

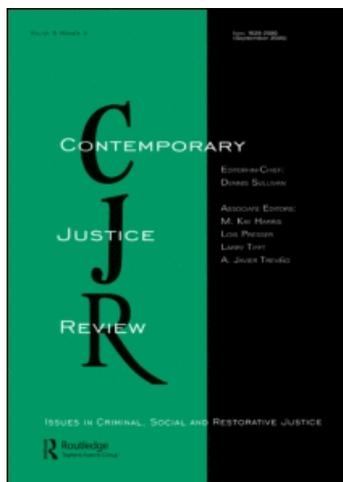
This article was downloaded by: [Gaskew, Tony]

On: 7 August 2009

Access details: Access Details: [subscription number 913759840]

Publisher Routledge

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## Contemporary Justice Review

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title-content=t713455187>

### Peacemaking criminology and counterterrorism: Muslim Americans and the war on terror

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Online Publication Date: 01 September 2009

**To cite this Article** Gaskew, Tony(2009)'Peacemaking criminology and counterterrorism: Muslim Americans and the war on terror',Contemporary Justice Review,12:3,345 — 366

**To link to this Article:** DOI: 10.1080/10282580903105913

**URL:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10282580903105913>

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## **Peacemaking criminology and counterterrorism: Muslim Americans and the war on terror**

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Few studies have used an ethnographic research methodology as a means of expanding the fundamental concepts of peacemaking criminology. Sixteen months of fieldwork among a Muslim-American community in central Florida, gathering data through participant observation and semi-structured interviews with 443 immigrant and indigenous Muslim Americans, reveal an increased climate of alienation, mistrust, anger, and fear toward law enforcement agencies, and concern on the part of some that the USA PATRIOT Act has diminished the likelihood of Muslim Americans cooperating with police agencies regarding potential terrorism. This paper also examines themes for improving domestic counterterrorism strategies, including the need for law enforcement agencies to make an effort to educate themselves on the basic tenets of Islam, along with its diverse customs and culture, to establish an open active dialogue with community members, and to sustain a relationship with the Muslim-American community based on the foundational concepts of mutual participation, respect, dignity, honor, and social justice.

**Keywords:** counterterrorism; peacemaking criminology; Muslim Americans; war on terror; USA PATRIOT Act

Today, an estimated six to seven million Muslims reside in the United States (Council on American-Islamic Relations [CAIR], 2006b, p. 4; Muslims in the American Public Square [Project MAPS], 2004; Pew Research Center, 2007, p. 11). This figure is only an approximation because the US census does not keep statistics based on religious affiliation. This population includes both immigrant Muslims from over 80 different countries and a significant community of indigenous or homegrown converts (CAIR, 2006a, 2006b; Pew Research Center, 2007). Immigrant Muslims make up the largest concentration (65%) of Muslim Americans, while African Americans represent the most significant (20%) indigenous population, which also includes a growing number of Hispanic and Anglo converts (CAIR, 2006b, p. 2; Pew Research Center, 2007, p. 15).

The majority of Muslim Americans are religiously diverse, married, and well educated with professional careers. Nearly half (49%) believe that mosques should keep out of political matters, compared to 54% of Christians surveyed who say churches and other houses of worship should express their political and social views (Pew Research Center, 2007, pp. 17–34). Seventy-eight percent of Muslims in the United States are married, over half (53%) earn more than \$50,000 a year, and the majority (60%) are college graduates (CAIR, 2006a, pp. 4–50; Project MAPS, 2004).

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According to the Pew Research Center (2007), although the majority of Muslim Americans are immigrants, they are highly assimilated into American society. Nearly half (47%) believe that Muslims coming to the US should try and adopt American customs, and a large portion of Muslim Americans reported that the majority of their friends are non-Muslim (Pew Research Center, 2007, pp. 17–34).

Although there is no clear party affiliation, the overwhelming majority (89%) of Muslim Americans vote regularly, celebrate holidays such as the Fourth of July (86%), and fly the US flag (64%) regularly (CAIR, 2006a, pp. 9–13). Findings from Project MAPS (2004) also suggest that the overwhelming majority of Muslim Americans want tougher laws to prevent terrorism (89%), support stronger gun control (79%), favor the death penalty for murder (68%), and want stricter environmental laws (92%).

### Islamaphobia

Despite these data suggesting that the majority of Muslim Americans hold similar mainstream religious, political, and family values, customs, and beliefs to non-Muslims, Muslim Americans continue to serve as the primary targets of the US post-9/11 war on terror. LeMay (2005) suggests that in the aftermath of 9/11, Muslim Americans have been subjected to an oppressive and discriminatory social environment, comparable to the treatment German and Japanese Americans received during World War II. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, the US government detained 110,000 persons of Japanese ancestry, two-thirds of whom were US citizens (Cole, 2003, p. 7). According to the CAIR (2005, p. 9), 1200 Muslim Americans were detained by law enforcement officials nationwide within the first two months after 9/11. Cole (2003, p. 25) conservatively estimates that domestic detentions of Muslim Americans have surpassed 5000.

Nationwide, for the calendar year of 2007, a total of 2652 civil rights complaints against Muslim Americans were processed, which included a 340% increase in law enforcement related passenger profiling complaints (CAIR, 2008, p. 5). Civil rights organizations, such as the National League of Cities (NLC), the American Conservative Union (ACU), the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Japanese American League (JAACL), and Veterans for Peace (VFP), place the blame for this significant rise in hate crimes squarely on the shoulders of anti-terror legislation such as the Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act, better known as the USA PATRIOT Act (CAIR, 2005, pp. 12–15).

According to Cole (2003, p. xxiii), under the USA PATRIOT Act special registration program over 80,000 men from predominately Arab and Muslim countries have been profiled, fingerprinted, photographed, and interviewed by US government officials. Cole (2003, p. xxiii) added:

The Arab and Muslim communities in the United States have been the targets of zero-tolerance immigration enforcement since 9/11, yet few if any terrorists have been identified and brought to justice through these efforts. Meanwhile thousands have been subjected to treatment that no one else – citizen or foreign national – has had to undergo.

The Pew Research Center (2007, p. 36) has reported that 74% of Muslim Americans believe the US's anti-terrorism policies single them out for increased surveillance and monitoring. However, many non-Muslims also believe these policies single out

Muslims. Nearly half (45%) of non-Muslims surveyed believe anti-terrorism policies target Muslim Americans; just over half overall (52%) indicated they were bothered by this (Pew Research Center, 2007, p. 37). The majority (63%) of the Muslim Americans surveyed felt that Americans are generally intolerant of Muslims (Project MAPS, 2004); 57% stated they knew of either family or friends who had experienced anti-Muslim discrimination (Project MAPS, 2004). The overwhelming majority (89%) of all Muslim Americans surveyed believed anti-Muslim discrimination was primarily displayed in terms of the hostility, distrust, racial profiling, and harassment perpetrated by law enforcement agencies around the country, and that the US government is actually fighting a war against Islam instead of against terrorism (Project MAPS, 2004).

## Methods

From August 2005 to January 2006, I conducted ethnographic fieldwork in two separate Muslim communities in Florida, gathering data through participant observations and semi-structured interviews. The participants were considered Muslims, based on observations and self-characterizations which include following the basic tenets of Islam: the *Qur'an*, *Hadith*, and the Five Pillars of Islam (which includes the *Shahadah*, *Salat*, *Zakat*, *Ramadan*, and *Hajj*). Most of the participants were associated with a recognized *masjid* and routinely attended Friday congregational prayer (*jummah*).

I conducted 443 interviews, and normally asked participants to expand on any particular behavior, custom, or ritual they mentioned, or statements overheard during my fieldwork encounters. I also made the following requests of each participant: 'What has been your greatest challenge as a Muslim living in the aftermath of 9/11?' and 'Has 9/11 impacted your general perception of law enforcement or the police?' I discovered throughout my fieldwork that these specific questions would inspire a wide variety of rich and diverse responses, providing each participant with an opportunity to share his or her own personal stories and perceptions of life as a Muslim in a post-9/11 world and their thoughts of law enforcement. For instance, while I was attending a community picnic sponsored by an Islamic community center, I asked one of my participants, Abdula, a Lebanese-American, why there were so many police officers in attendance, and he stated:

Well – one of the police officers said it was for our protection – come on – our protection – they're not fooling anyone – they're doing surveillance on us – why are they videotaping – we're with our families and children – look [pointing at a police officer with a handheld video camera] – this is what they do at the mosque on Fridays – but they're usually in undercover cars – they don't wave or even speak to us – they just stare at us – like we're a bunch of animals at the zoo – welcome to my life.

## *Interview participant demographics*

Of the interview participants, 434 were men and nine were women. All were adults and ranged in age from approximately 35 to 60. While 381 were immigrants, 62 were indigenous converts. The majority of the participants were professionally employed, and many owned and managed their own local businesses. All of the participants were fluent in English; however, many spoke at least one other language (including Arabic, Bosnian, Farsi, Punjabi, and Urdu).

The participants represented a wide range of ethnic and national backgrounds. The majority, 207, were of South Asian descent, while 155 were identified as Arab, 39

Table 1. Participant interview demographics.

Variable	Number ( <i>n</i> )	Mean (%)
Participants	443 (total)	
Immigrant	381	86.1%
Indigenous	62	13.9%
Gender		
Male	434	97.6%
Female	9	2.4%
Ethnicity		
Caucasian American	6	1.4%
African American	39	8.8%
Hispanic American	23	5.2%
South Asian	207	46.7%
Arab	155	34.9%
Guyanese	6	1.4%
Iranian	4	.9%
Sudanese	2	.5%
Bosnian	1	.2%

were African American, 23 were Hispanic American, six were Guyanese, six were Caucasian, four were Iranian, two were Sudanese, and one was Bosnian. However, generic ethnic categories do not reflect the true diversity of the participants. The following are just some of the countries of origin reported by the participants: Bosnia, Egypt, Guyana, India, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Pakistan, Palestine, Panama, Puerto Rico, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and the United States of America (see Table 1).

## Findings

### *The impact of the USA PATRIOT Act*

The overwhelming majority of the participants perceived their lives as being negatively impacted by anti-terrorism policies. Participants suggested the enhanced law enforcement powers incorporated within the USA PATRIOT Act and other US counterterrorism policies were directed solely at Muslim Americans. In fact, several of the participants pointed out a specific provision within the USA PATRIOT Act to support their perception: Section 102 of the USA PATRIOT Act (2007), entitled 'Sense of Congress Condemning Discrimination Against Arab and Muslim Americans'. The section emphasizes nine points directed at Muslims in the United States:

- (1) Arab Americans, Muslim Americans, and Americans from South Asia play a vital role in our Nation and are entitled to nothing less than the full rights of every American.
- (2) The acts of violence that have been taken against Arab and Muslim Americans since the September 11, 2001, attacks against the United States should be and are condemned by all Americans who value freedom.
- (3) The concept of individual responsibility for wrongdoing is sacrosanct in American society, and applies equally to all religious, racial, and ethnic groups.
- (4) When American citizens commit acts of violence against those who are, or are perceived to be, of Arab or Muslim descent, they should be punished to the full extent of the law.
- (5) Muslim Americans have become so fearful of harassment

that many Muslim women are changing the way they dress to avoid becoming targets. (6) Many Arab Americans and Muslim Americans have acted heroically during the attacks on the United States, including Mohammed Salman Hamdani, a 23-year-old New Yorker of Pakistani descent, who is believed to have gone to the World Trade Center to offer rescue assistance and is now missing.... (1) the civil rights and civil liberties of all Americans, including Arab Americans, Muslim Americans, and Americans from South Asia, must be protected, and every effort must be taken to preserve their safety; (2) any acts of violence or discrimination against any Americans be condemned; and (3) the Nation is called upon to recognize the patriotism of fellow citizens from all ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds.

Several of the participants believed that Section 102 clearly indicates the US government was fully aware law enforcement agents around the country would use the enhanced powers of the USA PATRIOT Act to target Muslim Americans specifically. Amir, a Lebanese American, explained:

How much clearer does it get – why even address this issue unless you already know it’s going to be a problem – so what message does this send to every Muslim living in the United States – that we [Muslim Americans] are the targets of this war on terror.

Jibrán, a Lebanese American, suggested:

It’s like having a disclaimer on a pack of cigarettes – they knew exactly the harm the PATRIOT Act would cause Muslim Americans – and they still allowed it to happen – this is an injustice.

Uddin, a Pakistani American, added:

The words in Section 102 of the PATRIOT Act clearly indicate a predisposition to target Muslim Americans – how can you see it any other way – if these laws were going to be applied fairly – why discuss the dangers against targeting Muslim Americans – please show me any other anti-terrorism bill in our history with the type of legal apology.

The participants also believed that the USA PATRIOT Act has created a social environment where the discriminatory treatment of Muslim Americans has become an acceptable part of the post-9/11 environment.

Abdul, a Palestinian American, believes the floodgates have been opened to demonize Muslims in the United States. He stated:

There should be no doubt in anyone’s mind – the PATRIOT Act is directed to humiliate Muslim Americans – it has provided a built-in reason to hate Muslims ... in fact – it’s a political tool used to demonize Muslims in America – that’s what makes it so painful at times – we are American citizens – what did we have to do with the attacks of 9/11 – the PATRIOT Act gave everyone a reason to fear Muslims – we became the bad guy in the war on terror.

Taair, a Lebanese American, explained:

The PATRIOT Act was designed to discredit Muslims in the US – come on – do you think we’re stupid – it’s insulting to think otherwise – this is not just my opinion – just ask any Muslim and they’ll tell you the same thing – and what makes it so bad is that nobody seems to care – we [Muslim Americans] have become the scapegoat of the US government.

Umar, an Indian American, added:

It's the Muslim American version of Jim Crow – the PATRIOT Act's purpose is target Muslims – nobody else – it makes us [Muslims] all terrorists in the eyes of the other American citizens – we [Muslims] are automatically guilty of terrorism – and when we [Muslim Americans] speak out against the PATRIOT Act – like any American citizen has a right – we [Muslims] are considered unsympathetic to those killed during 9/11 – but we are not to blame for 9/11 – I love this country just as if I was born here – and my son was born here in the United States ... and the treatment I've received because of the PATRIOT Act – has made me question my future – and the future of my family in America.

Several of the Muslim participants explained they firmly support aggressive law enforcement policies to target the perpetrators of the attacks on 9/11, along with anyone else involved in committing acts of terrorism around the world. In fact, many participants expressed open support for the use of intrusive law enforcement investigative powers, such as wiretaps and other electronic surveillance devices, as long as they were directed at those individuals responsible for the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. They felt many professionally-employed, college-educated, law-abiding Muslim-American citizens were unfairly targeted and held accountable for the events of 9/11. Jammal, a Lebanese-American businessman, explains:

Look – I support any effort to catch those responsible for 9/11 – I'm an American citizen – they impacted my life when New York was attacked – but go after them, not me, and every Muslim who calls America their home ... I'm not involved in any nonsense – so I'm not afraid of them [the US government] listening to my phone or opening my mail – but I want to be treated like any other American citizen – why target me if I've done nothing wrong.

Bilal, a Lebanese American, suggested:

I am the American dream – have a great education – great job – and a great family – so why target me ... I love this country – and would not be here if I didn't ... do I fit the profile of someone who would do that – this is just silly – it's about making Islam the enemy – nothing else – those responsible are not too hard to find – just look for the oil.

Faris, an Indian American, added:

By itself – the PATRIOT Act does not frighten me ... I have nothing to hide ... search what you want – but why should I accept being treated any differently than any other citizen in America.... I am an educated professional – and a loyal US citizen – and I demand to be treated like one – I should not have to tolerate being harassed – why are we [Muslim Americans] being held accountable for the actions of others ... in my opinion this goes against everything America stands for – freedom.

However, there is one aspect of the USA PATRIOT Act in particular which several of the participants perceived had caused the greatest harm to their lives: the Special Registration Program.

### *Singled out and alienated from society*

Many participants suggested that policies such as the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS), or what is commonly referred to as Special Registration, which was implemented throughout the United States in 2002, primarily in

support of the USA PATRIOT Act's enhanced powers regarding border and immigration control, had left them with a deep sense of fear and social alienation.

Participants reported staying locked in their homes for weeks at a time, fearful of being targeted for deportation or random acts of violence. Daris, a Pakistani-American storeowner, explained that wherever he and his wife went, whether to the corner grocery store or to their children's school, they would be subjected to vulgar comments or uncomfortable stares. He suggested:

We stayed in our home for weeks – I was afraid to go anywhere but work – I didn't know if they were going to try and deport us – and we're citizens – that's crazy ... I told my wife never to leave the house without me – and when we did go out – people would look at us and my daughter with this disgusting stare – and many times people would direct vulgar comments at me – calling me 'baby Bin Laden' or something – nobody would talk to me at work – nobody – even today – they whisper when I'm around – it's a horrible thing to deal with – nobody should have to be treated like this.

According to the Immigration Policy Center (IPC, 2004), NSEERS triggered a large-scale migration of Muslims out of the United States. A reported 20,000 Pakistani Muslims have left the US since the terrorist attacks on 9/11 (IPC, 2004, p. 7). Pakistani and Bangladesh Muslims are the most vulnerable populations for deportation because many immigrated to the United States less than a decade ago, unlike the well-established Muslims of Arab descent, more than 80% of whom are US citizens (IPC, 2004, p. 7). An estimated 14,000 Muslims in the United States have been placed into removal proceedings based on the Special Registration Program (IPC, 2004, p. 8).

Ghazi, a Pakistani American, felt the registration system was specifically designed to single out Muslims, and had caused a tremendous amount of fear and anxiety among the immigration Muslim population in the United States. Ghazi explained:

I remember Muslims going into interviews voluntarily – and not coming home for days – these were professionals – doctors – engineers – and they were being held and questioned for days only because they were Muslims – nobody knew what to think, you could be next – it caused a great deal of fear in the community for many Muslims ... America has been their home for years – and they were being deported and nobody really knew the specifics of these policies ... it was the worst experience of my life.

Imad, a Pakistani American, stated:

Come on – what about all the illegal Mexicans in Florida – if this policy is really about deporting illegals – why is it only people from Muslims countries had to register – what about Mexico – why wasn't it on the mandatory list – the government ignored them and selectively targeted Muslims – this is unforgivable treatment – many Muslims are professionals – they have wonderful friends and families – they prosper here – they obey all the rules and laws – for what – to be treated like an outsider ... by the government.

Mawdud, an Indian American, added:

I knew Muslims who lived in fear – afraid to go outside – scared they would be deported ... people were frozen – nobody was saying anything about it – how can you say the PATRIOT Act is not a war against Islam when it only impacts Muslims and worst of all – Muslim Americans who had nothing to do with the attacks – tell me what my 87-year-old father could possibly have to do with 9/11 but he was questioned anyway ... the

PATRIOT Act has devastated long-term relationships which took years to build with Muslim communities.

Participants reported refusing to go to social activities or even to their mosque for fear of being targeted for deportation, although they were American citizens. Participants suggested it was the 'unknown' which provided their greatest fear. Several participants reported not being aware of exactly how the registration process worked, and therefore thought the US government could begin the deportation process on any Muslim regardless of citizenship status. Several participants who served as *imams* or Muslim community leaders reported that following the attacks of 9/11 attendance at Islamic social events and mosques went into a sharp decline. Esmail, a Pakistani-American imam, explained that although attendance in *masjids* has steadily increased since 9/11, the deep fear and social alienation felt by Muslim communities has never dissipated. Esmail explained:

I've been here almost 20 years and I've never seen this type of fear from Muslims – especially from those who are US citizens ... after the attacks the mosques were empty – you have to remember nobody could anticipate the type of pressure being placed on Muslims – that we [Muslim Americans] would be the targets of this war on terror – as you can see – many of the Muslims who attend the mosque are professionals – doctors – engineers – teachers – highly educated – and for them to be afraid to come to the mosque – well – it sent a clear message that all Muslims should stay away and you have to remember – my role and the role of mosques have changed since 9/11 – we provide community services – counseling – guidance on family issues – a daycare for many children – services many immigrant Muslims in the community would never receive – so when they don't come to the mosque it impacts their entire lives.

Qasim, a Guyanese-American imam, added:

Muslims were so afraid and they still are today – especially immigrants – I remember the day of 9/11 – we had to lock the doors of the mosque because we were afraid of being attacked – hate crimes – I was so ashamed – this was the first time we had ever locked the doors of the mosque – we only opened them during the prayers – and I would lock them again once everyone was inside – I didn't know what else to do – I didn't know what the community would think.

Several of the participants reported being fearful of even openly discussing their feelings and perceptions of the USA PATRIOT Act with me, concerned the US government would somehow retaliate against them. Based on my observations, these fears were deeply ingrained within the immigrant population. The USA PATRIOT Act directly impacted my study, as participants refused to sign consent forms required for follow-up interviews. Many of the research participants were highly educated professionals and/or had established business and were community leaders, but became skeptical of signing any documents indicating their voluntary consent to participate in a formal interview. Several participants made correlations between signing the IRB consent forms and their Special Registration interviews. Early in the study, this behavior seemed a little unusual given the class and educational status of the participants; however, after listening to many of their stories, I have a much better understanding of their feelings of distrust and apprehension towards outsiders like myself. In fact, several participants believed the USA PATRIOT Act has hurt the war on terror, creating an atmosphere of severe distrust and animosity between Muslims in the United States and the law enforcement agencies which serve them.

### *Fear of law enforcement*

Many participants suggested that one of the most damaging impacts of the USA PATRIOT Act has been the near destruction of the relationship between Muslim Americans and law enforcement agencies. Participants felt that due to anti-terrorism policies such as the USA PATRIOT Act, they were being targeted, racially profiled, and harassed by overzealous police agencies. Several participants reported traffic stops by police officers for no apparent reason. Others reported that during these traffic stops, every vehicle occupant would be asked to provide proof of his or her US citizenship. Qasim, a Pakistani-American physician, described an incident where he was stopped by police in Orlando on his way to work:

I was stopped on Colonial Drive – the police officer would not explain to me why he stopped me – I told him that I was a physician and he said it didn't matter – he asked me to step out of my vehicle – I was then approached by someone who told me they were from immigration – they began to question me about my place of birth – they asked if they could search my car – it was so humiliating – I mean – I think there were at least five or six police vehicles there and they were just standing there and staring at me – and Colonial is a very busy road – so everyone was slowing down and looking – I was there for at least 30 minutes – and when they were finished nobody ever told me why I was stopped in the first place – this happened several years ago but I've never forgotten it – I don't trust the police anymore.

Tariq, Pakistani American, described a similar incident:

I was taking my son to school and an officer stopped me right in front of the school – the first thing he asked if I was a US citizen and when I replied 'yes' – he asked for proof – I looked at my son and he began to cry – the officer then asked me to step out of the vehicle – the children at my son's school were being dropped off – I can only imagine what they were thinking – another police car arrived and I asked what was going on – the officer told me it was routine procedure to have another car – I said it's routine to have two police officers when you stop someone with a child – the officers then asked me several questions on where I was born and such – after they were finished – I asked why I was stopped and one of them said it was just making sure I was a US citizen – now – how should I explain to my son what had happened – he asked me later if we were going to jail because of being Muslim – I don't want my children growing up in this type of environment – if we can't trust the police then who – and I don't trust the police here anymore.

Zayd, an African American, added:

I was stopped with my wife – she was wearing a *niquaab* – and the officer asked her to remove it – I asked why and the officer said he needed to see her face for identification purposes – I refused – another officer came up to my window and asked if my wife could remove her scarf and I refused again – I then asked why I was being stopped and the officer insisted that I had been speeding – I said okay so what does that have to do with my wife – she was not driving – the officer asked me if I was a US citizen and where I was born – when I replied that I am a US citizen and I was born right in Orlando – he just stared at me – I said to myself – yeah – I have a full beard – I'm wearing a *kufi* – my wife is wearing a *niquaab* – so we're easy to profile – I was disgusted – that stop forever changed how I will think about the police.

Other research participants suggested law enforcement agencies would commonly use threats of deportation in order to force them to 'spy' on fellow Muslims in the community. According to CAIR (2008), numerous complaints have been received,

alleging aggressive tactics including threats of deportation being used by various law enforcement agencies in Florida in order to force Muslims to become police informants. The Immigration Policy Center (2004) suggested that law enforcement agencies in Florida were among the most aggressive in the country regarding the enforcement of the new immigration policies under the USA PATRIOT Act.

Habib, a Pakistani American, explained that law enforcement agents approached him and suggested that unless he provided them with ongoing information on fellow Muslims, his elderly mother and father would be deported back to Pakistan. Habib stated that he refused their threats and filed an official complaint with CAIR. Habib explained:

When they [the police] first came to me, I thought they were kidding – I'm not going to provide information on other Muslims – I told them to ask them yourself – and do they think they can threaten me – to threaten to deport my parents – I just don't understand – it was very frightening to think this could happen in America but then I got very angry – I didn't do anything wrong – I'm a U.S. citizen – they don't have the right to threaten me – this is a violation of my civil rights – I'll tell you – there's no difference between the police forces in Pakistan and in the United States – I don't trust either of them.

Bakr, a Pakistani American, explained that he had been in a similar situation, and his confidence and trust in law enforcement had also diminished. Bakr added:

So this is what it's come to – this is the real war on terror – to threaten to deport my wife if I didn't work with them – the police said they could make it very hard for my wife to stay here if I didn't help them – I didn't think that was right – so I said no – I was scared at first – I was so afraid because I hadn't done anything – I told my friends and they said I should report it – and I did – I will never forget how they spoke to me – how they tried to threaten me – it makes me very angry to even speak about it now – I will never trust the police.

Other participants told how law enforcement agents routinely visited them in their places of employment. Mabad, an African American, explained how law enforcement agents had come to his place of business attempting to recruit him as an informant. Mabad believes the intent of the officers was to embarrass him in front of his co-workers and possibly get him fired from his job if he refused. He explained:

They would come and approach me at work – two or three of them – and give me their business cards and ask if I had any information – I told them I don't involve myself with the types of people who would do anything like that – they asked me if I would like to work for them and give them information – I told them no – but they kept coming back – I thought I was going to get fired because everyone at work started looking at me funny – like something was going on – I've got a wife and kids – do you what it feels like to be scared to come to work – and sure enough a few weeks later my boss fired me – he said he didn't want that kind of attention – and that I must be doing something wrong if the police keep coming by anyway.

Radi, an Indian American, described a similar incident:

They [the police] came to my job and started asking me all these questions – it was embarrassing – I didn't know what to do – everyone was staring at me – like I was one of the people responsible – and they asked me to call them later – to work for them – I didn't know what to do – they came back again and asked me the same questions – I told them to stop coming to my job because I'm going to get fired – I told them I didn't know anything – they kept asking me questions – if I would be

willing to work for them – I told them no – but they kept calling my job – how can you trust the police after that.

Several participants acknowledged that they had lost all respect for and trust in law enforcement agencies since 9/11 and would avoid contacting them regardless of the circumstances, including potential criminal investigations concerning acts of terrorism. The Immigration Policy Center (2004) has reported similar findings, suggesting that Muslim women are less likely to report acts of domestic violence and that many Muslims were even afraid to seek routine medical treatment because of their fear of law enforcement. Yafi, a Lebanese American, stated:

I wouldn't call the police – no matter what – even another 9/11 – why – to be harassed and embarrassed again – it comes down to trust and I don't trust the police any more – and I don't think I ever will again.

Taban, an Indian American, explained:

It's just wrong – I love this country and everything it stands for but I don't trust the police anymore – they harassed me and my family – they pulled us over because we were Muslim – that's it – no other reason – I have worked in this country for 25 years and this is how I'm treated.

Dameer, a Lebanese American, suggested:

It's just not worth it – I just don't want a problem – why should I call the police – so they can show up at my door and arrest me or my family – for nothing – something made up – this is not the United States I know – I wouldn't call the police for anything now.

Ghalib, a Pakistani American, added:

Sorry – fear is a big thing in the Muslim community – remember many of us come from countries where the police are very corrupt – it's the baggage we came to America with – and when I see this here – it reminds me of what I left behind – what I didn't want my children to be raised around but it's becoming the same here – no – I'm just too afraid of the police – I just don't want any trouble for my family.

### ***The Muslim American role in the war on terror***

Several participants suggested that the negative treatment they had received post-9/11 had clarified their roles in the war on terrorism. Participants explained that their roles should be more in line with their Islamic foundation. Malik, a Pakistani American, suggested that Muslim Americans should not take an active role in 'hunting down' fellow Muslims, but should follow the example set by the Prophet Muhammad. Malik also believes the USA PATRIOT Act will have a long-term negative impact on the next generation of Muslims in the United States. Malik explained:

Our role in the war on terror must be excellent role models – role models for the entire world – following the example of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) – Muslim Americans can be the best role models because of our freedoms but the PATRIOT Act has made many Muslims bitter – they have gone back into their homes – they are only talking to other Muslims – this is the worst thing that could have happened – if we go back into our own world – a separate community – where there is no interaction between Muslims and non-Muslims – it only makes matters worse – I have friends who

believe ‘Muslims should not be trying to hunt down other Muslims – this is matter for the police – not Muslims – and I don’t know how this will affect the next generation of Muslim Americans – it might be like it is in France or Great Britain – nobody wants that and these young people are angry – they are taking a much stronger traditional Islamic stance – and the funny thing is – the more the government targets Muslims – the more resentment it creates – Muslims are less inclined to become involved if they are being treated poorly – I think the PATRIOT Act has hurt the war on terror.

Faris, a Saudi American, added:

The best thing Muslims could do in this war on terror is become role models – following the example set by the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) – I don’t believe we are responsible to do anymore.

Jakeem, an Indian American, believes Muslim Americans are the key to the war on terrorism because of their principles of social justice, the moral duty of humanism, equity, and peace, even if it results in creating conflicts with fellow Muslims; however, the USA PATRIOT Act has left Muslim Americans so humiliated that they are less inclined to involve themselves in the type of self-reflection required to cooperate against other Muslims. Jakeem explained:

What are the expectations of Muslim Americans in the war on terror – Muslim Americans are the key to this war on terror because of the great love we have for America – and because of our moral obligation for compassion, mercy, and social justice – which were violated on 9/11 – but the PATRIOT Act humiliated Muslims so badly – it made Muslims here feel so un-American – so what’s the point of helping – the PATRIOT Act is creating feelings of rejection and oppression – these are the exact feelings many Muslims were trying to escape from in their countries of origin – and they come here and find the same type of treatment – many Muslim Americans feel as though their honor was questioned – their dignity is gone – they feel humiliated ... Muslims will not help under these conditions – to target Muslim Americans was the worst thing to do – we are not radicals – we support the US on many issues – we are not the enemy – let me ask you – do you think more Muslims will help in this so-called war on terror after being treated like this – or will they begin to just ignore the issue ... they will just ignore the issue and go back into their homes and hide for another 20 years – this is what the PATRIOT Act has done.

Sami, a Bosnian American, stated:

The only role Muslim Americans can play in the war on terror is to set an example of how to properly conduct themselves as Muslims – an example set by the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) – we must be role models – you see – I converted in Bosnia – but I could not practice Islam until coming to the United States – I was persecuted in Bosnia – but look – Muslims cannot compromise Islam for the West – we should not try and make excuses for the actions of every Muslim in the world ... there are acts of violence being committed by all people – Muslim, Christian, Jewish – and we should not be singled out and become apologists – whoever commits a crime should be punished – but I cannot speak for the acts of others – whether Muslim or not I cannot see into their hearts – I do not know the pain and suffering they may have been subjected to in their lives – so why subject us [Muslim Americans] to the same pain ... we have done nothing to deserve this type of treatment – the PATRIOT Act – whoever created the PATRIOT Act did not understand Islam – you cannot scare Muslims into cooperating – you cannot humiliate Muslims into helping – I love this country – but my role is not to spy on other Muslims – many of us come from countries where we were treated far worse – all this does is isolate Muslims – they just don’t come out of their homes – unless it going to the

mosque – or holidays – do you think this helps or hurts the war on terror – you cannot disrespect the Muslim community and expect them to welcome you with open arms – this is the results of the PATRIOT Act – the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) is our role model – to follow his example is our only role in the war on terror.

Kasim, an African American, added:

The PATRIOT Act is not fighting a war on terror – but a war on Islam – what’s the purpose – to shame and humiliate the most educated and wealthiest Muslims in America into cooperating with the government – impossible – anyone who understands Islam knows this is a failed strategy – I love this country – I served in the military – but they [the US government] can’t tell me about Islam or how to be a Muslim – I’ve got a great suggestion – how about treating Muslim Americans with the same respect that all US citizens are afforded – how about asking for our guidance – our help – nobody supports these criminals or others like them – so why treat us all as if we are criminals – the PATRIOT Act has alienated Muslims – whoever created the PATRIOT Act don’t understand Islam – this is a closed community already – and the PATRIOT Act may have shut the doors forever – there is no trust anymore – the PATRIOT Act has given some Muslims – who are already very critical of the US policy a perfect reason not to help – and it’s given the other Muslims – who would normally cooperate – a moment of pause – should they support the government which is targeting Muslims – here in America – or will they just ignore the issues – the PATRIOT Act suggests if you cooperate – you’re a good Muslim – if not – you’re a bad Muslim – ridiculous – but that’s how many Muslims feel – like they have to choose sides – Muslims will not choose sides – and if you force me to choose sides – I choose Islam – and so will every other Muslim in America – regardless of race or gender – whether they were born in the United States or not doesn’t matter – there is not debate on this issue – these circumstances – the PATRIOT Act only clarified this – Muslims will just remain neutral – silent – no matter what they hear or see – they will not call the police – now tell me – is the PATRIOT Act winning the war on terrorism?

Although the participants perceived their role in the war on terror to be to follow the example set by the Prophet Muhammad, which is consistent with Ramadan’s (2004) analogy of the Muslim identity, they were reluctant to explain the exact role to which they were referring. The *Hadith* reports that the Prophet Muhammad exhibited many roles in his life, including a messenger of God, husband, father, businessman, mediator, politician, and military leader. Ramadan (2004) suggests Muslims will act according to the teachings of Islam, regardless of the environment.

### *A loss of respect, honor, and dignity*

Many of the participants suggested that the most damaging impacts of the USA PATRIOT Act were the deep feelings of shame, guilt, and humiliation they were forced to endure in what many Muslim Americans perceived as a ‘government-supported’ Islamophobic social environment, specifically in their negative interactions with law enforcement authorities. According to Ramadan (2004, p. 88), recognition of family is part of the essence of a Muslim’s relationship with the Oneness of God and the obligation for social justice. According to Nasr (1994, 1995) and Esposito (1999), honor and family are characteristics which are inseparable from Islam. Ahmed (2003, p. 140) argued that the loss of honor is one of the root causes of violence, to which no society is immune.

Parvez, a Lebanese-American high school teacher, believes the USA PATRIOT Act was written specifically to humiliate Muslim men in order to destroy the Muslim family structure. Parvez stated:

We've [Muslim men] been humiliated in so many ways because of the PATRIOT Act – in front of our wives – in front of our children – there is nothing lower in life than this – and the shame that follows – and for what – to humiliate a Muslim man – is to destroy the Muslim family.

Nasir, an Indian American, explained:

Many Muslim men lost their jobs as a result of 9/11 – in many traditional Muslim families – men are the primary income in the house – what do you think happened when we [Muslim men] lost our jobs – no rent – no food – nothing – what does this do to the family – it's destroyed – remember many Muslims do not have their extended families here in the United States – they are on their own so there is nobody to go to – but the mosque and we were too afraid to even go there – if you take a man's honor – what does he have left – nothing.

Asir, a Pakistani American, added:

Muslims lived in fear of being deported at the drop of a hat – do you understand how it feels to be mailed a letter from the government – singling you out as a Muslim and being told to report to immigration for an interview concerning terrorism – how do you explain that to your children – it's worse than humiliating and as a Muslim man – to know they're targeting you for nothing – I love this country – so why me?

Faruq, a Pakistani-American imam, suggested that no environment was safe from humiliation and shame for Muslim men, including the mosques. Faruq explained how law enforcement agents would enter the mosques in an attempt to conduct interviews, showing very little respect for and courtesy towards Muslims or the Islamic customs of the mosque. He explained:

I don't understand – why would you come into a mosque – understanding its significance for Muslims – to speak with someone – we [Muslims] respect the authority of the law but they must also respect the authority of God – sometimes they would come in and you could see their guns – and wearing shoes – standing inside the prayer room – this shows they have no respect for Muslims or of Islam – this is done to strip us [Muslims] of our honor – our dignity as men.

Hussein, a Saudi-American imam, stated:

To enter a mosque in this way – shows no respect for us [Muslims] – the mosque is the center of our community – this is where prayer is held – it is where we bring our families – our small children – so when this type of humiliation occurs – the entire community is shamed – the entire community losing respect – this is a serious matter – one I don't think has been thought out well – how do you regain your honor – many have decided to return to their countries – others just remain silent in their homes – they no longer have an investment in this country – they feel as though they've been fooled this entire time into thinking they were really being accepted as equals in America and they found out they weren't – they found out they didn't matter – how do you repair this – and we haven't even begun to discuss how this impacts young adults or children – what respect will they have for those responsible for taking their honor – this is a very serious matter and I don't think they understood the long-term results of this humiliation on Muslim Americans – it doesn't stop with us – it goes onto our children as well.

Taqi, an African-American imam, added:

There is no rational explanation to come inside a mosque to interview someone – other than to humiliate them – as a man – and to show how little respect you have for Muslims

or Islam – can you give me an answer – and nobody is held accountable – they [the police] can just come in as they please and just disrespect Muslim men – what if this happened in a church or a synagogue – can you imagine the public outrage – but nobody cares because it’s Muslims – we’ve been rendered voiceless – but the pain doesn’t go away – to lose one’s dignity – how do you get that back – a great deal of trust has been lost – maybe forever – but it doesn’t end here – what do you tell children – you would think we went backwards – to the 1960s – when people were openly treated as unequal – how can you not be angry – we are not animals.

Several of the participants continued to comment on the unknown impact the perceived feelings of shame, humiliation, and anger produced as a result of the USA PATRIOT Act would have on Muslim American youth. Abu, a Lebanese American, believes the shame and loss of respect brought on by anti-terrorism policies such as the USA PATRIOT Act have produced a great deal of anger and frustration among Muslim American youth. Abu suggested that, unlike the older generation of Muslim Americans like himself, Muslim youth today are manifesting their feelings of shame and humiliation as anger. Abu explained:

You know – I don’t really understand what they were thinking with the PATRIOT Act – it’s impacted our youth as well – our children were born here but they saw a different side of America the last six years – and it’s making them very angry – it concerns me because I know what anger and frustration can do – it’s not good – but only time will tell – one thing’s for sure – they will not be as tolerant as their parents – they are much more vocal – they are not afraid of the government or the police – it’s forced our children away from their American roots – and they are American – but they’re becoming more rooted in our [the Muslim parents’] past – before 9/11 my children hardly called themselves Lebanese – but now it’s different – they are proud to tell you they are Lebanese – but it concerns me because this is how extremism happens it’s baby steps at first – just talk – and then it controls you – I’ve seen it in Lebanon with the Muslim youth – our children have never lived under our hardships in our homes – but they act as though they feel the pain of generations – and this can’t be good – this is what shame and humiliation does.

Yasir, a Lebanese American, suggested:

The Muslim youth today are different – they were born right here in the United States – and are not going to tolerate their rights being violated – it’s weird – my son was born here – but he acts like he was born in Lebanon – he acts more Lebanese than I do [laughing] – and his friends are the same – the shame and humiliation he’s endured in school – and what he’s seen my generation go through the last several years – it looks like it’s forced him to become more of a Muslim – if that makes sense – it’s made him connect with his own ethnic culture – he’s American – but he’s clearly a Muslim first – then Lebanese – then American – he’s paying much more attention to international issues involving Muslims – I considered sending my son away from the United States for a while – to see a different way of life – but I’m afraid of what might return – you see – the PATRIOT Act has done much more harm than good – and we are left to deal with it as parents – and the thing is – I cannot defend what the government has done to us – I can’t tell my son oh, it’s okay, because it’s not – they are educated – they compare their pain to the same pain Muslim youths are feeling around the world.

Hermansen (2005, p. 306) believes that as a result of the post-9/11 anti-Muslim climate, Muslim American youth have taken an extremely conservative ‘internationalist’ identity, becoming very rigid regarding the ideological teachings of the *Qur’an* and *Hadith*, negating any progressive interpretations of the traditions, beliefs, and values of Islam. The ideological premise for this internationalist identity is the utopian perspective that ‘true’ Islam is superior to everything else, and an Islamic state needs

to be re-imposed to make the world a better place in which to live. Hermansen (2005, p. 306) states: 'Muslim American youth are moving in a direction that negates interpretation and diversity altogether, one that rejects historical development and cultural content.'

Hermansen (2005, p. 309) adds that the post-9/11 environment has alienated Muslim American youth, somehow encouraging them to embrace a 'culture-free' militant vision of Islam. Hermansen (2005), a Muslim American herself, explained that several of the Muslim American students she has encountered on her campus in Loyola, where she serves as Professor of Islamic Studies, 'seemed to feel vindicated by the destruction and loss of life on September 11 ... twisting their understanding of their own situation and history to welcome such an event as payback' (p. 307).

### **A paradigm shift: peacemaking criminology**

The use of criminal investigative tactics based on secrecy, intimidation, and manipulation, which are highly successfully when targeting violent drug trafficking gangs or organized crime in the United States, are not effective for domestic counterterrorism investigations within Muslim American communities. In fact, these tactics have created a destructive barrier between law enforcement agencies and Muslim American communities, weakening long-term counterterrorism efforts. In order to address underlying post-9/11 concerns regarding alienation, fear, humiliation, and the perceived loss of respect, honor, and dignity facing the Muslim American community, a paradigm shift in domestic law enforcement counterterrorism strategies is required. This paradigm shift must be based on the fundamental principles of peacemaking criminology.

Since its inception by Pepinsky and Quinney (1991), peacemaking criminology has struggled to find its place in the vast crime control-driven world of the criminal justice system. In fact, critics have often labeled peacemaking criminology as an idealistic utopian vision lacking empirical credibility. However, I argue that in today's post-9/11 climate, the underlying principles of peacemaking criminology, inspired by Fuller's (1998) multi-level implementation strategy, can strengthen current crime control-modeled anti-terror policies in the United States. Peacemaking criminology's unique emphasis on the use of humanism, connectivity, and social justice make it the ideal foundation for a domestic counterterrorism strategy, specifically within Muslim American communities. In this regard, peacemaking criminology must be perceived by law enforcement agencies as a crime control tactic, designed to create a sincere, honest, and cooperative relationship between Muslim Americans and law enforcement agencies, in order to enhance counterterror efforts. Law enforcement agencies can use the tactical concepts found in peacemaking criminology to address the perceptions of police-instigated oppression, alienation, and injustice expressed by Muslim Americans: only when these 'invisible' issues are truly addressed will Muslim Americans feel confident under the humanistic banner of social justice to participate in domestic counterterrorism efforts.

### ***Tactical concepts***

Under the framework of peacemaking criminology, in order to improve the damaged relationship between police and Muslim American communities in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, law enforcement agencies around the country must first accept two fundamental tactical concepts:

- (1) The global war on terrorism cannot be won without the cooperation of Muslims in the United States.
- (2) Muslim Americans are the key to successfully defeating extremism and the potential growth and practice of radical political Islam within the United States.

Without clear understanding of, acknowledgment of, and commitment to these two tactical concepts, police agencies will continue to promote unintentionally a cycle of structural violence, and Muslim Americans will continue to perceive the bulk of counterterrorism efforts as being directed towards their families and Islamic communities despite the sincere efforts of law enforcements agencies to persuade them otherwise. Counterterrorism strategies should be based on the premise of building genuine, sincere, and trusting long-term relationships with Muslim Americans in order to open the channels of human intelligence. No matter how law enforcement agencies may perceive Muslim Americans in the aftermath of 9/11, they must recognize that Muslim Americans are the resident experts on Islam in the United States, and the only reliable eyes and ears for law enforcement in their often exclusive communities. Once these long-term relationships have been established, law enforcement agencies will be able to appeal to the moral obligation and duty of all Muslims in their quest for social justice, which is critical in confronting the minority of Muslims who choose to advocate for extremism and violence within the practice of Islam.

In order for this paradigm shift to begin, high-level command officers, special agents in charge, sheriffs, and police chiefs must set the tone. They must provide clear leadership and guidance, promoting a philosophy which encourages and actively involves rank-and-file officers to understand the significant role Muslim Americans can play in the war on terror. They must convince their respective police officers that every single contact with a Muslim in the United States, regardless of whether that Muslim is of immigrant or indigenous origin, creates an ally, a neutral supporter, or a foe against the war on terror and radical extremism in the practice of Islam. The interpersonal relationships, actions, and behaviors of law enforcement agencies play a critical role in how Muslim Americans see themselves in this global war on terror.

By accepting the two fundamental tactical concepts noted above as nonnegotiable truths, law enforcement agencies will be obligated to do everything in their power – morally, ethically, and tactically – to create an environment conducive to obtaining cooperation from the Muslim American community. Under the fundamental framework of peacemaking criminology, law enforcement agencies must commit themselves to the concepts of humanism, interpersonal connectivity, and social justice, in order to rebuild their relationship with Muslim Americans. This strategy can be implemented in a three-part process, involving understanding, dialogue, and participation.

### *Understanding*

Law enforcement agencies must begin by immersing themselves in the history, traditions, values, and practices of Islam. This task cannot be completed by taking an eight-hour training block or seminar on Islam in a specialized law enforcement school, by watching a two-hour video telecast on the life of the Prophet Muhammad, or by listening to a local imam speak about the ‘truths’ of Islam during a 30-minute roll-call lecture. There is no ‘quick fix’ for this issue.

Ghazzi, a Lebanese American, believes that only though a fundamental understanding of the basic tenets of Islam, which includes the *Qur’an* and *Hadith*, will the

police be able to make a connection with the Muslim American community. Ghazzi stated:

Understanding the *Qur'an* and *Hadith* is the start – without a detailed understanding of these texts no relationship can be forged with the Muslim community – police still don't understand this concept – they think memorizing a few verses from some training manual makes them experts on Islam – you see – this has always been the misconception of police – and it reflects in their poor relationship with Muslims today.

Khaleel, an African American, suggested:

Police must understand and respect the importance of the *Qur'an* in the lives of Muslims – it is the word of God and police simply lack this basic and fundamental understanding – this is where the relationship between police and Muslim Americans must begin.

Sameer, a Pakistani American, added:

It begins with understanding the core texts of Islam – the *Qur'an* and *Hadith* – if the police can't get past this issue – they will never understand Islam – these texts dictate Muslim behavior and core identity – the history of Islam is contained in these texts.

The process of understanding Islam first requires a thorough and detailed erudition of the foundational Islamic texts and principles, including the *Qur'an*, *Hadith*, and *Shariah*, along with the Five Pillars. Reading and understanding the *Qur'an* is simply mandatory in this initial process. There are also numerous courses offered at local universities throughout the United States specializing in Islamic studies, where law enforcement agencies can obtain a solid historical background on the core principles of Islam. Law enforcement agencies must also understand the ethnic diversity and complex relationships in the Muslim American community, as well as with their unique cultural practices of Islam.

For the past decade, law enforcement agencies around the country have participated in mandatory 'cultural diversity' training as a direct by-product of accusations involving racial profiling, primarily of African-American and Hispanic-American communities. Although all Muslims share the same foundational texts (*Qur'an* and *Hadith*) regarding Islam, law enforcement agencies must understand that they do not share the same cultural practices of Islam. Muslim communities separate themselves in terms of race, ethnicity, and national identity. Understanding the complex social relationships between Muslims in the United States is crucial to building a sustainable long-term relationship with the community. Law enforcement agencies must have the motivation to reach out and work in conjunction with academic institutions for guidance in matters of cultural and ethnic discourse on the Muslim American community.

There are also dozens of outstanding books on the Islamic diaspora which could facilitate this learning process. Creating an 'Islamic library' would be an excellent investment for police agencies and would provide a setting grounded in practical scholarship, which is long overdue. As in any process of change, having the ability to 'think outside the box' will serve as a powerful advantage to law enforcement agencies.

This process will take time, patience, and a great deal of dedication on behalf of law enforcement agencies – the key component is that police agencies must educate themselves thoroughly on the basic textual sources (*Qur'an* and *Sunna*) and unique

cultural practices of Islam. They must have a clear understanding that Islam is not just a religion; it is a way of life for 1.4 billion Muslims worldwide, and an estimated seven million Muslims in the United States. Law enforcement agencies cannot build a relationship with Muslim Americans without first understanding the foundational texts of Islam.

### *Dialogue*

Armed with a basic understanding of Islam, dialogue is a natural extension of this understanding and involves having open and honest discussions with Muslim Americans on both the individual and community levels. According to Ramadan (2004, p. 210), dialogue involves four essential components:

- (1) Recognition of the legitimacy of each other's convictions and respect for them.
- (2) Listening to what people say, and not what we understand or want to understand from them.
- (3) The right, in the name of trust and respect, to ask all possible questions, sometimes even the most embarrassing.
- (4) The practice of self-criticism, and deciding clearly what our personal position is on issues of great importance.

These components provide a framework within which trust and respect can be established between Muslim Americans and law enforcement agencies. The type of dialogue being recommended can create an environment in which law enforcement agencies have the opportunity to see the world through the eyes of the Muslim American community. Empathy plays an important role in transforming and resolving conflicts. To initiate this type of dialogue, I recommend creating a Muslim American Outreach Unit (MAOU) in each law enforcement agency, which would serve as the official police point of contact on all matters which impact the Muslim community. This unit would be dedicated to opening communication channels and improving dialogue between the Muslim community and the police.

Kalid, a Palestinian American, believes that constructive dialogue between the police and Muslim American communities is an essential component of rebuilding their damaged relationship. He stated:

Police need to speak with the Muslim community – not at us – this should not come as a surprise – constructive dialogue is an essential component at sustaining any relationship and it's an absolute necessity if a rebuilding effort will take place between Muslim Americans and police.

Hamza, a Palestinian American, suggested:

It's funny – you want to know how important dialogue is – I have never met a single police officer in my life who speaks Arabic – now I know there are some so don't take this wrong – I speak English – but for some Muslims in my community – learning to speak Arabic is a matter of respect – so when police don't even make an effort to understand these dialogue nuances – it's perceived as disrespectful – this is the importance of dialogue.

Dawoud, a Pakistani American, added:

Dialogue is the primary instrument of communication – police must make a concerted effort at establishing a proactive dialogue with the Muslim community – a dialogue that

focuses on honesty and respect – not one that is one-sided – when they [police] need some information – but dialogue that focuses on mutual interests – and problems in the community – Muslims must be able to benefit from this dialogue.

I recommend creating a Community Relations Council (CRC), consisting of individuals from the Muslim, law enforcement, local NGO, and city government communities. This council would have meetings open to the general public and would serve as a platform where Muslims could voice their feelings and concerns on issues impacting their lives. The council would provide the Muslim community and police with the opportunity to develop a shared list of concerns and goals, and a better understanding of what is expected in their relationship. The power of dialogue sets the tone for mutual respect, trust, and reconciliation (Sacks, 2004; Sonn, 2004; Wolfensohn, 2004).

Again, the process of dialogue will not be easy and will take a considerable investment in terms of time, patience, resources, and ultimately courage from police agencies. Various civic groups will accuse law enforcement agencies of ‘catering’ to the special interests of the Muslim American community, so leaders within the law enforcement community must be steadfast and explain the advantages of creating an environment of open communication with the Muslim community. In order to be effective, these dialogues must reflect a genuine, sincere, and passionate effort to build a bridge of communication and understanding with Muslim communities, many of which comprise dozens of diverse ethnicities and cultures. If these dialogues are perceived by the Muslim community as just another transparent public relations effort, such as ‘community policing’, or as just an intelligence gathering exercise, the process will ultimately fail (Roberg, 1994; Trojanowicz, 1994).

### **Participation**

Finally, after establishing a thorough understanding of Islam and developing a climate in which Muslim communities can participate in constructive and honest dialogues about issue of concerns, law enforcement agencies will be able to create an inclusive environment in which they can actively participate in the daily lives of Muslims. The process of participation allows law enforcement agencies the opportunity to apply their enhanced understanding and knowledge of Islam and immerse themselves in the fabric of a Muslim community.

Participation – human interaction – is the central process for establishing and building social relationships; thus, it becomes a central component in shaping human behavior. Participation is the crucial stage where law enforcement agencies can work with the Muslim American community on counterterrorism efforts. At this level, law enforcement agencies will be able to appeal to the moral obligation and duty of all Muslims in their struggle (*jihad*) for social justice for all humankind. This moral obligation for social justice is paralleled by the components of safety/security and freedom. This moral duty allows Muslims to take a critical stance and confront other Muslims who choose to use extremism and violence within the practice of Islam. In my opinion, this will be the pinnacle of counterterrorism efforts in the United States.

In order to convince Muslims that they are not the sole target of the war on terror, law enforcement agencies must begin to participate in their lives from a humanistic perspective. Many of these Muslim participants perceive law enforcement agencies as oppressors of human rights, with every personal contact centered on targeting them as

potential terrorists. Law enforcement agents must be perceived as positive contributors to the collective Muslim community.

It is at this level that law enforcement agencies will finally be able to see Muslim Americans as a population struggling to make sense of their lives in the aftermath of 9/11. Muslim Americans will begin to see clearly their new roles as Muslim American citizens. Participation will provide Muslim Americans with the ability to see the entire world under the premise of the collective *ummah* where social justice reigns supreme.

Seyyed, a Pakistani American, believes active participation in the Muslim American community is the key. Seyyed stated:

If police officers really participated in our [Muslims'] lives, they would truly see that we are the most patriotic and loyal citizens – we are obligated to stand up for social justice – fighting all aspects of terrorism – even if it means going against fellow Muslims – but this takes more than just words – I don't believe words anymore – it takes an investment in understanding our lives – and of Islam – I don't think they [police] understand how powerful the concept of social justice is in Islam and the lives of Muslims – if the police showed the community that they really cared – they were really invested in their lives – the possibilities would be endless.

Kareem, a Caucasian American, added:

Social justice is the essence of the *ummah* – only by participating in the daily lives of Muslims can this be truly understood – police must allow themselves the ability to be 'exposed' to Islam and everything it contains without hesitation – participation in the lives of the [Muslim] community – we are part of their lives – but as a foreign body – not as friends – active participation changes this scenario – it challenges stereotypes created of Muslims since 9/11 – look – as you can see I have blond hair, green eyes, and wear no beard – I am a reflection of a Muslim American today – I am a true believer in social justice – even against other Muslims – but you would not understand that obligation unless you participated in my life.

Muslim Americans will truly have the ability to take a self-critical and introspective look at their own traditions and system of beliefs in relation to extremism and violence within the practice of Islam. Muslim Americans will truly understand that during the attacks of September 11, 2001, Muslim Americans and everything they represent to the world in terms of the Islamic concepts of mercy, peace, and justice came under attack. Muslim Americans will gain the respect, honor, and dignity they deserve, not only as Muslims but as Americans living in the aftermath of 9/11. Muslim Americans, without hesitation, would never tolerate their 'home', which they share with 300 million fellow Americans, to be invaded by the practices of radical political Islam. It is at this level that law enforcement agencies will appeal to Muslim Americans to follow the example of the Prophet Muhammad, as many of the research participants suggested, to fulfill their moral obligation for social justice, not only for fellow Muslims but for all of humanity.

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