearcasting: How Islamophobes spread fear, bigotry, and misinformation,” Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting (2008).


235 Phares, Future Jihad, 140, 147.

236 Phares, Future Jihad, 101-104, 166. Dr. Phares does not document the authors or progenitors of this expansionist strategy from Saudi Arabia. Inside the Saudi Arabia, the Sharia law would be applied in the most restrictive way. Pure Wahhabism would start at home. The jihad-shaped foreign policy of Saudi Arabia, in Phares’ view, consists of a sustained policy of financial and diplomatic support to Islamist networks around the world, within the framework of charities, mosques, hospitals, orphanages, and of course religious schools who are made up of several waves of Wahhabi sympathizers and adherents.


238 Phares, Future Jihad, 141.

239 Phares, Future Jihad, 178.


241 In Future jihad, Dr. Phares refers to an article to Daniel Pipes in support of his argument regarding academic funding. Daniel Pipes, “Jihad: How Academics Have Camouflaged Its Real Meaning,” 141. See also, for example Julie Hollar and Jim Naureckas, eds., “Smearcasting: How Islamophobes spread fear, bigotry, and misinformation,” Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting (2008).

242 Phares, Future Jihad, 106.


244 Ziad Munson, Interview with PRA, October 2010.

245 Counter Terrorism Communicates Center, Words that Work and Words that Don’t: A Guide for Counterterrorism Communication (March 14, 2008) http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/misc/127.pdf; Claire Lopez, “Jihadis Inside the Gate.” Human Events (January 6, 2010). http://www.human events.com/article.php?id=35078 In March 2008, the National Counter Terrorism Center released a document which called for substituting words such as “Islamic terrorist” and “global caliphate” with “violent extremists” and “global totalitarian state” in an effort to disassociate al Qaeda from mainstream Islam and avoid offending the broader Muslim community by using derogatory words of a non-Islamic nature to describe al Qaeda. United States Central Command Red Team, “Freedom of Speech in Jihad Analysis: Debunking the Myth of Offensive Words” (August 21, 2008). http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/misc/ 198.pdf However, an August report from U.S. Central Command refuted the NCTC findings and concluded that “we should avoid readily accepting the notion that criticism or notice of an Islamic tenet, such as jihad, by the U.S. Government is tantamount to the demonization of all Muslims or Islam.”

246 Lopez, “Jihadis Inside the Gate.”

247 Glazov, “CAIR and the FBI.”

248 Glazov, “CAIR and the FBI.”

249 Glazov, “CAIR and the FBI.”


251 Griffith, “Emerson Pulls Lid Off Stealth Jihad at TREXPO East.”

252 Complete list of CI Centre participant feedback, as published at www.cicentre.net, is made available by request on our website.

253 Richard English, Terrorism: How to Respond (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 12-14. Historian Richard English says, “It is grossly misleading to treat terrorism as a synonym for insurgency, guerilla warfare, or political violence in general.” English is the author of award-winning histories of the Irish Republican Army. According to English, Hezbollah has developed from a more conspiratorial, terrorist-style group into one also engaged in more conventional politics and enjoying much support (increasingly doing well in parliamentary elections as the 1990s turned into the 2000s). By the early 21st century, Hezbollah had become a lasting and serious political player in Lebanon; as a consequence, it was one which could not easily be pigeon-holed according to any narrow label.

Manufacturing the Muslim Menace

http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/dhs_crcl_terminology_08-1-08_accessi

265 Glenn Greenwald, “GOP House members call for investigation of Muslim political activity,” Salon.com (October 15, 2009). For example, Gaubatz and Sperry accuse CAIR of acts that are consistent with the political activism and lobbying of virtually every political advocacy group in the nation.


268 See also [insert reference].

269 Gaubatz, Speech delivered at 51st Annual Homeland Security Professionals Conference.


273 Clare Lopez, “SEALs Case Shows How Terrorists Use ‘Lawfare’ to Undermine U.S.” Human Events (March 8, 2010). http://www.humanevents.com/article.php?id=35934 States: “When frivolous lawsuits are brought against those who speak against Islamic jihad in an attempt to close down criticism of Islam altogether, that is lawfare. When the Organization of Islamic Conference sponsors a resolution that urges criminalization of any free speech that criticizes Islam, that is intended lawfare. When a Western government puts its own citizen on trial for ‘hate speech’ against Islam, as is happening right now in the Netherlands with the courageous and very popular Freedom Party leader, Geert Wilders, that is lawfare.”

274 Lopez, “SEALs Case Shows How Terrorists Use ‘Lawfare’ to Undermine U.S.”

Conversion may be marked by increased attention to religious observances (mosque attendance, prayer, fasting), more attention to religious programming and publications, or more emphasis upon Islamic dress and values.


Darwish, Cruel and Unusual Punishment, 256.


Jackson, “What is Sharia and Why Does it Matter?”


Feldman, “Why Sharia?”


For instance, many trainers refer to the work of Rachel Ehrenfeld, Director of the American Center for Democracy, on how Sharia-compliant financial transactions serve as a “Trojan Horse” for “civilizational jihad.” See, e.g., Henry Morgenstern, The Global Jihad in Ophir Falk and Henry Morgenstern, Suicide Terror: Understanding and Confronting the Threat (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2009), 40, fn. 42, citing Rachel Ehrenfeld, Funding Evil (Santa Monica: Bonus Books, 2003).

Jamie Glazov, “CAIR and the FBI,” FrontPage (June 23, 2009). http://archive.frontpagemag.com/readArticle.aspx?ART_ID=35334. Speakers, such as David Gaubatz, have used the term “pure Muslim” in a manner that connotes something sinister.

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2008), 157. See also Robert A. Pape, *Cutting the Fuse: The explosion of global suicide terrorism and how to stop it* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010). 81. Finds that most transnational suicide terrorists are not the products of long-standing inculcation in particular religious institutions.


Furthermore, as noted by Congressional Research Services in its 2010 survey of the “homegrown jihadist threat,” the actual risk to American lives from a domestic terrorist is minimal relative to other crime, disparate sources of terrorism, and by comparison to other periods of American history. Jerome P. Belpoera and Mark A. Randel, “American Jihadist Terrorism: Combating a Complex Threat” (Congressional Research Service, 2010), 7.


Bilal Kaleem, Muslim American Society, electronic correspondence to Thomas Cincotta (March 29, 2010).


Paul Shukovsky, “FBI Says Men in Ferry Photo were Innocent Sightseers,” *Seattle PI* (May 6, 2008). http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/local/361872_ferryterroror06.html

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Deputy Chief Donald O’Connor, Email to PRA (September 8, 2010). Four officers from MBTA attended “Suicide Terror and the Threat of Explosives” organized by Security Solutions International in 2008.


Annotated Glossary

Caliphate: The term caliphate refers to the first political system of government established in Islam, representing the political unity of the Muslim nation. The head of state (Caliph) and other officials rule according to Islamic law.

Jihad: To most scholars, religious leaders, and Muslims, the term jihad signifies a spiritual battle for personal salvation, the self-discipline to follow God’s will, to be better Muslims; it is a lifelong struggle to be virtuous. Counterterrorism commentators typically use jihadist or jihadi movement to describe the ideology and tactics of armed Islamic terrorist groups, such as al Qaeda and Lashkar-e-Taiba. Such groups have “exploited the idea of jihad to call for physical force, if necessary, in the struggle against all ideas, ideologies, and political institutions that they regard as alien to Islam.” Terrorism in the name of God has been practiced by the adherents of all major religions and by pseudo-religious sects; the use of the idea to justify non-defensive lethal attacks has been highly controversial within Muslim theological circles.

Jihad is also used to describe the Islamic community’s aims to spread the rule or abode of Islam globally through preaching, diplomacy, economic means, warfare, brutality, and infiltration. This hybrid view merges the broad acceptance of jihad as spiritual understanding with jihad as warfare and posits an existential threat to Western democracies and Christianity. Those who advance this view position jihadism as a core tenet of “true” Islam and either infer or assert that Islam is a terrorist religion.

Islamic Fundamentalism: Fundamentalists are found within the three major monotheistic faiths—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Muslim fundamentalists believe that the only remedy for the growing threat of the renunciation of Islam (apostasy) is to establish states governed exclusively by Sharia (the law of Allah). Fundamentalists focus their concern first on lax members of the faith community itself and see the world as sharply divided between true believers and corrupt sinners.

Islamism: Islamism or Political Islam refers to Muslim social movements and attitudes that advocate the search for more purely Islamic solutions to contemporary political, economic, and cultural issues. The terms fundamentalism, jihadism, and Islamic extremism are often and inaccurately used as synonyms and are avoided in this report, except when quoting or summarizing the views of others.

For many writers, Islamism connotes “stridently antagonistic Muslim attitudes toward the West, socially conservative and patriarchal attitudes, intolerance toward non-Muslims, and perhaps most fearfully for outsiders to Islamist causes, the ambition to establish Islamic law, Sharia, as a normative political goal.” Narrow insistence on implementing such beliefs across Muslim society has gained only limited Muslim support around the word, with more sympathy for conserving traditional Muslim values. Most Islamists support peaceful change.

Muslim Brotherhood: The oldest and most influential Islamist movement, founded in Egypt in 1928.

Radical Islam: Refers to Muslim individuals, groups, organizations, and parties that see in Islam a guiding political doctrine that justifies and motivates mobilization on behalf of that doctrine. They are radical because they reject accommodation with the existing order, refuse to participate in its institutions, and insist on the necessity of violent revolution or terrorism to achieve their objective. The long term stated goal of these radicals is to establish a new government based on Islamic law (Sharia) and unify the Islamic nation under a single Muslim ruler (khalifa or caliph).

Radical Islam has its origins in intellectuals and organizations that were not always radical or violent, but “above all, radical Muslims put forward an extreme interpretation of Islam to justify rebellion against the existing order,” according to Congressional Quarterly’s Encyclopedia of Politics and Religion. Radical Islamists believe that is an aggressive doctrine, not a defensive concept.

Salafism: A form of Islamic fundamentalism. The Salafi movement within the larger Muslim population comprises the most puritanical form of Sunni Islam and promotes the return to the original teachings of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. Salafis believe that the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad’s practices (the Hadiths, not later interpretations of these sources by Islamic scholars) are the most authentic
guidelines for the devout Muslim. Salafists seek to convert all Muslims and to insure their own version of Islam will dominate the world. Most Salafis do not engage in violence and do not support the terrorist acts of fellow Salafis.

However, today’s most dangerous and by far most numerous terrorist groups and cells are part of the Salafi movement. According to Mark Sageman, “Salafi ideology determines its [the violent Islamic terrorist movement’s] mission, sets its goals, and guides its practice.” The ideology of militant jihad at the core of the teachings and actions of al Qaeda is heavily influenced by the works of Salafists Ibn Taymiyya and Sayyid al Qutb. Osama bin Laden came to embrace the tenets of Qutb’s teachings, as did other leaders and followers in other violent terrorist organizations. Some argue that Salafists’ devotion to practicing Islam as it was practiced by Muhammed demonstrates that “jihadi doctrine” is a core tenet of Islam, rather than a misinterpretation of Islamic teaching.

Sharia: Sharia is the body of religious and legal prescriptions for the behavior of Muslims that derives in principle from the Quran and the example of the Prophet Muhammed. Sharia includes purely religious rules such as prayer and fasting (the human-creator relationship), and rules related to relationships between human beings. Compliance with religious rules is an individual responsibility. Sharia plays a varied role in shaping and legitimizing national legal systems, where it is applied through legislation, rather than on the basis of writings of the authoritative legal scholars. Codification has acted as an instrument of reform, where states have introduced changes in the law to eliminate some interpretations of the Sharia that were regarded as socially undesirable.

Taqiyya: Part of the Muslim Menace conspiracy theory includes the idea that Muslims are involved in large scale deceptive, or stealth, campaigns to further their belligerent faith. Taqiyya is the use of duplicity and dissimulation by Muslims as approved by Islamic law for defense in wartime. Usage of the term suggests that when moderate Muslims express peaceful views, these should be dismissed as deception. For example, Stephen Coughlin shares a joke “commonly told by those who have actually read Islamic law on jihad:”

A businesswoman returns early from a business trip and walks into her bedroom only to find her husband in bed with another woman. Caught completely by surprise, the husband jumps out of bed and calls to his wife: “Honey, who are you going to believe, me or your lying eyes?”

When extremist and fundamentalist Muslims express belligerent views, these are accepted as being “real Islam.”

Wahhabism: The most influential Salafis are Saudi clerics who preach an old version of Salafism called, Wahhabism, after an 18th Century movement named for its founder Muhammed bin Abd al Wahhab.

Endnotes

3 Juergensmeyer, Terror in the Mind of God, 148.
5 Martin and Barzegar, eds., Islamism: Contested Perspectives on Political Islam, 9.
6 Martin and Barzegar, eds., Islamism: Contested Perspectives on Political Islam, 9.
9 Encyclopedia of Politics and Religion, ed. 466.
11 Robert Pape, Cutting the Fuse: The Explosion of Global Suicide Terrorism and How to Stop It (Chicago: U. Chicago Press, 2010), 80-81.
13 Mark Sageman, Leaderless Resistance, quoted in Nacos, p. 90, fn. 60.
14 Encyclopedia of Politics and Religion, 824. For instance, Tunisia’s ban on polygamy and extra-judicial divorce.
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About the Civil Liberties Team

Project Director **Thomas Cincotta** heads PRA’s nationwide investigation of regional counterintelligence strategies. A criminal defense lawyer, he coordinated the Denver chapter of the National Lawyers Guild (NLG) in support of peace groups and other dissidents during the 2008 Democratic National Convention. He connected progressive lawyers with other community efforts around sentencing reform, immigrant rights, and police misconduct. He also represented migrant farm workers and served on the board of El Centro Humanitario, Denver’s first day laborer center. Cincotta currently serves on the NLG’s national executive board and international committee. Before becoming a lawyer, Cincotta worked as a labor representative for UNITE HERE Local 217 in Providence, Rhode Island.

**Tarso Luis Ramos** is Executive Director of Political Research Associates, a role he assumed after serving as PRA’s research director for three years. As research director, he focused on anti-immigrant groups and the rise of “colorblind” ideology. He also launched three new research projects—on civil liberties, right-wing attacks on mainstream churches, and Islamophobia and antisemitism on college campuses. Before joining PRA, he served as founding director of Western States Center’s racial justice program, which resists racist public policy initiatives and supports the base-building work of progressive people of color-led organizations. As projects director on civil liberties of the Wise Use Public Exposure Project in the mid-90s, he tracked the Right’s anti-union and anti-environmental campaigns.

Senior Analyst **Chip Berlet**, at PRA since 1982, has written, edited, and co-authored numerous articles on civil liberties, surveillance, and government repression for publications as varied as the *New York Times*, *Boston Globe*, *Utne Reader*, and *Amnesty Now*. He serves as a vice president of the Defending Dissent Foundation. Berlet spent several years as a paralegal investigator for lawsuits filed by the American Civil Liberties Union, National Lawyers Guild and other groups against the FBI, CIA, Military Intelligence, and local police Red Squads. His article on “Violence and Public Policy” appeared in the journal of *Criminology and Public Policy* special issue on terrorism. He also wrote the entry on “Surveillance Abuse” for the Encyclopedia of Crime and Punishment. Berlet is coauthor, with Matthew N. Lyons, of *Right-Wing Populism in America: Too Close for Comfort* published by Guilford Press (2000).

Program associate **Maria Planansky** is a member of PRA’s research team. In addition to managing the editorial, production, and communication outreach for “Manufacturing the Muslim Menace,” she coordinates the organization’s investigation into antisemitism and Islamophobia on college campuses. Before joining PRA as a staff member, she served as an editorial intern, assisting with *Public Eye*. In addition to her work with PRA, she covers the Boston music scene as a contributing writer at *Foundwaves* and helps out with the Family Folk Chorale and Independent Film Festival Boston.
About the Publisher

Political Research Associates (PRA) is a progressive think tank devoted to supporting movements that are building a more just and inclusive democratic society. We expose movements, institutions, and ideologies that undermine human rights, with a focus on the U.S. political Right. Political Research Associates seeks to advance progressive thinking and action by providing accurate research-based information, analysis, and referrals.

Political Research Associates
1310 Broadway, Suite 201
Somerville, MA 02144
Voice: 617.666.5300
Fax: 617.666.6622
www.publiceye.org