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## Rabbi Jack Moline

President of Interfaith Alliance



Jack Moline is President of Interfaith Alliance.

Interfaith Alliance is a First Amendment advocacy organization seeking common ground among people of faith and adherents of philosophies in protecting faith and freedom. A non-partisan group, it brings together members of 75 different faith communities for mutual support and understanding and in opposition to those who would restrict either the establishment clause or the free exercise clause of the Constitution.

A native of Chicago, he holds the title of Rabbi Emeritus of Agudas Achim Congregation in Alexandria, Virginia, where he held the pulpit for 27 years. Rabbi Moline serves as an adjunct faculty member of the Jewish Theological Seminary and Virginia Theological Seminary.

A graduate of Northwestern University (School of Communications, 1974), he served as Director of Youth Activities for the Seaboard Region of United Synagogue of America through 1976. After a year as interim director of Hillel at the University of Virginia, he entered Rabbinical School, graduating from the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1982 and awarded an honorary doctorate in 2012.

His first two years of seminary were spent at the University of Judaism (now the American Jewish University) in Los Angeles. During this time he held part-time positions at Camp Ramah as Winter Program Director, Temple Ramat Zion as Rabbinic Intern, and Universal Studios as Tour Guide (with a specialty in Hebrew language tours).

From 1980-1982, Rabbi Moline completed his studies at the New York campus of JTS and served Congregation B'nai Israel in Danbury, Connecticut as student rabbi. He became full-time rabbi and part-time Jewish chaplain at the Federal Correctional Institution there upon ordination. In 1987, he became rabbi of Agudas Achim Congregation of Northern Virginia, in Alexandria.

He has served as chair of the Interfaith Relations Committee of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, Chair of the Board of Interfaith Alliance, Vice-president of the Washington-Baltimore Rabbinical Assembly and board member of Faith and Politics Institute. He serves on the advisory boards of Clergy Beyond Borders and Operation Understanding DC.

He has served as President of the Washington Board of Rabbis and is past chair of the Alexandria Interfaith Association. He also served as the first Director of Public Policy for the Rabbinical Assembly and was Executive Director of the National Jewish Democratic Council. He is a member of Rabbis Without Borders and a mentor in the Clergy Leadership Incubator.

Rabbi Moline also has advised and written for many public figures, including President Bill Clinton, for whom he composed much of his memorable eulogy for PM Yitzhak Rabin. He was invited to offer a blessing to the Obama and Biden families before the 2013 Inauguration.

Rabbi Moline has authored two books and has contributed to many publications, both print and web-based. He is a popular speaker, featured by many organizations, on radio and television broadcasts, in government gatherings and in Christian churches, Muslim societies, synagogues and Jewish Community Centers across the United States and Canada.

Rabbi Moline is a long-suffering and recently redeemed supporter of the Chicago Cubs. He prefers to be best known as husband, father and grandfather of two perfect grandchildren.



# INTERFAITH ALLIANCE

PROTECTING FAITH AND FREEDOM

June 24, 2020

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President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
935 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20535

## **RE: Hearing on "President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice"**

Dear Chairman Phil Keith, Vice Chair Katharine Sullivan, and esteemed commissioners:

It is my distinct honor to submit the following testimony as part of today's hearing. My name is Rabbi Jack Moline, and I proudly serve as president of Interfaith Alliance, a national advocacy organization committed to advancing true religious freedom, promoting policies that protect the integrity of both religion and democracy, and ensuring that all Americans are treated equally under the law.

The topic under review today is a painful one, especially at this moment. For members of minority faith communities, relationships with law enforcement pose complex and evolving challenges. I share my thoughts with you today as a former congregational rabbi, who encountered these issues on the community level for decades. I also offer these remarks as a lifelong advocate for equality and justice, a practitioner of interfaith solidarity, and an admirer of a little bit of good trouble.

My own experience with the impact of a hate crime on the community may be illustrative. In 1990, while I served as rabbi at Agudas Achim congregation in Alexandria, VA, the members of the Jewish community of Northern Virginia completed the construction of their first Jewish Community Center in Annandale. The dedication was an event that was celebrated by the entire local community and featured the participation of the governor and members of Congress. A short time later, the building was defaced – spray painted with threats, obscenities and, of course, swastikas. A shaken Jewish community called for a rally against fear, and the numbers filled the new gymnasium with Jews and non-Jews alike. I was there with my in-laws and my two eldest children, daughters aged eight and five. In the middle of the rally – during a speech by a member of Congress – the center received a bomb threat and we were all evacuated to the parking lot. Following the directions of local law enforcement, my family made its way to our car and headed home. While traveling at speed on the Interstate, I heard my five-year-old burst into sobs behind me. She cried, "Why would anyone want to hurt us?"

I, of course, could do nothing at that moment except feel the rage at the perpetrators of both crimes on behalf of my child's stolen innocence. As you can see, thirty years later that experience is still with me.



The young men responsible for the vandalism and threat were located and arrested. They are now adults, likely fathers themselves and, perhaps, even grandfathers. Knowing that they carried this experience with them through life, a legacy of some measure from their own upbringing and an influence of some unknown significance in the way they raised their children, rests uncomfortably on my heart whenever I confront a crime or act of antagonism against my otherwise secure community. For me, for my family, and for my community, this incident is determinative, provoking insecurities that I had thought were outdated and insignificant in contemporary America.

This story is not unique to the Pozez JCC in Northern Virginia or to American Jewish communities. Violence targeting religious minorities is on the rise and has a profound impact on how we gather and care for one another. In November 2018, the FBI reported a 23 percent increase<sup>1</sup> in hate crimes on the basis of religious identity - the largest annual increase since 2001. While crimes against physical property went down, the number of physical assaults against individuals went up by 61 percent.

Behind these numbers are Americans - mother and fathers, sisters and brothers, beloved neighbors and friends who will carry with them the fear and insecurity that targeted violence leaves behind for years to come. These statistics are only a snapshot and all too often, incidents of hate against religious minorities go unreported or unaddressed.

Even in moments where religious minority communities may need the assistance of law enforcement most, many maintain a well-founded distrust of state involvement.

In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the New York City Police Department's Intelligence Division began engaging in the systematic religious profiling and surveillance of Muslims.<sup>2</sup> The program, built out into several policing units and extending into several surrounding states, was based on the discriminatory notion that "Muslim religious belief and practices are a basis for law enforcement scrutiny." The NYPD's spying program was deeply invasive, causing stigma and community fear, and interfering with religious practices. This legacy of over-policing and invasive surveillance has all but destroyed a trusted relationship between Muslim Americans and law enforcement -- particularly at a time when Muslim communities arguably needed more protection and support due to increased civilian hate crimes, bigotry, and discrimination.

In the recent case brought to the Supreme Court, *Tanzin v. Tanvir*, two Muslim men allege that the FBI placed their names on the national "No Fly List" in retaliation for their refusal to become FBI informants against their fellow Muslim-Americans. Regardless of officers' intent, these practices are clearly discriminatory, rooted in anti-Muslim stereotypes that reinforce an existing relationship of distrust.

This is simply one example that has received attention in recent years. But American Muslim communities are not alone in the perception of law enforcement as - at times - a tool of oppression. Let's be blunt about this: ethnic, racial and religious minorities have never been treated equally and equitably under the law.

We cannot ignore this history, nor can we ignore how this history continues to impact policing and law enforcement. Our partners in coalition in the Black community, but also in the Muslim, Sikh, Hindu and other

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<sup>1</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, Hate Crimes Statistics, 2017, <https://ucr.fbi.gov/hate-crime/2017>

<sup>2</sup> American Civil Liberties Union, Factsheet: The NYPD Muslim Surveillance Program, <https://www.aclu.org/other/factsheet-nypd-muslim-surveillance-program>



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minority groups have documented this challenge. This commission should invite testimony directly from representatives of those communities themselves.

Our laws are meant to promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to all citizens. We must grapple with this very basic and tragic fact in order to apply the law and enforcement of the law equally and equitably; there are social, economic, cultural and faith perspectives that have significant impact on the perception from different communities. Officials must take seriously the reports of harassment and violence made by religious members of faith backgrounds -- from hijabi Muslims to turban-wearing Sikhs to Haredi Jews -- who, because of their clothing, language, or practices distinguish them from other members of the community. Failure to do so only further fuels the perception of law enforcement as an oppositional force.

These concerns, held by members of Black churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, gurdwaras, and other houses of worship ought to be prioritized by officials. Preserving a police culture which is suspicious of and antagonistic toward minority groups will only intensify the threat these communities face from white supremacist violence. It is the responsibility of law enforcement to initiate meaningful dialogue that prioritizes the voices of religious and ethnic minorities. It is my hope that such conversations will enable police to better serve these communities.

Law enforcement should take steps at every level to investigate and prevent hate-based crime, as well as hold officers accountable for engaging in racial or religious profiling, targeting, and surveillance. The perceptions in our communities are as important in policing as demonstrable realities. When they go unaddressed, they are -- however unintentionally -- validated, which makes the community feel less secure and the work of law enforcement that much more difficult.

We are in the midst of a national conversation about the role of police, and law enforcement more broadly, in communities across the country. Central to that work must be an honest and, perhaps at times, painful examination of practices that target religious minorities. Animosity, both real and perceived, toward ethnic, racial and religious minorities reinforces the notion that the blessing of liberty has not been secured for our communities.

Above all, I ask you to recommit yourselves to protecting all Americans in your pursuit of justice and a system that better serves people of all faiths or none. As an interfaith leader and a staunch advocate for true religious freedom, I ask that you take seriously and prioritize investigating and stopping hate crimes and white supremacist violence -- the biggest threat facing Jews, Muslims, Black Christians, Sikhs, and other minority faiths today. And I ask that you consider ending surveillance and profiling programs and culture, which have marred the perception of police by millions of Black and Brown Americans.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Jack Moline  
President, Interfaith Alliance

## Imam Dr. Talib M. Shareef

President, Masjid Muhammad, The Nation's Mosque



Talib M. Shareef is President and Imam of the historic, Masjid Muhammad, The Nation's Mosque in Washington, D.C. Imam Shareef, is a retired U.S. Air Force member with 30+ years of service; he has a Doctorate Degree from Global Oved Dei Seminary and University, an MBA from American Intercontinental University, a Diploma from the Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University, and the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center in Arabic and Middle East studies. He is a student of the late Imam W. Deen Mohammed, Muslim-American Spokesman for Human Salvation.

Imam Shareef served as Imam in five U.S. cities and seven military locations around the world. Under the high patronage of His Majesty Mohammed VI, the King of Morocco, Imam Shareef received the Kingdom's highest Royal Medal and honor for his outstanding interfaith leadership. He was the first Imam with military service to open a session of the U.S. Congress with prayer. Imam Shareef was honored to be recognized for his service by the President at the White House. He was selected and featured as a Marquis *Who's Who in America*, 73<sup>rd</sup> edition. He was sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs to speak in several cities and meet with various local, national and international leaders in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He offered the opening prayer on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial for the 50th Anniversary of Dr. King's March on Washington; key speaker at former President George H.W. Bush's Points of Light Conference's Faith Summit; Spoke at the South African Embassy celebration of Nelson Mandela's life; led historic delegation to and addressed over 500,000 in South Africa; Hosted Press Conference/Panel for the then Presidential Candidate, Senator Bernie Sanders at the Nation's Mosque to address religious bigotry. Spoke at Sojourner Douglass College memorial honoring human rights activist, Coretta Scott King. He participated in signing the Abuja Peace Declaration organized by the International Global Peace Foundation and the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution in Nigeria. He led an interfaith delegation to Italy meeting with the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. Co-organized, spoke and led the historic Islamic congregational prayer at the Washington National Cathedral. Addressed the ills of Human Trafficking on Capitol Hill. Facilitated Peace Forum at the Global Peace Convention in Manila, Philippines. He established the first Islamic Dietary Nutrition site for elderly members of all faiths in D.C. Member of the D.C. Mayor's Interfaith Council; served as President and Chairman of the Interfaith Conference based in the nation's capital. Director, American Muslims Against Terrorism and Extremism Initiative, a model program funded by Congress through the Department of Homeland Security that challenged the narrative extremist use to radicalize. This initiative reached millions via several internet campaigns and other programs to prevent potentially vulnerable individuals from going down that road.

He served as keynote speaker for the Pentagon and Homeland Security Ramadan programs, co-initiated the U.S. Military commissioning its first Islamic Chaplain in 1993. Spoke and facilitated interfaith peacebuilding, countering/preventing extremism, and/or religious freedom forums in the countries of Denmark, S. Korea, Nigeria, South America, Uzbekistan, United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, Germany, Philippines, and N. Ireland. He traveled to the Middle East for an orientation on the Israeli-Palestinian Situation. Recipient of the IWDM Global Ambassador for Peace Award; the NAACP Roy Wilkins Leadership Award. Imam Shareef and wife, Tahirah, have three children, seven grandchildren, are custodial parents of three others and have fostered several children.

## **Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice**

### **Testimony of Imam Talib M. Shareef**

Good afternoon. I extend my gratitude for the invitation to testify before this distinguished and important commission. The organization that I lead, Masjid Muhammad, The Nation's Mosque, dates to the mid 1930's, and is representative of the oldest Muslim community in our nation's capital and was established by American citizens of African descent. Its members have proudly taken seriously the responsibility of citizenship and is comprised of and associated with millions of healthy-minded, hardworking, and loyal Muslims who are in every field of public service and the private sector and are making significant contributions to America. It is vital that the voice of the Islamic community be welcomed and I believe we, as Muslim and African American citizens, bring a unique perspective to any study about law enforcement, administering justice and ways to improve public safety for all citizens.

I am going to be presenting some details from a successful program we initiated that I believe can be extracted from or serve as a template to help bring about necessary change. I will also present a brief philosophical message highlighting the foundation of our law and justice that was at the base of our successful program, which I believe is relevant for this testimony. Lastly, I will provide specific recommendations for this commission based on the results of our program initiatives as well as from my own personal experience.

I want to begin by stating that Masjid Muhammad has a long history of engaging law enforcement. Aside from my 30 years of active military service in the U.S. Air Force, I was the first Muslim to serve as a Chaplain for the FBI. The previous Imam served as chaplain to the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department for many years and our membership includes several officers from across the Maryland, Virginia, and D.C. region. In fact, in 2018, the year we launched the program I'll be highlighting, Corporal Mujahid Ramzziddin of the Prince George's County Police, a member of Masjid Muhammad, valiantly lost his life while off-duty and responding to a domestic violence situation. Our duty as Muslims and citizens call for us to support the security of our communities. We know good policing is integral to this effort.

#### **AMATE Initiative**

In 2018, Masjid Muhammad launched the AMATE Initiative. We, along with several organizations, were awarded grant funds by DHS. Our selection was rooted in the fact that since its inception, the longest and most comprehensive de-radicalization program in the US has largely gone unnoticed and forgotten. The Islamic community of the late Imam W. Deen Muhammad (CWDM), of which we are leading members, has been quietly implementing an incredibly effective counter-radicalization program for over four decades. The African American Muslim story contains a wealth of untapped information and problem-solving experience that has the potential to create effective and successful Preventing Violent Extremism policy (PVE) specific to the United States' unique conditions and necessities. There is a detailed report of its methodology and success in a report that is attached to this testimony. The FBI, DHS and the White House have highlighted the community as healthy citizens with absolutely no cases of or tendencies towards terrorism or violent extremism, essentially "zero cases of radicalization".

As a result of this natural success, we were given an opportunity to “package” that success in a program called, “American Muslims Against Terrorism and Extremism Initiative, referred to as the AMATE Initiative. Under the grant, we were responsible for producing one of the most progressive, informational online social media campaigns “**challenging the narrative**” that promotes extremist ideology and violence throughout the world. Statistics show that a significant number of individuals are recruited to join extremist factions via online channels, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and elsewhere. Our job was to distribute counter messages that showed the true nature of Islam – the religion of peace – in opposition to those messages misusing Islamic text as a way of drawing recruits into their violent way of life.

The AMATE Website facilitated a national communications multimedia platform that educates Americans about radicalization and actively combats the spread of violence through positive counter narratives, provides comprehensive educational anti-terrorism resources to Islamic organizations, religious groups, educational institutions and those seeking guidance on the Islamic faith, as it relates to extremist, and creates a robust English/Arabic online platform that uses strategic communications, content creation, community engagement, media outreach, and social media outreach to counter radicalization online

As a part of the grant, we partnered with the U. S. Institute of Peace (USIP) and organized an AMATE Symposium/Town Hall entitled AL-NOOR: Sanitizing the Hate Corroding the Beauty of the Islamic Faith. It brought some of the top, brightest and most notable Islamic and CVE experts to the table to discuss this sensitive subject matter. We produced 4 short promotional videos that were used to promote the unveiling of the documentary shown at the USIP hosted Symposium. This documentary dove deeper into the realities of being a Muslim in America and the dark corners awaiting those who are vulnerable online. **In the documentary, Congressman Andre Carson of Indiana, a Muslim and former law enforcement officer himself, spoke about the necessity for good policing and for the community to have a good relationship with the officers assigned to watch over them.** I’m very proud to say that this body of work has left an indelible mark on the discourse about what the Islamic community looks like in America and I am confident that this approach to changing the conversation about policing and police culture can be just as effective. The documentary is included in the attached PowerPoint. For details about the video campaigns or more information on AMATE, visit our website at [www.amateinitiative.com](http://www.amateinitiative.com).

AMATE used Geotargeting to mobile devices with Social media outreach (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter), resulting in 129 zip code pickups with a potential audience = 134,167,900. 87 Countries with Users, More than 705,000 reached, broken down by 400,000 men aged 25-34, 240,000 men aged 18-24, 60,000 men aged 35-44, More than 86,000 women reached, 65,000 women aged 25-34, 15,000 women aged 18-24 and Over 6,000 women aged 35-44.

The project was executed in collaboration with community partners to include mosques and cultural centers throughout the D.C. metropolitan region, PVE and counter-terrorism experts, and Greene Street Communications, LLC, a full-service communications firm. We convened focus groups (similar to this commission) to gather feedback to ensure all messaging was sensitive and effective, conducted photo shoots to capture authentic images of Muslims at worship here in the D.C. area, images of Muslims serving the community, attending universities and fellowshiping

with those of other various religious backgrounds. We launched a multi-media website filled with informational articles, video clips and high-quality posters and other graphics which were used to flood social channels with these counter messages.

Just as was the case leading up to and in 2018, a time that had seen previous years marred by reports of one violent action after another by those posing in the name of Islam, law enforcement is facing a similar challenge. We do not believe that all officers intend to harm the residents in the community they police any more than we would like anyone else to believe that all Muslims are bad. This commission is testament that the conversation must shift. What law enforcement and the community need to do is “challenge the narrative”. A chance to see law enforcement in another light, the light of genuine positive interactions.

Our efforts continue to spur conversation about new, unique ways to engage with a community and we are confident that this model will help in changing the discourse about community policing. We stand ready to assist with our expertise if called upon. Our team has been called upon by DHS to provide strategy insight on a panel at the University of Pittsburgh. We’ve been featured speakers at conferences in Ireland, Denmark, Germany, S. Korea, Nigeria, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and the Philippines. In addition, we’ve hosted delegations from Egypt, Germany and France who have been interested in learning more about our efforts. Furthermore, the 2011 White House countering violent extremism strategy report explicitly stated that “credible, authentic and constructive” Muslim voices was one of the most beneficial tools to help address and combat extremism. The same rings true here! To address the issues that exist, as it relates to law enforcement, the voice of those impacted MUST be out front. And, the grim reality for decades, the African American Muslim voice has been removed from the conversation., our arduous work with DHS shows that without question. Having the necessary credible, authentic voices “will help bring about sustainable change.”

The Carnegie Corporation published a study in 1944 (by Harper & Bros.; reprinted in 1996 by Transaction Publishers), *An American Dilemma*. It served to crystallize the emerging awareness that racial discrimination and legal segregation could not endure in the U.S. Its moral wake-up call for Americans to live up to the democratic ideals of the “American Creed” became a powerful justification that united the major groups responsible for the civil rights movement. It has been called one of the most important works of social science of the twentieth century. Never has such a comprehensive and wide-ranging study of the state of black Americans and interracial relations been carried out. I have attached a copy of the study for your review.

That American Creed, embedded in the Constitution, the fundamental law of the U.S., defines the principal organs of government, their jurisdictions, and the basic rights of citizens. This is one of the resources used and one of the reasons our program was successful.

We were successful in showing that our form of democracy is not something that Muslims have to be afraid of. In fact, it may be closer to what we have as Islamic justice for society than any other political ideology existing in the world today. Justice is an idea. The Constitution of the U. S. is based upon an idea that Muslims can accept. It is well documented with Thomas Jefferson and others, that designed our Constitution, were acquainted with the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammed (pbuh).

In the language of the Founding Fathers: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are **created equal** and endowed by their **Creator....**" Here is the language of the Founding Fathers recognizing G-d, recognizing the Creator and recognizing all men as having inalienable rights that the government cannot give to them. All were created with those rights, inalienable rights, among these, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

This is truly a statement of strong faith and allegiance to G-d. The writers of this language were building an idea that would tie man to G-d and would insist government recognize that tie between man and G-d; a tie that government didn't make, a tie that government cannot break. Government has to recognize that tie and **treat all citizens as the creation of G-d** and that **G-d gave them certain rights that man, the world, or the government cannot take away from them.**

So, this is the beauty of, that idea, and this is what makes for a true democracy. A true democracy must recognize that there is an Authority higher than man and people are accountable to their Creator, the One that designed and gave them their life. The Creator, puts a high value on life and saving life, saying, "if anyone saved a life it's as if he saved the whole of humanity." Qur'an 5:32

G-d introduced Himself to Muhammed (pbuh), firstly, as the Creator not by the name, Allah (swt). That's the precious idea, that this did not happen accidentally; that there is a Designer for the course of matter in the skies, that Designer has designed the course for man's life, and the same G-d has also created and designed human life to follow laws, to follow definite patterns of behavior, definite patterns of discipline or behavior so that the life will continue and make progress.

So, America recognizes that, the government recognizes that, that is the strength of our Constitution. That is the strongest glue or adhesive matter holding together the idea we call Western Democracy. Those in government and those entrusted to uphold the laws of our government must understand the serious sacred regard of the intent of sacred documents upon which this country was founded. This experiment must prove itself to be sound and continue to exponentially excel in excellence toward a more perfect union exemplified in that which ensures domestic tranquility, provides for security, and promotes the general well-being of all of its citizens. The logic is clear. Let us have the courage to follow the logic to its logical conclusion.

### Suggested Recommendations:

**Recognize that tie between man and G-d and treat all citizens as the creation of G-d**

**Be Transparent as Much as Possible So the Public can have Faith/Confidence**

- Cultivate trust – Sensitivities are steered by fear, love, and faith resulting from TRUST.
- Whatever we have faith in, it is because in having a relationship with that person or thing, we have found we can trust it.
- i.e. I have seen that I can trust mother, daddy, etc, therefore I have faith in them.

**Implement Geotargeted campaigns**

- Initiate aggressive, **geotargeted campaigns showing law enforcement officers engaging with communities** as members of the community, as allies to ensure their safety, security and comfort as opposed to in a more defensive posture.
  - o Show **soundbites from officers talking about their connection to the communities they serve** and why they care about the communities they serve.

- Establish a Multimedia website with information showcasing law enforcement at work in their communities and those who have been aided by officers.

#### **Partner on community events (block parties, barbeques, etc.)**

- Allow residents to interact with officers in a more personal manner to deepen the relationship and create more harmony.
- Encourage community members to weigh in on messaging collateral (posters, banners, etc.) created to improve relations between law enforcement and residents.

#### **Reconstruct Trainings and Continued Education**

- Reassess Training and Continued Education in the areas of de-escalation, conflict resolution, building rapport, community partnerships and utilizing community resources
- Officers in the community should understand social issues such as mental illness, poverty, familial conflict, persons with disabilities, or who abuse substances.
- Partner with local agencies/professionals that could arrive to the scene to assist in situations where laws are not being violated or that do not require the assistance of LEO

#### **Implement New Legislation**

- Require all LEOs to indoctrinate reactionary simulations every 6 months. Simulations dealing with use of force or firing their weapon under stressful/non-stressful citizen encounters. Scenarios should be based on minor traffic up to criminal violations.
  - Officers flagged as violating human rights, policy or the law; nonprofessional, excessive, etc. they should not be able to go into the field again until they have completed additional training and been cleared to perform duty without prejudice.
- Require Officers/Deputies to take sensitivity, diversity, cultural awareness
  - Make it mandatory and enforce the practice of clearly greeting citizens, stating the nature of the stop, and if the person is under arrest or being detained and why.
  - Citizens should not be taken and held to the ground for lengthy periods of time
- Establish a federal ombudsman to monitor complaints of harassment/abuse by racial minorities, women, and ethnic minorities.

**Increase availability of assessments for mental health issues** after initial arrests so mentally impaired individuals can be directed towards social workers and treatment instead of being held in jail for minor offenses. (This will produce significant savings for jail administrators since jail populations routinely include individuals with undiagnosed mental health issues.)

In conclusion, I would like to offer a recommended reading of a book by one of my partners in this work, *America's Other Muslims: Imam W.D. Mohammed, Islamic Reform, and the Making of American Islam* by Muhammad Fraser-Rahim. Additionally, I have attached three supporting documents to this testimony: An AMATE PowerPoint, The Carnegie Report: An American Dilemma, and Transforming the Hate that Hate Produced which is a policy report that looks at real and or perceived grievances in African American and Muslim communities, and addresses issues and interaction with law enforcement, and how a community was able to be critical of the state (US) and get past some past injustices via the legal system. Thank you for the invitation and time, that concludes my testimony.

#### **3 Attachments**

1. AMATE PowerPoint
2. The Carnegie Report: An American Dilemma
3. A Policy Report: Transforming the Hate that Hate Produced



# AMERICAN MUSLIMS AGAINST TERRORISM AND EXTREMISM (AMATE)



Testimony before President's  
Commission on Law  
Enforcement and the  
Administration of Justice

# GRANT PERFORMANCE



## DETAILS

- Focus group to gather input
- **Multimedia website designed and launched**
- Social media (including geofencing) campaigns developed
- **Documentary film produced on the topic**
- Panel discussion and film premiere at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP)

# PROGRAM WEBSITE



American Muslims  
Against Terrorism & Extremism

HOME

GET IN TOUCH ▾

NEWS ▾

BLOG

MEDIA CENTER ▾

ABOUT US ▾

RESOURCES ▾



join us online.



#ENOUGHISENUGH

[www.AMATEinitiative.com](http://www.AMATEinitiative.com)



American Muslims  
Against Terrorism & Extremism

[www.amateinitiative.com](http://www.amateinitiative.com)

# SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH



## LAUNCH OVERVIEW

- **Officially launched – January 8, 2018**
- **Geotargeting to mobile devices**
- **Social media outreach (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter)**

# LAUNCH PERFORMANCE



**American Muslims**  
Against Terrorism & Extremism

## STATISTICS

- Potential audience of 134,167,900
- More than 705,000 reached in the Washington, D.C. metro area
- Close to 400,000 men aged 25-34
- Nearly 240,000 men aged 18-24
- Close to 60,000 men aged 35-44
- More than 86,000 women reached
- 65,000 women aged 25-34
- 15,000 women aged 18-24
- Over 6,000 women aged 35-44

# CAMPAIGN #1 #ENOUGHISENOUGH

I OPPOSE  
**TERRORISM.**

*Muslims are an integral part  
of the American fabric and we  
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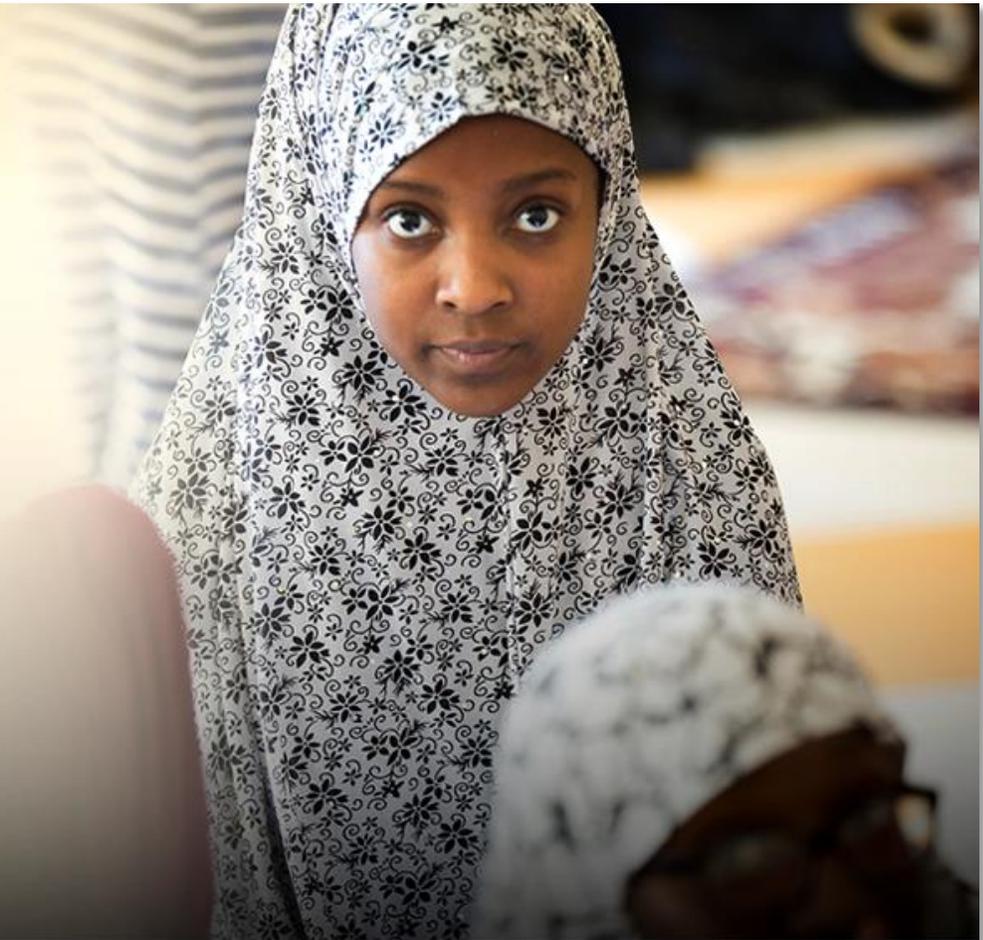


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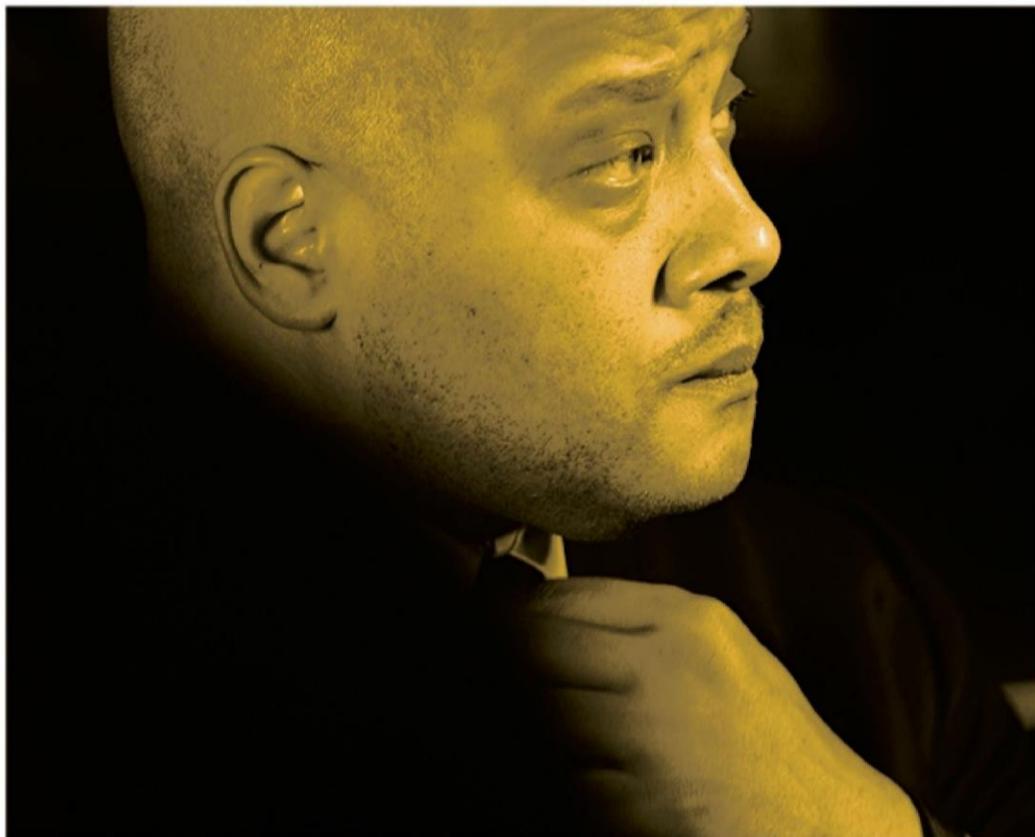
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# SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY



## THE “HUMAN ELEMENT”

- Law enforcement officers stand bravely for their communities in the face of danger.
- Prince George’s County Police Department Cpl. Mujahid Ramzziddin, a member of Masjid Muhammad, was off-duty when he was shot February 21, 2018.

# OUR SUGGESTIONS



## THE “HUMAN ELEMENT”

- **Aggressive, geotargeted campaigns showing law enforcement officers engaging with communities as allies to ensure their safety, security and comfort as opposed to in a more defensive manner.**
- **Campaigns showing soundbites from officers talking about their connection to the communities they serve and why they care about the communities they serve.**
- **Multimedia website with information showcasing law enforcement at work in their communities and those who have been aided by officers.**

# OUR SUGGESTIONS



## THE “HUMAN ELEMENT”

- Community events (block parties, barbeques, etc.) allowing residents to interact with officers in a more personal manner in order to deepen the relationship and create more harmony.
- Design groups that allow community members to weigh in on messaging collateral (posters, banners, etc.) created to improve relations between law enforcement and residents.

**THANK YOU!**



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Results Or Information Of  
Special Note.

## **The Lasting Legacy of *An American Dilemma***

The fiftieth anniversary of the landmark 1954 Supreme Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education*—which said that the segregated schools of the South were damaging to black children, and thus began to dismantle the system of legalized segregation—was an occasion for assessing the last half century’s progress in the lives of African Americans. While there remains deep disagreement about the current state of black America and the policies that ought to follow from that, most would agree that the status of African Americans has changed dramatically, if insufficiently, since *Brown*. Not only has the system of legal segregation been eliminated and widespread prejudice diminished, but the economic, political and educational status of many blacks has significantly improved.

Gunnar Myrdal’s *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy*, generally viewed as one of the most important results of grantmaking by Carnegie Corporation of New York, played a major role in the story that led from an America, which after World War II still had a legal Jim Crow system in the South—along with a segregated army—to the Voting Rights Act of 1965. It was cited as the social scientific evidence justifying the Supreme Court’s decision that what had been deemed separate but equal education for black children was, in fact, detrimental to their development.

Published in 1944 (by Harper & Bros.; reprinted in 1996 by Transaction Publishers), *An American Dilemma* served to crystallize the emerging awareness that racial discrimination and legal segregation could not endure in the U.S. Its moral wake-up call for Americans to live up to the democratic ideals of the “American Creed” became a powerful justification that united the major groups responsible for the civil rights movement. It has been called one of the most important works of social science of the twentieth century. Never before had so comprehensive and wide-ranging a study of the state of black Americans and interracial relations been carried out.

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*Written by: Shari Cohen, Ph.D. Cohen is president of Intersections Research, a consulting company that offers strategic planning, leadership development and political analysis. She has taught on nationalism and ethnicity and international affairs in the political science departments at*

*the University of California, Berkeley and at Wellesley College. She has also run a research program on the future of religion and ethnicity for the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership (CLAL). Her book, Politics Without a Past: The Absence of History in Postcommunist Nationalism (Duke University Press, 1999) is about leadership and civil society in post-Communist political transitions.*

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While thousands of pages have since been written on related issues, and hundreds of studies funded and commissions convened, it might well be true that no single work since *An American Dilemma* has combined comprehensive social scientific research with a path-breaking argument that could define a consensus and drive policy. As noted scholar and long-time *Daedalus* editor Stephen Graubard provocatively commented, “It is extraordinary that there has been no successor study to that of Myrdal, that no foundation or corporate group has to this date recognized the need for a fundamental reinvestigation of what is incontestably the most serious problem that plagues American society today” (Clayton, ed., *An American Dilemma Revisited*, p. 1). Whatever one’s views on that subject, a look back at what made the Myrdal study uniquely possible in its day, and more difficult to imagine now, tells us a lot about the continuing battle to improve the lives of African Americans and the possibilities of advancing the still-polarized debate about race.

## The Study’s Content

Myrdal argued that there was a fundamental dilemma within individual Americans, who were torn between the ideals of what he called the American Creed—values of democracy and equal opportunity—and the realities of discrimination and segregation. “The American Negro problem is a problem in the heart of the American. It is there that the interracial tension has its focus. It is there that the decisive struggle goes on...” (*An American Dilemma*, Introduction). In Myrdal’s view, it was due to this struggle that change would inevitably take place.

The study was also a clarion call for Americans to live up to the ideals of the American Creed or face a deterioration of the values and vision that unites the country and makes it great. “The Negro problem is an integral part of, or a special phase of, the whole complex of problems in the larger American civilization” (*An American Dilemma*, Introduction). Framing it this way dovetailed well with the ideas later expressed by Martin Luther King, Jr.; it helped black Americans and the white liberals who would join together in the civil rights movement articulate the urgency of addressing what Myrdal called “a century-long lag of public morals” (Southern, *Gunnar Myrdal and Black-White Relations*, p. 58).

Another key facet of Myrdal's argument was to set the study in an international context, predicting that, for Americans, having defined World War II as a struggle for liberty and equality and against Nazi racism would force a redefinition and reexamination of race in the United States. Myrdal also thought that the treatment of blacks in the U.S. would affect its international prestige and power.

The book's argument was supported by extensive sociological research and data that demonstrated the dire state of blacks and the depth of discrimination. This gave the framing, which resonated on a moral level, a heft and persuasiveness that increased its impact. *An American Dilemma* drew upon thirty-one commissioned research memoranda on every aspect of black life and interracial relations. And Myrdal carried out extensive field research, touring the country and talking with black and white leaders, journalists, schoolteachers, clergy, academics, labor union members, businessmen, farmers, law enforcement officers and many more.

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The book also had something to say about the purpose of social scientific research: it contained a cutting critique of the dominant view of social science of the time. As Leslie Dunbar said in “The Enduring American Dilemma,” an article written in 1983, “He [Myrdal] was against the view that was then weighty and authoritative in social science...that social problems had best be left alone to work themselves out and that intervention by government to direct or speed up the process is futile and productive of much harm. Myrdal argued the case for the possibility of change and for the necessity of conscious action in order to achieve it.”

## Origins of the Study

The book that was ultimately published in 1944—over six years after Carnegie Corporation president Fredrick Keppel invited Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal to “lead a comprehensive Study of the Negro in the United States” —was not the one intended (Lagemann, *The Politics of Knowledge*, p. 135). Instead of what the foundation had planned as a limited study that would help guide Corporation grantmaking beyond its historic involvement in black education in the South, Keppel got a treatise that recast the very paradigm within which the Corporation staff who were responsible for the idea were operating. The problem of race, for Myrdal, was a moral issue, not just a matter of preventing racial clashes or modernizing the South.

At the time, although Keppel and his advisors were aware that black-white relations were changing and needed a new kind of attention, they did not aim to end segregation or take on the economic and social conditions of blacks. But they did begin to see that social changes such as the migration to northern cities, the crisis of southern agriculture, the devastating effects of the Great Depression in the cities of the North and the South, and the rising militancy among blacks were making it increasingly necessary to move beyond the dominant philanthropic approach of the time: educating rural southern blacks within the context of segregation.

In 1935, Keppel’s adviser, Newton Baker, who had been mayor of Cleveland 1913-1916, and Secretary of War under Woodrow Wilson, questioned the foundation’s policy of using the funds it devoted to issues of race to support “Negro” schools in the South. He argued that more needed to be understood about race, which was no longer just a southern problem and that the Corporation should concern itself with the condition of blacks in northern cities (Jackson, *Gunnar Myrdal and*

*America's Conscience*, p.17). He suggested that a study was needed to help the Corporation decide how to spend its money in such a way to have the most impact on the black minority (Southern, p. 3).

While Baker spoke publicly against discrimination, he referred to blacks as an "infant race" and his views still reflected the fact that he was from a Confederate family in West Virginia. These inconsistencies demonstrate the dilemma Myrdal would write about. Keppel's views were less overtly inconsistent on the issue of blacks, but he did not have a developed alternative to the reigning paradigm of the day (Lagemann, p. 132).

Black leaders such as W.E.B. Du Bois had already questioned the dominant approach to black education in the philanthropic community, which was based on the assumption that blacks should be trained for agricultural and industrial work. He complained that this technical training would teach blacks "to be thought for, not to think; to be led, but not to lead themselves" (Lagemann, p. 126). But within philanthropic circles, the dominant focus remained rural education in the South, although increasingly higher education was included.

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The main players were the Rockefeller Foundation, through support of the General Education Board (GEB) and the Laura Spellman Rockefeller Memorial Fund; the Julius Rosenwald Fund and the Phelps Stokes Fund. Of these, GEB worked on the premise that educating whites in the South was the primary way to help blacks. Their work focused on universal education, though they accepted separate and inferior schools for blacks. The Laura Spellman Rockefeller Memorial and Rosenwald funds supported both black and white scholars in social scientific and cultural studies of black Americans. They were increasingly moving into supporting black health and economic welfare. Rosenwald was the most progressive, and was responsible for establishing the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, which brought together leading white and black citizens in communities across the South to work on common problems (Nielsen, *The Big Foundations*, p. 340). Carnegie was less involved than were these other foundations and its grants had been mostly for black colleges in the South. But it had also contributed to organizations such as the Commission on Interracial Cooperation and the Urban League.

While Keppel remained a product of the times in his own attitudes, he did understand that there needed to be a breakthrough in the constraints and interests that surrounded the issue of race in the American scholarly community. He came to believe that race was such an emotional and fraught issue that neither a northerner, nor a southerner, neither a black nor a white scholar, would be able to achieve a sufficiently objective study and one that would get a fair hearing once it was done.

In opting to look for a foreigner to do the study, Keppel consciously overlooked another project that was being considered for funding at the time—the Encyclopedia of the Negro. The ambitious project, with W.E.B. DuBois as editor, was to be supervised by a board of leading black and white scholars and reformers. DuBois had hoped to use the project to “reformulate the problem of the century” (Lewis, *W.E.B. DuBois*, p. 446). It did not however, meet Keppel’s criteria of objectivity given DuBois’ two decades of civil rights advocacy in the NAACP. Carnegie Corporation staff involved in the encyclopedia were also concerned about discord among the black and white collaborators.

Keppel’s choice of using a foreign scholar and one who was not an expert in the field was also viewed skeptically by some of the other established scholars of black life in America and interracial relations of

the time, who did not believe that a non-American would be able to say anything new about the subject.

After a search through a list that included twenty-five names, Keppel chose Gunnar Myrdal, the Swedish economist, then thirty-nine years old. In the invitation to Myrdal, Keppel wrote that Carnegie Corporation wanted “someone who would approach the situation with an entirely fresh mind. We have also thought that it would be wise to seek a man in a non-imperialistic country with no background of domination of one race over another” (Jackson, p. 33).

Myrdal, who would go on to win the 1974 Nobel Prize in Economic Science (which he shared with Friedrich von Hayek) arrived in New York to begin the work in September 1938.

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## What Gave the Study Impact

The unique combination of Myrdal and Keppel made the project bolder and better able to affect public policy than it otherwise would have been. Keppel was an unusual foundation president: personally involved, operating on intuition, he employed only a small staff and received many grant applicants himself (Jackson, p. 14). Keppel sent Myrdal off on a two-month tour of the South as soon as he arrived in the U.S., before he could do library research and be influenced by “the experts.” While Keppel had little knowledge of the social sciences, his instinct continued to be to lay the groundwork for as fresh a view as possible. As Walter Jackson points out, it was, paradoxically, because Carnegie Corporation had largely ignored black issues that there would be few institutional checks and obstacles to Myrdal’s intellectual freedom:

“The Swedish visitor would be able to chart a more liberal course on race relations because the Carnegie Corporation had no southern trustees, no elaborate educational programs that depended on the good will of southern white elites, and no staff specialists on Negro education whose watchword was caution” (Jackson, p. 35).

Myrdal felt no constraints about personally shaping the study’s scope, nor did he feel that he had to pay great attention to the original mission of providing the underpinning for foundation programs. Once he returned from his first tour of the South he commented that he found the situation more shocking than he expected and was overwhelmed by how little he knew. But he wrote in his report that he would need to redefine the scope of the study since “The American Negro as a social problem is included in, and includes all other American social, economic and political problems” (Lagemann, p. 138). While Keppel must have worried that the mission was expanding, in the tradition of Andrew Carnegie, he had invested in a “great man” and was willing to give him the latitude he thought he deserved (Jackson, p. 13). Keppel later said that he staked his reputation on the book.

In addition, after going to great lengths to find an “objective” foreigner to do the work, Keppel inadvertently chose a social scientist who did not believe in objective social science and who was deeply committed to

social engineering. Myrdal, as an outsider, was not beholden to the American social science establishment with its commitment to value-free social science. He did not need to submit to peer review. And it was Myrdal's very departure from an orthodoxy that made social scientists hesitant to develop policy recommendations about race relations that would allow the study to have impact beyond narrow academic circles.

Although Myrdal was given great freedom to go about his work as he saw fit (and Keppel encouraged him to remain the sole author, even when he had doubts about his abilities to accomplish the task) and he wrote the text alone, he relied on the input of a broad range of collaborators—as respondents to his original framework for the study and then as authors of research memoranda.

Myrdal went to great lengths to include scholars from several disciplines, both black and white. Using the lure of the Carnegie Corporation name and the possibility of future funding from the foundation, he attracted the best minds in the field. His collaborators were from all of the main centers of research on race relations in America: the University of Chicago, the University of North Carolina, Atlanta University, Yale's Institute of Human Behavior, Howard, Fisk and Columbia universities (Jackson, p. 109).

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Other key organizations, such as the NAACP, the National Urban League and the Commission on Interracial Relations, all of which had received earlier grants from the Corporation but which had been told that they would not be funded further until after the Myrdal study was completed, were eager to cooperate with the author. By the time the book came out, most of the key potential critics were invested in it. Guy Johnson of the University of North Carolina, who was deputy director of the study said, of Myrdal:

“He was basically a politician...besides being a great scholar...If you hadn’t involved all these people and spent all this money and had a thousand names on the list of people that had helped, the reception might not have been as enthusiastic” (Jackson, p. 113).

Each collaborator was encouraged to publish the memorandum independently and to use whichever methodological—and ideological—approach they found comfortable. Some have argued that the work of collaborators, particularly ones that were intimately involved, like Ralph Bunche, who was part of the core staff, was not sufficiently acknowledged. Still, Bunche, who later went on to win the Nobel Peace Prize, was one of several of the African American contributors to the study whose careers were launched through their participation in the project.

The fact that Myrdal alone was responsible for the final text meant that the collaborators’ memoranda did not need to agree fully with his argument. There was very little attempt from the Corporation to censor the final product. The one area in which Keppel did intervene was in a chapter where Myrdal made an analogy between racism and sexism. Myrdal moved this chapter to an unobtrusive appendix called “A Parallel to the Negro Problem.” This did not stop numerous feminist scholars from drawing upon the chapter to make the case for women’s rights.

## The Importance of World War II

Without the context of World War II and the social changes it drove forward, the message of the Myrdal book would not have been nearly as

powerful. It became acutely obvious that the fight against Nazism was being carried out in the context of racism at home and was being fought with a still-segregated army. This became an increasing source of frustration, not just for blacks but also for white liberals. In addition, the draft and black employment in war industries accelerated the move from the rural South to the cities of the North, South and West. All of this resulted in increasing militancy in the black community. In 1941, A. Philip Randolph organized a movement to protest against discrimination in the war industries. He only called off a march on Washington of 100,000 blacks after President Roosevelt issued an executive order to establish the Fair Employment Practices Committee, in which the federal government for the first time recognized equal opportunity in employment as a civil right. Riots broke out in 1943 in Detroit, New York and Los Angeles. The NAACP grew to nearly ten times what it was in 1940 during this period (Jackson, p. 236). More generally, the cause of civil rights and the black protest movement drew more support from northern white liberals than it had before the war.

Fredrick Keppel (in his foreword to *An American Dilemma*) commented on how much had changed since the beginning of the Myrdal project, saying that no one could have foreseen, in 1937, that the study would be made public at a time when the place of blacks in America would be a subject of such greatly increased interest because of the social questions that the war raised. Nor had anyone anticipated the new global position of the U.S. and its implications for the increasing importance of, as Keppel pointed out, “dealing at home with a major problem of race relations.”

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## Responses to the Study

While the study was published before the end of the war, and received less attention than it might have in the months following, over the next years it was reviewed widely and favorably by both black and white commentators and in public policy and academic circles. *Time* magazine said “Perhaps not since Bryce and de Tocqueville has the U.S. had such an analytical probing by a sharp-eyed foreigner” (Southern, p. 73). W.E.B. DuBois praised it as a “monumental and unrivaled study” (Jackson, p. 245). One Columbia University sociologist said *An American Dilemma* was “the most penetrating and important book on our contemporary American civilization that has been written” (Jackson, p. 242).

It was treated very carefully by southern liberals and it was not reviewed widely in the South. Social scientists were some of the early critics. The main complaint was about Myrdal’s theory of change: did Americans really share the beliefs of the American Creed? Could the discord between the American Creed and lasting discrimination be sufficient to bring about the level of change Myrdal talked about? Other early critics were Marxists who decried the book for underplaying the class dimension of racial discrimination.

While most of the African American community was extremely positive about the book, Ralph Ellison, in a 1944 review, which was not published until twenty years later, complained that Myrdal had framed black culture in the U.S. as a pathological result of white racism, thereby ignoring the independent content and contribution of African American culture. This foreshadowed the criticism that book would receive from black intellectuals in the late 1960s.

Because of its heft, much of the public gained access to the book through several condensed versions and these were distributed widely to colleges, schools, the armed services, government agencies and civil rights groups (Southern, p. 105). As Southern points out, reviewers seemed to relate virtually every work on blacks to the Myrdal book. For example Richard Wright’s *Black Boy*, first published in 1945, was hailed as a supplement to the Myrdal report (Southern, p. 108). With the increase in teaching of social sciences after the war; “a generation of future racial reformers in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations of the 1960s grew up on an academic diet of Myrdal” (Southern, p. 111).

*An American Dilemma* also had ramifications in the political sphere: in December 1946, Harry Truman became the first president to appoint a national committee to study black-white relations. Known as the Committee on Civil Rights, the group issued its report a year later, which was clearly influenced by Myrdal (Southern, p. 113-116). President Truman himself read the book, which was published just as the NAACP was stepping up its efforts to wage the civil rights battle through the courts, and it was used repeatedly in civil rights cases even prior to *Brown*.

As noted earlier, Myrdal's ideas also paralleled those of the main spokesman for the civil rights movement, Martin Luther King, Jr. In his book *Stride Toward Freedom*, which details the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott, King lauded Myrdal for framing the problem of race as a moral issue. King invoked the book's title and central theme in the 1957 charter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (Southern, p. 230–231).

After its citation in the *Brown v. Board* opinion, a new set of critics emerged. During the struggle in the South that went on for ten years after the *Brown decision*, and culminated in the passage of the Civil Rights Bill and the Voting Rights Act, the Myrdal book was vilified by opponents of desegregation as a threat to the southern way of life and as Communist inspired.

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## Carnegie Corporation's Postwar Role

The success of *An American Dilemma* in influencing so many areas of the growing civil rights movement was not due to the activities of the Corporation, which notably withdrew from promoting the study or related programs for twenty years following its publication. In announcing the Corporation's new commitment to social justice in a 1973 annual report essay, Corporation president Alan Pifer said:

“Such a concern had not been totally lacking in earlier years, as evidenced by the foundation's invitation and support of the renowned Myrdal study of the American Negro. Nevertheless, from the end of the Second World War, until the early 1960's, other issues had commanded the Corporation's attention...”

Keppel had been the main advocate for the study at the Corporation and made efforts to seed a publicity effort in advance of its January 1944 publication. Charles Dollard, Keppel's assistant, who would serve as the Corporation's president from 1948–55, was also intimately involved with the Myrdal work. Keppel's death in 1943 and the absence of Dollard, who had resigned to serve in the army, meant that when the study came out there was no one at the foundation to champion it.

Walter Jessup, who succeeded Keppel as president from 1941–44, wrote in the 1944 annual report that the Corporation “never had and did not intend to have special programs in behalf of the Negro.”

The foundation's distance from the study can be explained in several ways. It might well have had to do with the very fact of there having been three presidents in the period 1941–55, during a time when the international issues that followed from the end of World War II and the beginning of the Cold War were so pressing. As Patricia Rosenfield, Carnegie Corporation Chair, Carnegie Scholars Program, and Special Advisor to the Vice President and Director for Strategic Planning and Program Coordination points out, “One could argue that the foundation was very efficient in its spending: the book was having plenty of impact without further Corporation involvement.”

An internal Carnegie Corporation conversation on the field of race relations after the Myrdal study is illuminating:

*In the opinion of the officers, the money currently available from all sources for work in this field is already out of proportion to our knowledge of how to apply it intelligently. Not only has research lagged behind action; the research itself has been fuzzy and disconnected. Accordingly, the officers do not plan to recommend new grants either for research or for ameliorative programs until a special committee appointed by the Social Science Research Council to survey the field has reported (Carnegie Corporation of New York Agenda for Meetings of the Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees, May 16, 1946).*

Still, in 1947, a grant was made to University of Chicago to help support training and research relevant to the improvement of race relations. But advisers to the foundation recommended that it concentrate on its traditional area of black higher education in the South rather than give funds “in small grants to many agencies of varying purpose and degrees of effectiveness” (Jackson, p. 264).

During the 1940s and 50s, the Corporation continued to contribute in a limited way to the National Urban League, the United Negro College Fund and black colleges and universities. While there was an increase in funding in 1963, it was still to the advancement of black higher education.

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The Congressional attacks on foundations in the mid-1950s discouraged most foundation initiatives on social and racial issues. Representatives of the Corporation testified before the Congressional committee investigating foundations in 1952, and Dollard was subpoenaed, though not called to testify, to answer charges that *An American Dilemma* was the work of a foreign socialist who criticized the U.S. Constitution (Jackson, p. 330).

By the time the foundations caught up, the civil rights movement had emerged in full force. As Avery Russell, who, during her 30-year career at the Corporation served as both director of publications and as a program officer, comments, “Foundations like to think of themselves as being ahead of the curve...but foundations are social institutions and are, in general, conformist.”

After 1965, the Corporation began to move beyond its traditional funding areas and explicitly framed its social justice agenda as linked to the legacy of Myrdal. Carnegie Corporation was once again on the cutting edge of funding for improving the situation of African Americans. Some of the many programs the Corporation began to fund over the next several years included promoting desegregation of northern schools, supporting voting rights, preparing black dropouts for college, training black lawyers to become active in civil rights and increasing the numbers of black students in southern law schools.

## A Follow-Up Study?

By the time of the 1964 Civil Rights Bill and the 1965 Voting Rights Act, many scholars had already seen that the next phase of the civil rights movement—beyond the end of legal segregation and the decline of overt individual prejudice—would be much more difficult than the first. As scholar and author James Q. Wilson said in 1962, there is a “Negro problem” beyond white racism (Southern, p. 220).

The critique of Myrdal for being overly optimistic and not paying sufficient attention to power intensified after the Watts riots that broke out in the summer of 1965. The violence only intensified in subsequent summers. The emergence of the black power movement and the disappointment of formerly integrationist black intellectuals led to scathing criticism of the Myrdal book along the lines of Ralph Ellison’s 1944 review.

All of this marked the end of the consensus to which the study contributed and which allowed it to have such impact. Twenty years of dramatic social change had made the data more appropriate for historians than as an underpinning for contemporary debates. But by this time as well, it had become much more difficult to imagine an equivalently influential single study.

Several observers have pointed out that funding for studies of race dried up for twenty years after *An American Dilemma* came out. Myrdal himself complained in 1972 that the book did “not spur greater scientific exertions to investigate the problems of race relations in America.” Noting a “decisive decline of interest in the scientific study of race relations in America on the part of foundations as well as of the academic community,” he said that he had begun work on a follow-up to the original work.

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Beginning in 1972, the Corporation provided funding for Myrdal to do a follow-up study, which was to be called *An American Dilemma Revisited: The Racial Crisis in Historical Perspective*. According to Eli Evans, who was a program officer at the Corporation from 1967 until 1977 and recently retired as president of the Revson foundation, the requirements of social science had changed significantly from the time the study had first come out and a project of similar scale would have cost in the tens of millions of dollars. Thus Myrdal, and his former collaborator Kenneth Clark (well-known for the “doll study,” which used white and brown dolls to examine children’s attitudes about race and which, along with *An American Dilemma*, was cited as social scientific evidence to support the Brown decision), were funded by the Corporation to work on a less extensive follow up. Myrdal begged out of the undertaking because of disagreements over staffing. The project, which the Corporation supported through the Metropolitan Applied Research Center did yield a book: Dorothy K. Newman, et al, *Protest, Politics, and Prosperity: Black Americans and White Institutions, 1940-75*, which was published by Random House in 1978. While not a true follow-up to the original Myrdal study, the book was a survey of statistical information on how blacks were doing in education, employment, income, wealth, housing and health care.

Myrdal was again funded by the Corporation to do a follow-up study in the early 1980s. By this time he was old and sick with Parkinson’s disease. After producing the manuscript with the help of a consultant funded by the Corporation, Myrdal remained dissatisfied and did not want it published. As Sissela Bok, Myrdal’s daughter, writes in *An American Dilemma Revisited*, “...the task proved too great... increasingly immobile and blind, and unable to carry out or even oversee the research and the revisions that he knew were needed, he decided not to submit his manuscript for publication.” Whether or not a second Myrdal study would have had influence comparable to the first is an open question.

In the years after *An American Dilemma*’s initial political influence ebbed, and as it came to represent the liberal integrationist side of an increasingly polarized debate on race, the nature of the study’s impact changed. It became a benchmark of the state of black Americans against which countless studies framed their research. Examples include a volume that took the title of Myrdal’s unfinished follow-up, *An American Dilemma Revisited*, published by Russell Sage in 1996.

The National Research Council sponsored a major study in 1989 called *Blacks in American Society* that was also comprehensive and in the Myrdal legacy. Other authors framed their contributions to the polarized debates on multiculturalism or affirmative action as being in Myrdal's footsteps.

*An American Dilemma* also remained a model of the kind of paradigm-shifting and consensus-generating comprehensive study to which others would aspire. It was primarily in this way that it continued to affect the work of the Corporation. Several foundation staff members have noted that the Myrdal project remained a model of a kind of commission or study—either by a single person or a prestigious group of people—on a topic of great significance that became a hallmark of the Corporation's work in the latter half of the 20th century. They cited its influence on the Corporation's work in South Africa, in particular the "Second Carnegie Inquiry into Poverty and Development in Southern Africa" in the early 1980s. Like the Myrdal study, it involved a multi-racial group of researchers and its devastating findings about black poverty were influential in bringing down a system of legalized segregation. (See [Carnegie Results, Winter 2004](#), "Carnegie Corporation in South Africa: A Difficult Past Leads to a Commitment to Change.") Patricia Rosenfield says that the Myrdal study "got into the subconscious of the foundation," affecting the Corporation's work in numerous ways.

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*An American Dilemma* also served as a moral goad for Americans to remain true to the American Creed on a range of policy issues; it is still cited in discussions about issues as diverse as immigration and democracy-building abroad.

That it has been difficult to recreate a contemporary study on race in America with Myrdal's impact—in its sociological seriousness, its ability to articulate a new paradigm for thinking about race and in its ability to define a consensus that drives policy—might well be due to the changes in the foundation world and the polarization of the debate about race. It would be difficult to imagine a single foundation president driving forward a similarly successful venture; Keppel was acting in a different period in the history of foundations. Demands for diversity and for accountability would make it difficult to think of giving such free reign to a single scholar in current times. As Vartan Gregorian, president of Carnegie Corporation points out: "To carry out such a study today, you would need to involve all the African American organizations, all the Hispanic organizations, all the Asian organizations and more, so it would not be the same; the issue has expanded to one of equity for all these groups."

Eli Evans says that *An American Dilemma* was as much a work of literature as it was one of social science: "It wasn't just a report; it was the passion and insight behind the writing that allowed it to have a resonance that an ordinary single-person study by an academic or a study by a commission doesn't have...A commission study by its nature has to find a language that joins a broad constituency from all walks of American life and a consensus about a subject that makes for less of a literary report." It is also hard to imagine that a non-American, and an outsider to the subject of race, would have the legitimacy to serve as the kind of mirror that Myrdal did on such a fraught topic, especially apart from the unifying and historical context of World War II, which provided the framework for new kinds of collaboration among groups that had not previously worked together.

It is perfectly possible that a study as such is not what will be required to move the debate on race forward. However, the Myrdal project continues to stand out as an extraordinary example of how far-sighted foundation giving can introduce scholarship into the policy arena to facilitate large-scale social change.

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Upcoming: *The Essential Gunnar Myrdal*, edited by Örjan Appelqvist and Stellan Andersson, to be published by New Press.

Corporation files and annual report essays

## Also interviewed for this article:

Present and former Carnegie Corporation of New York staff: Barbara Finberg, Sarah Engelhardt, Patricia Rosenfield, Eli Evans and Avery Russell. Additional interviews with Walter Jackson and Sissela Bok

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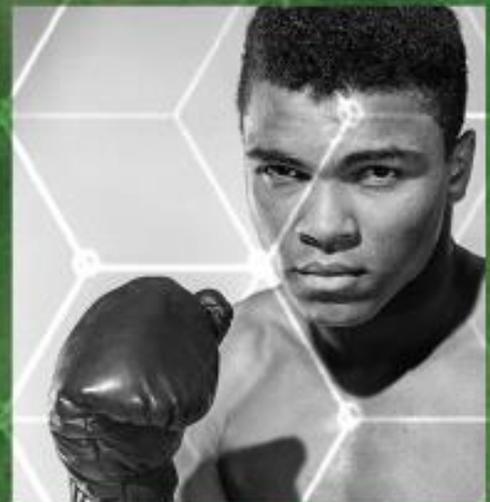
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# TRANSFORMING THE HATE THAT HATE PRODUCED:

An Analysis of the History and  
Counter-Radicalization Efforts of the  
Community of Imam WD Muhammad

Dr. Muhammad Fraser-Rahim and  
Dr. Adrian Taylor  
Spring 2018



## About the Authors

**Dr. Muhammad Fraser-Rahim** is the Executive Director, North America for Quilliam International. He is an expert on violent extremism issues domestically and overseas and a scholar on Africa. Prior to his current role, he served as a Senior Program Officer at the U.S. Institute of Peace, where he led their Horn of Africa program and served as an expert on CVE issues. Dr. Fraser-Rahim's areas of specialty are on transnational terrorist movements, Islamic intellectual history, Muslim communities in the West and Africa affairs. In addition, Mr. Fraser-Rahim worked for the United States Government for more than a decade for the Department of Homeland Security, Director of National Intelligence, and the National Counterterrorism Center. There, he provided strategic advice and executive branch analytical support on CVE issues to the White House and the National Security Council, where he was the author or co-author of Presidential Daily Briefs and strategic assessments on extremist ideology. Dr. Fraser-Rahim has conducted research in more than 40 countries on the African continent, and has worked and studied throughout the Middle East. He completed advanced level Arabic language certificates at various higher education institutions in the U.S., West Africa and the Middle East and he earned his Ph.D. from Howard University in African Studies, with a focus on Islamic thought and on transnational violent extremism.

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From Front Page:

*Top Right and Proceeding Down, (Photo 1) Ayuba Suleiman Diallo aka Job Ben Solomon, an Enslaved African Muslim living in the United States; (Photo 2) Masjid Muhammad aka "The Nations Capitol Mosque," Oldest Mosque in Washington DC built by indigenous Muslims; (Photo 3) Muhammad Ali, Boxing Heavyweight Champion; (Photo 4) Imam WD Muhammad, America's Imam, holding an American flag in the early 70's in Chicago, IL*

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## About Quilliam:

Quilliam is the world's first counter-extremism organisation. We have a full spectrum and values-based approach to counter-extremism which means promoting pluralism and inspiring change.

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Challenging extremism is the duty of all responsible members of society. Not least because cultural insularity and extremism are products of the failures of wider society to foster a shared sense of belonging and to advance liberal democratic values.

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## A Note from the CEO

Since its inception, the longest and most comprehensive de-radicalization program in the US has largely gone unnoticed and forgotten. Islamist terror and extremism may seem like a modern-day security issue, the Community of Imam W. Deen Muhammad (CWDM), led by the American Islamic reformer and son of the late Nation of Islam leader Elijah Muhammad, has been quietly implementing an incredibly effective counter-radicalization program for over four decades.

The African American Muslim story contains a wealth of untapped information and problem-solving experience that has the potential to create effective and successful CVE policy specific to the United States' unique conditions and necessities. Past experiences have shown that, despite the millions of dollars spent each year on CVE and counter-terrorism in the US, the efficacy of these policies is largely up for debate.

Our latest report, *Transforming the Hate: A policy report on the threat of radicalization among African American Muslims*, provides a uniquely comprehensive breakdown of the African American Muslim experience and the tools developed by a significant section of the community, for the community, to shield its members from the pull of radical Islamist narratives.

We hope that this report will shed light on these good practices and result in further development of the CWDM structure, as well as provide innovative ideas and resources for new CVE programs that build upon the existing framework developed by CWDM.

Haras Rafiq  
CEO, Quilliam International  
London, UK

## Foreword

Dating back to the mid 1930's, Masjid Muhammad, The Nations Mosque is a representative of the oldest Muslim community in the Nations Capitol. It's established as the first local/national Mosque to be built, upon a national platform, from the ground up, by American citizens of African descent. Its members have proudly taken serious the responsibility of citizenship, and is comprised of and associated with millions of healthy-minded, hardworking and loyal Muslims who are in every field of public service and the private sector. In addition, they are making significant contributions to support, defend, protect and invest in the betterment of our society, our nation, the United States of America.

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The Nation's Mosque, Masjid Muhammad, the oldest Muslim community located in the capital of America dating back to the mid-1930s, stands in support of "all of society" approaches to combat/prevent violence in all its forms. From the tragic events throughout the world including Paris, Brussels, Bamako or Nairobi to name a few, we stand in support of all right-minded people around the world who stand against the use of violence to take innocent lives and add yet again another atrocious, senseless act of violence.

While ISIL, al-Qa'ida and other transnational terrorist groups claim responsibility all over the world, our position is that it doesn't matter who the attackers are or what they claim, their actions are criminal, inhumane, and are an outright betrayal of and not condoned by Islam, Christianity, Judaism or any of the other beautiful faith communities. Any person or group, no matter how desperate their situation, no matter how much their hearts are painning because of wrong that has been done to them, or no matter what their cause, there is no justification for them to murder and make helpless, vulnerable, or innocent humans the target of their hate or their inhumane actions.

We stand in support of community level, governmental and all of society approaches to combat/prevent violent extremism. In addition, we call upon all religious leaders to maximize their Faith's teachings of love, mercy, compassion, peace, universal brotherhood and concern for humanity and human life. The Almighty is merciful and has placed more good and love in the world than not, together, united upon that inherent goodness and love we can reduce these small worlds of hate and evil. We have a responsibility to exhibit the best of our human and religious identity, by following the examples of Prophets Muhammad, Abraham, Moses, Jesus Christ, etc, (Peace be upon all of them).

Imam Talib Shareef  
President and Imam of Masjid Muhammad  
Washington, DC

## Executive Summary

This report represents one of the most comprehensive, based on open source available information on extremist recruitment targeting African Americans. Furthermore, it highlights the successful deradicalization program carried out by the community of the late Imam WD Muhammad for over 43 years in the United States.

African American Muslims represent one of the largest percentages of American Muslims. Despite mainstream public narratives to the contrary, Muslims of African descent have been in the United States before the inception of the republic and have played an integral part in the development of American society. Developing from the enslaved African Muslim experience and journeying through Black Nationalism and heterodox and orthodox Islam, the expression of Islam's formative years in America are a direct reaction to American slavery, the Jim Crow Laws, and the forced separation and breakdown of the black family. Emerging through organizations like the Ahmadiyya movement, the Moorish Science Temple, and the Nation of Islam, as well as individual Sunni, Shia, and Sufi practitioners, Islam in the Black American experience has taken shape on its own terms, experiences, and religious expression. This dissertation explores how the Islamic continuum in the Black American experience developed into its own organic expression of independence and creativity while simultaneously preserving its time-honored religious tradition.

Through the legacy of the American Muslim revivalist Imam W.D. Mohammed, we are given a philosophical, theological, and spiritual tradition that has carried out at least a forty-three-year counter-radicalization program against violence and fostered a community of hundreds of thousands of adherents who are part of every fabric of American culture, thus creating a prototype of how communities can stay resilient against violent extremism domestically and globally. This report builds off but departs from other scholarly traditions in highlighting Imam W.D. Mohammed's formula as the basis of his reform techniques and him arguing a uniquely American Islamic experience that offered an enlightenment and reawakening of Islamic principles for his co-religionists in the US and worldwide. Therefore, this report offers the approach instituted by W.D. Mohammed as a third option that can serve US and global policymakers around the world as they wrestle with the idea of effective approaches to combat violent extremism.

# Introduction

Sixteen years after the attacks of 9/11, the United States has demonstrated its power to deal military defeats to jihadist groups abroad, but continues to wrestle with jihadist ideology's continued appeal to youth, not only abroad, but also at home. This continued threat has given rise to an ongoing debate on the efficacy of countering violent extremism (CVE) or terrorism prevention. Yet despite the attention paid to CVE, the particular experiences and history of the African American Muslim community have seemingly been ignored.

Specifically, one of the most successful deradicalization programs in American history remains largely unknown to those working on terrorism prevention. Following the 1975 death of Elijah Muhammad, the leader of the Nation of Islam, his son WD Muhammad led the Community of Imam W. Deen Muhammad (CWDM) in a step-by-step program of reform that transformed the Nation of Islam. The CWDM abandoned the Nation of Islam's more extreme racial and anti-government views, replacing them with views that were more compatible with normative Islam and that stressed the value of working within the Constitutional system for reform.

The CWDM has demonstrated its continued resilience in the face of jihadist efforts to recruit African Americans, building upon its original reform effort with further programming, which addresses jihadist radicalization among other challenges. Despite the CWDM being one of the largest communities of African American Muslims, with some 300 mosques and associated centers throughout the U.S. and the Caribbean, not a single member of the community is known to have engaged in jihadist terrorism-related crimes.<sup>1</sup>

Jihadist terrorists have appealed to the history of African Americans to recruit and radicalize individuals – with some limited success. However, a combination of factors, including the unique history of the African American experience and the CWDM's efforts, have resulted in a jihadist radicalization challenge that takes a different form in the African American community than it does among other communities wrestling with jihadist efforts to radicalize and recruit youth.

This report provides an initial examination of the particular experience and history of African American Muslims and the CWDM's de- and counter-radicalization efforts, as well as the ways in which jihadist extremism has found expression within African American communities.

This paper is organized into four sections:

- First, a history of Islam among African Americans;
- Second, a review of the specific dynamics of jihadist recruitment among African Americans;
- Third, an examination of the program and methodology of CWDM deradicalization/reform interventions, alongside a case study of a PVE/CVE critical thinking program generated with the CWDM in Washington, DC, called *Tafakkur* (“to think, to ponder” in Arabic); and
- Lastly, policy recommendations informed by the model portrayed by the CWDM.

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<sup>1</sup> See Zafar Ishaq Ansari, “WD Muhammad: The Making of a ‘Black Muslim’ Leader (1933-1961),” *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 2, no. 2 (1985): 248-262. W. Deen Muhammad, *Focus on Al-Islam: A Series of Interviews with Imam W. Deen Muhammad in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: Zakat Publications, 1988), 35-37.

# 1. The Historical Roots of African American Islam

In the U.S., most discussion of American Muslim communities, and the challenge of jihadist terrorism therein, has focused upon those communities with South Asian or Arab roots and occasionally white converts. Yet, African Americans – those individuals who descend from enslaved Africans brought to the United States by force – represent one of the United States' largest Muslim communities. According to a 2017 Pew Research Center study, African Americans make up 32% of the American Muslim population.<sup>2</sup> African American Muslims have a distinct history not only from the South Asian, Arab, and white Muslim communities inside the U.S., but also from the African Muslims that arrived in the U.S. as immigrants or refugees and their descendants. Their history is deeply shaped by the historical experience of slavery and modern contestation over racism in American society.

## Islam's Journey to America

Islam first reached the Americas as a result of the transatlantic slave trade. From the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, merchants forced over twelve million Africans into bondage in the Americas.<sup>3</sup> Millions lost their lives during what is called the middle passage.<sup>4</sup> Scholars estimate that between 15-30% of Africans who survived the trans-Atlantic slave trade came from Islamic regions of West Africa, including what are currently the nations of Senegal, Mali, Guinea, Sierra Leone, and the Gambia.<sup>5</sup>

Despite the struggles of slavery, Africans found ways to adapt and continue their spiritual beliefs and practices. Many still practiced their Islamic faith and passed on its cultural, spiritual, and intellectual legacies to their African American descendants. In this way, enslaved Africans from centuries-old Muslim societies emerged as the first major population of Muslims in what would become the U.S.<sup>6</sup>

## African American Islam's Roots in West Africa

The advance of Islam into West Africa began in the ninth and tenth centuries, crossing from the Iberian Peninsula (southern Spain) into North Africa, before moving farther south into Sub-Saharan regions. Islam in West Africa developed through two influential paths. The first was through merchant transactions between West Africans and predominantly Arab traders who arrived from the Iberian Peninsula and North Africa. The second path was through "mystical" teachers, also known as Sufis, who became increasingly influential in the region. Similar to other religious traditions, these

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<sup>2</sup> Pew Research Center Study, 2017.

<sup>3</sup> See Eric Williams, *Capitalism & Slavery* (Capitol Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994).

<sup>4</sup> Sylviane A. Diouf, *Servants of Allah: African Muslims Enslaved in the Americas*, 15th Anniversary Ed., (New York: New York University Press, 2013).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> See Katia M. de Queiros Mattoso, *To Be a Slave in Brazil, 1550-1888*, Arthur Goldhammer, trans. (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press, 1994).

Islamic “missionaries” slowly developed a foothold with local West African communities already practicing a wide range of traditional spiritual beliefs.

Traditional spiritual practices in West Africa, though diverse, generally emphasized a worldview that included a complex cosmological structure and belief system that recognized ancestors, a supreme creator, and the supernatural. In this context, Islam, like its Judeo-Christian counterparts in Europe, shared similar religious motifs as found in West Africa. Marked by periods of hybridization, Islamic beliefs and traditional West African practices blended together to establish a new form of Islamic faith – iterations that would also happen as Islam adapted to the (African) American context. For example, pre-Islamic West African children and women often wore a protective amulet that would include an offering or charm that was to be worn all the time. With the advent of Islam and the gradual process of developing orthodox Islamic practices, Quranic verses or prayers were also included in the protective amulet.

Sufi leaders in West Africa became increasingly influential by the thirteenth century, but they did not necessarily assert Islam over existing practices. For example, in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, West African Sufi scholar Al Hajj Salim Suwari established a community focusing on the rights and responsibilities of religious minorities in Muslim-dominant societies.<sup>7</sup> Suwari modeled his beliefs after the Constitution of Medina, which highlighted the importance of equitable and fair treatment to other religious communities, protecting religious pluralism in society.

Beginning in the fourteenth century, West African cities such as Timbuktu in Mali, Agadez in Niger, and Kano in Nigeria emerged as centers of Islamic intellectual learning. The early Islamic schooling system in these areas demonstrated a commitment to scholarship and teaching, with an emphasis on the values of respect, inclusion, and tolerance. Students were taught a classical education, which included Arabic, arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy, rhetoric, logic, and Islamic spirituality.<sup>8</sup> Sufism was the predominant form of Islamic spiritual practice among West African Muslims, and it encouraged adherents to go beyond their five daily prayers as performed by Muslim devotees to offer additional devotional prayers, and to spend more time developing their personal relationship with Allah/God. Devotional practices included an emphasis on Arabic litanies and prayers chanted silently or aloud for self-purification.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, enslaved West African Muslims came from established Islamic societies and brought to the Americas an emphasis on transmission of knowledge and adherence to their faith. These spiritual practices, codified in West Africa and practiced for centuries, would serve as the religious and spiritual framework for those enslaved African Muslims who survived the middle passage to preserve for future generations. For many, the retention and memory of their Islamic beliefs served as a cornerstone for survival in the Americas.

## **The Emergence of Early American Islamic Movements**

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<sup>7</sup> See Ousmane Kane, *Beyond Timbuktu: An Intellectual History of Muslim West Africa* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* 42-101.

Although African American Islam had roots in established Islamic societies in West Africa, the experience of slavery imposed a rupture in the development of Islamic practices. Cut off from its original African-based forms, African American Islam gradually developed its own unique cultural and social practices distinct from the form of Islam practiced in West Africa. Dr. Sulayman Nyang, Professor Emeritus of African Studies at Howard University, refers to “the sixty-year gap between African Muslim slaves and the African American Muslims of this century.”<sup>9</sup>

Following this gap, a variety of groups, including Ahmadiyya missionaries, the Moorish Science Temple, and The Nation of Islam, began to formalize African American Islamic traditions. Later, the CWDM emerged out of the NOI, and during the late 1970s and 1980s, other black Sunni organizations influenced by foreign religious groups began to emerge as well.

## Ahmadiyya Movement

The Ahmadiyya movement originated in Southeast Asia as an Islamic missionary movement. Its ideological teachings were similar to those of mainstream Muslims as they were based on following the Qur’an and the example of the Prophet Muhammad. However, it departed from mainstream Islam in the specific teachings of its founder, Hazrat Ghulam Ahmad, who in 1888 declared himself the *Mahdi*, or the promised Messiah. He also argued that he was the incarnation of the Hindu god Krishna.<sup>10</sup>

In 1920, the Ahmadiyya movement sent Mufi Muhammad Sadiq, an Ahmadiyya religious officer, to the U.S. to spread the teachings of Ahmadiyya Islamic revivalism. Sadiq initially set out to recruit white Americans to Islam, but he quickly realized the challenges of racism in America after being detained at the airport.<sup>11</sup> Sadiq adjusted his tactical approach to focus on African Americans, who were subjected to vigilante and institutionalized racial abuse and were likely to be more open to a universal racial, spiritual, and religious message that included them.

By the time of Sadiq’s arrival in the U.S., many African Americans had already become acquainted with Islam through the Pan-African philosophy of Marcus Garvey and his United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA).<sup>12</sup> Garvey, for his part, was influenced by a Sudanese/Egyptian Muslim mentor, Duse Mohammed Ali.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Sulayman Nyang, *Islam in the United States of America* (Chicago: Kazi Publications: 1999).

<sup>10</sup> See Adil Hussain Khan, *From Sufism to Ahmadiyya: A Muslim Minority Movement in South Asia* (Indiana University Press, 2015).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Rashid, *Black Muslims in the US*, 34-97.

<sup>13</sup> See “7 Facts About Marcus Garvey’s Friend, Duse Mohamad Ali, You May Not Know,” *Atlanta Black Star*, September 21, 2017, accessed September 9, 2017 <http://atlantablackstar.com/2015/09/21/7-facts-about-marcus-garveys-friend-duse-mohamad-ali-you-may-not-know/>.

Prior to the 1940s, Ahmadis were the primary propagators of Islam to African American Muslims, and their decision to build their mosques in urban locations made it possible for many African Americans to be exposed to Islamic teachings.<sup>14</sup>

### **Moorish Science Temple**

Timothy Drew (1886-1929), a Pan-Africanist, established the Moorish Science Temple in 1913. Drew became a key influencer of numerous African American early Islamic movements in America. He traced his ideological roots to Marcus Garvey and would later adopt the name Noble Drew Ali. He appropriated into his organization Islamic religious motifs; elements of esoterica, freemasonry, and Pan-Africanism; and symbols from the Middle East. Drew also borrowed from a number of other ideas in an attempt to find an identity for his group. His movement included around 30,000 members at its peak in the early 1900s.<sup>15</sup>

Early Islamic movements in America had identity at the center of their movements, driven by the need to cope with and respond to American racism and segregation. For Drew, the aim of the Moorish Temple was to impress upon its followers the importance of dignity, self-respect, and responsibility. According to followers' archival narratives, they were to be known as Asiatic or Moorish people from Morocco.<sup>16</sup> This lore, invented by Drew, sought to bring some dignity to African Americans who were subjected to lynchings/domestic terrorism, legal discrimination, poverty, and degrees of hopelessness.<sup>17</sup>

### **The Nation of Islam**

In 1930, a year after the death of Noble Drew Ali, Wali Fard Muhammad founded the Nation of Islam (NOI), which would be popularized in mainstream America by his student Elijah Muhammad.<sup>18</sup> For many orthodox Muslims, the NOI was unorthodox and a deviation from "normative" Islam, informed by such notions as the idea that Fard was God in flesh, and that Elijah Muhammad (not the Muslim Prophet Muhammad) was the last prophet – if not the Messiah.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> See Dr. Fatima Fanusie, "Fard Muhammad," Doctoral dissertation, unpublished, March 2008.

<sup>15</sup> See Kambiz GhaneaBassiri, *A History of Islam in America: From the New World to the New World Order* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> See "Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror," accessed September 23, 2017, <https://lynchinginamerica.eji.org/report/>, to learn about how what is often characterized as "the great migration" from the south to the north or to the west is a misnomer. In effect, new evidence suggests that blacks were fleeing the south due to lynchings/domestic terrorism, with no recourse for civil justice.

<sup>18</sup> This is noteworthy, given that there are credible reports that Elijah Muhammad and Fard Muhammad were influenced by the Moorish Science Temple and may have been card carrying members. In this context, some scholars contended that the NOI came into existence to fill the leadership void left by the passing of Noble Drew Ali. For further reference, see "The Lost Found Nation of Islam," YouTube, documentary, accessed September 9, 2017 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5GhOYQALY4&t=1012s>.

<sup>19</sup> See "The Honorable Elijah Muhammad as Messiah," accessed November 9, 2017 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Laf0JG1\\_qYo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Laf0JG1_qYo).

The Nation of Islam was more than a religious group. It was also a political movement at odds with the U.S. government, who viewed the NOI as a black nationalist extremist group. The Nation of Islam embraced rhetoric calling the white man the devil, believed that blacks should have their own separate nation within the U.S., and emphasized self-defense in the face of real and imagined injustice perpetuated by whites. As a result, the Nation of Islam was classified as an extremist group – a product of extreme times, via racism, segregation, lynchings, etc.<sup>20</sup>

The NOI was also a social reform movement focused on the experience of African American life. Its agenda included a moral and physical code in which adherents were instructed to abide by strict measures of discipline, including abstinence from alcohol, gambling, fornication, adultery, drugs, and dancing, as well as dietary restrictions, such as avoidance of pork. Additionally, the NOI recruited and attracted African Americans from the underclass (e.g. those in/from prison, the poor, the undereducated, etc.). These and other rules were carefully orchestrated to make clear the divisions between members and nonmembers of the NOI.

For many African-Americans, the NOI's social reform efforts and the techniques it employed were vital. The importance of the NOI and its promotion of social reform can be seen in the bold speeches and practices of men like Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali, two international figures that introduced NOI and the struggles of African Americans to the world scene.<sup>21</sup> At its peak, the NOI had perhaps millions of followers. However, many African Americans were hesitant to join this new movement that was critical of the white American establishment. Though this paper doesn't address the minutiae of doctrinal details on the NOI or other early Islamic movements in America, it is important to understand that the NOI and other such movements offered elements of Islamic reform to address the physical, emotional, and spiritual conditions of its followers.

## **The Community of Imam W. Deen Muhammad**

In 1975, Elijah Muhammad died, and leadership of the Nation of Islam (NOI) fell to his son, Imam Wallace Deen Muhammad (1933-2008).<sup>22</sup> As a result, WD Muhammad became the religious leader of the largest American Muslim community in the Western Hemisphere and began to transform the NOI.<sup>23</sup> WD Muhammad's efforts led to the eventual disbandment of the original NOI and the emergence of the Community of WD Muhammad (CWDM).

As part of this transformation, WD Muhammad ushered in the largest mass-conversion of Americans to Sunni Islam. While doing so, he gradually moved away from his father's divisive teachings of black nationalism and proto-Islamic concepts into

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> From his time coming into office as the leader in 1975, Wallace Muhammad used many different spellings for his name, including the Arabic name of "Warithudeen." For the sake of simplicity throughout this study, we use "WD Muhammad."

<sup>23</sup> GhaneaBassiri, *A History of Islam in America*, 197-271.

universal Islamic values that filtered through the African American experience.<sup>24</sup> For WD Muhammad, the aim was to indigenize mainstream Islamic beliefs and practices and recalibrate the old NOI teachings into mainstream Islamic beliefs. His desire was for an Islam that was distinctly Islamic yet proudly African American, and he saw African Americans “reverting” to the original religion of their African ancestors rather than converting to a new religion. The particular views and approach of the CWDM and the specifics of its transformation of the NOI are described in more detail in the next section.<sup>25</sup>

## 2. The CWDM’s Deradicalization Program

Despite the attention devoted to Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), terrorism prevention, and deradicalization efforts, one of the most successful deradicalization efforts in American history has long been ignored – that of the CWDM. Upon taking leadership of the Nation of Islam, WD Muhammad instituted a 43-year deradicalization program which attempted to shift the Nation of Islam away from its radical beliefs regarding black separatism and the relationship to the U.S. government. The changes that Muhammad instituted transformed the original structure of the NOI.

### Ideological/Doctrinal Reform

Dismantling the NOI’s extremist ideology was at the core of WD Muhammad’s efforts. He created a new frame for the entire movement that included the following changes: (1) labeling Fard Muhammad, the founder of the NOI, as a wise man instead of “God in person” as Elijah Muhammad and followers had done; (2) restoring and honoring Malcolm X’s legacy as a critical and influential member in the movement and raising his status to that of an important contributor to the NOI; (3) raising the status of American citizenship as a central role, a direct critique on the NOI’s previous rhetoric calling for a separate state; and (4) doctrinally ensuring that the followers of the previous NOI were in line with traditional and normative Islam through ritual devotional acts as commonly practiced by Muslims throughout the world (e.g. fasting, prayers, practicing hajj, etc.).

The institution of these four measures provided WD Muhammad with the foundational basis to establish a new movement on the theological and spiritual grounds of the religion of Islam. Through weekly radio addresses, public events using audio and cassette recordings, and annual conventions, he used his new platform to directly critique the theological innovations of his father.

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<sup>24</sup> W. Deen Muhammad, *Focus on Al-Islam: A Series of Interviews with imam W. Deen Muhammad in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: Zakat Publications, 1988), 35-7.

<sup>25</sup> Despite WD Muhammad’s reform efforts, the NOI was reconstituted under Louis Farrakhan in 1977.

## Self-Empowerment and Identity Reconstruction

The Nation of Islam had derived strength from the real contribution it made to the expression of African American identity amidst institutionalized racism and being the victims of domestic terrorism.<sup>26</sup> The CWDM was successful in its transformation of the NOI in part because it did not abandon the work of providing a structure for the expression of African American identity, but instead reshaped the structure within which the group shaped the identity.

To this point, WD Muhammad introduced the term “Bilalians.” Bilal was an Ethiopian Muslim who was born in 600 AD. His role in early Islamic history is of primary importance since he was one of the first converts to Islam and was brutally punished by his enslaver in the pre-Islamic Arabian society for his refusal to denounce Islam. According to authoritative Islamic accounts, Bilal would lament and cry out his belief in monotheism and his faith in the new religion of Islam as the early Muslim community was emerging.

WD Muhammad's introduction of the concept of the “Bilalian” was a deliberate and concerted effort to reshape the way identity was expressed. WD Muhammad was keen on the delicate balance between appropriating Bilal for his community's purpose and replacing the extreme ethnocentric identity of the NOI for another idea of racial superiority within Sunni orthodoxy. To this effect, WD Muhammad stated, “We are experimenting...trying to find a solution to our identity problem.”<sup>27</sup>

By creating a new image that allowed the followers to have a hero and model who was both black and Muslim, WD Muhammad created a sense of belonging and meaning while recentring Islamic identity and blackness to the religion of Islam and to the African continent. The *Muhammad Speaks* newspaper, the publication of the NOI, was renamed the *Bilalian News*, effective November 1, 1975, furthering the change carried out by WD Muhammad.

In the *Bilalian News* on November 16, 1979, he defended the reform towards Sunni Islam that he was trying to introduce to members of the former Nation of Islam. With regard to the concept of Bilalian, he stated:

[This] is not a religious name. We have adopted the name Bilalian as an ethnic name to replace other terms that we think are not as rich, ethnically speaking. They are not as rich because to identify with skin color is not as rich ethnically speaking as to identify with an ancestor who identified with a great ideology....We don't identify with Bilal only because he was Muslim, it's mainly because he was an African ancestor.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> See “Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror,” accessed September 23, 2017, <https://lynchinginamerica.eji.org/report/>.

<sup>27</sup> Edward E. Curtis, IV, *Islam in Black America: Identity, Liberation, and Difference in African American Islamic Thought* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2002).

<sup>28</sup> *Bilalian News*, November 16, 1979.

## Patriotism and Citizenship

In addition to deliberately reframing the way the Nation of Islam constructed African American identity, WD Muhammad also reframed the way the NOI related to the U.S. Government and citizenship. Unlike the separatism of the NOI, Muhammad encouraged his followers to embrace their American citizenship despite the complicated history of being descendants of enslaved Africans. He also encouraged his community to not only recognize their black roots from the continent, but also to fully embrace being both Muslim and black in America, especially because there would be no opportunity for African Americans at large to know where in Africa they were from. This understanding also placed the desire to respect the rich tradition of Islamic schools of learning and value the experiences of the American encounter with Islam as unique, different, and contextualized in history. WD Muhammad emphasized the development of a specifically American formal tradition or school of Islamic thought (*madhab*):

It's because, as I understand, the *madhabs* are geographically influenced. We are in a totally different geography in America. And I don't think we should adhere to any *madhabs* because those were influenced by their location and they are different based on their location. The Shafi school and the Maliki school are in North Africa and the Wahhabi one in Saudi Arabia. Regions are supposed to develop these *madhabs*. I think we are gradually getting a sense of *madhabs* in America, especially those like me. We are getting a sense of *madhabs*. And with the coming generation I think that we will be getting a much stronger sense of it. It is coming more and more.<sup>29</sup>

WD Muhammad encouraged a healthy sense of American patriotism, encouraging his members to serve their society in government, civil society, and locally. For WD Muhammad, service was a part of worship and was at the core of reconciling differences and creating a sense of cohesion with one's fellow citizen. This was significant, as it transformed the notion that the U.S. was inherently evil and created the conditions for members from the CWDM to actively participate in government and civil society.

## Case Study: *Tafakkur*, Critical Thinking Cyphers

As the CWDM has confronted the specific challenge of jihadist extremism's appeal, it has continued to draw upon the tradition of reform that began in 1975 and combine it with practical interventions to address jihadism specifically. This section provides a case study of such an intervention.

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<sup>29</sup> Michael V. Perez and Fatima Bahloul, editors, "Imam Warith Deen Mohammed: 'If we become independent thinkers, we can make a contribution,'" *Islamica Magazine*, September 11, 2008, accessed September 24, 2017, [http://www.patheos.com/blogs/altmuslim/2008/09/if\\_we\\_become\\_independent\\_thinkers\\_we\\_can\\_make\\_a\\_contribution/](http://www.patheos.com/blogs/altmuslim/2008/09/if_we_become_independent_thinkers_we_can_make_a_contribution/).

Beginning in the summer of 2015, the CWDM in Washington, DC, partnered with the America's Islamic Heritage Museum to design and implement a six-week CVE critical thinking program called "Tafakkur Cyphers DC." *Tafakkur* means "to think, ponder, and reflect" in Arabic. Tafakkur Cyphers, held at the America's Islamic Heritage Museum, was designed to empower DC youth to think for themselves, and to insulate the community's youth from the threat of violent extremism through the window of Islam, the Africana (the African and African Diaspora) Experience, and contemporary International Affairs.

The program posited a theory of change that if youth were encouraged, empowered, and taught how to think for themselves, they would be better able to determine and expose the contradictions embedded in the narratives and practices of violent extremist groups, thus making them less susceptible to their messaging.<sup>30</sup> Accordingly, the program was divided into two halves. The first half of the intervention reviewed the topics of Critical Thinking, the Socratic Method, Islam, Islamic Philosophy, and *Ikhtilaaf* (respect for differences of opinions in Islam). The second half of the workshop reviewed the topics of the Africana History, the Genealogy of African American Muslims, and the intersections of Geopolitics, Modernity, and Violent Extremism.

Trained facilitators met with youth six times over the course of the six weeks, for two hours each meeting. During the first hour, the facilitators gave an introduction and review of the week's topic and theme. During the second hour of each meeting, the Tafakkur Cyphers model was implemented. Under the model, students posed self-generated questions and queried them philosophically, in the spirit of Socratic, and time honored, Islamic inquiry.

During the abovementioned cyphers, students sat in a circle led by a moderator. While in the circle, they were prompted to share questions about the social world that were on their mind. While the questions were shared, the moderator recorded them on the whiteboard. After five to ten questions were shared, two rounds of voting occurred. During the first round of voting, students were allowed to vote on any question that was listed – some voted for one question, some two or more. Next, a second round of voting occurred, from the list of top three choices from round one. During this round, students could only vote once, and the question with the most votes was the question that was examined for the remainder of the hour. The intervention was useful for the students because 1) they were given the opportunity to talk about issues that mattered to them – they were talked with, not at, which is the case far too often when engaging adults; 2) they had a chance to be socialized with positive peers and mentors; and 3) they were given guided instruction and modeling on how to "do" critical thinking.

Unprompted and early on, students easily condemned the practices of violent extremist groups (e.g. sharing that the terrorists were "evil," "not cool," and "making Islam look bad," and exposed the contradiction of terrorists claiming to support Muslims, while killing Muslim civilians, etc.) and pivoted to issues that mattered to

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<sup>30</sup> During this workshop, students were introduced to the principles of reasoning (e.g. logic 101, how to identify assumptions and presuppositions, test the validity of a claim based on facts/evidence, etc.).

them socially and developmentally (e.g. dating or not, how to dress modestly, listening to secular music, etc.).<sup>31</sup>

The Tafakkur program was also taken internationally to Nigeria in 2017, thanks to USAID funding, enabling the format of the CDWM to work directly with individuals affected by Boko Haram and the Islamic State in West Africa. Both Tafakkur DC and Tafakkur Nigeria were seen as successes with measurable results affecting students, youth, and participants from various backgrounds. Students showed increased knowledge about the project's themes via a pre- and post-test, and all participants knew more about critical thinking techniques and how to apply them to real-life situations. Additionally, all the participants and parents in Tafakkur DC expressed a need for ongoing interventions and services. Our M&E impact assessments of both Tafakkur DC and Nigeria are still being compiled, and will be available in the near future, but preliminary findings show promising opportunities to scale even further globally.

### **3. Jihadist Terrorism and African American Experience**

Though often ignored by debates over counterterrorism policy, the African American Muslim community in the U.S. has not been immune to jihadist recruitment. African Americans constitute 50 of the 417 individuals (12%) accused of jihadist terrorism-related crimes since 9/11, according to the New America Foundation's database and study "Terrorism in America After 9/11."<sup>32</sup>

To analyze the particular context of African Americans attracted to jihadist terrorism, this report draws upon the findings of the New America Foundation's database and study "Terrorism in America After 9/11." The version of the database used in this study covers the time period from September 11, 2001, to July 11, 2017.<sup>33</sup> This section of the texts examines the characteristics of those African American Muslims who have been drawn to terrorism, and reviews jihadist recruitment efforts directed at African American Muslims.

#### **Jihadist Targeting of the African American Muslim Community**

Jihadists have always seen the African American Muslim community as grounds for potential recruits. African American Muslim encounters with overseas Muslims, largely from the Arab world and Southeast Asia, have been documented going back to the 40s and 50s.<sup>34</sup> In the mid-1980s and 90s, Muslims in the U.S. and African American

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<sup>31</sup> Funding limitations precluded a careful M&E assessment, though data was compiled and stored for future use.

<sup>32</sup> See "Terrorism in America After 9/11," accessed November 3, 2017 <https://www.newamerica.org/in-depth/terrorism-in-america/>.

<sup>33</sup> July 11, 2017, was when the research team received access to the NAF's database.

<sup>34</sup> Los Angeles, *Herald-Dispatch*, March 12, 1959, I and 5, cited in E.U. Essien-Udom, *Black Nationalism: The Search for an Identity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 305.

Muslims in particular were actively recruited to fight in the Afghan jihad to expel the Soviets.<sup>35</sup>

Additionally, missionary activities starting in the early 1990's coincided with a period of large influx of cash flow from the Arabian Peninsula and the reawakening of African American social identity.<sup>36</sup> In America, the epicenters of East Orange, NJ, and Philadelphia, PA, became the locations for vibrant missionary activities, which provided lucrative educational scholarships, and satellite exchanges with Saudi-based clerics and immediate cash into urban communities who were desperate for resources. These efforts prompted the emergence of African American Salafī clerics who became emissaries of Salafī thought,<sup>37</sup> and provided tremendous influence for conversion.

In 2008, then-al Qa'ida second-in-command, Ayman al Zawahiri, sought to interlace domestic African American racial grievances with the global jihad movement in a video message after the election of President Barack Obama.<sup>38</sup> In this message, Zawahiri presented video motifs of Malcolm X, attempting to exploit historical African American Muslim activism as a potential means for future radicalization and mobilization. The effort was judged to be largely unsuccessful.<sup>39</sup>

In the summer of 2015 Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula produced a six-page piece, "The Blacks in America," in their English-language online magazine *Inspire*. The article emphasized the history of abuse inflicted on African Americans at the hands of the U.S. government and white America. Equally important, the authors of the article sought to connect Islamic historical events, particularly that of Bilal, the aforementioned Ethiopian convert to Islam, with that of the plight of the current state of African Americans.

In the same year, in its English-language magazine called *Dabiq*, ISIS published an article titled "Wala and Bara versus American Racism." The article used Qur'anic references and narrations of the Prophet Muhammad to denounce American racism, calling on African Americans to embrace Islam and see the colorblindness within the Islamic State's Ummah.<sup>40</sup> The article demonstrates that ISIS is keenly aware of ways to create fissures within American's minority populations.

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<sup>35</sup> See "Today's terrorism didn't start with 9/11 -- it started with the '90s," *CNN*, August 2, 2017, accessed September 19, 2017 [www.cnn.com/2017/08/02/opinions/nineties-terrorism-bergen/index.html](http://www.cnn.com/2017/08/02/opinions/nineties-terrorism-bergen/index.html).

<sup>36</sup> James Jennings, ed., *Blacks, Latinos and Asians in Urban America: Status and Prospects for Politics and Activism* (London: Praeger, 1994). Yuri Kochiyama, *The Impact of Malcolm X on Asian-American Politics and Activism* (London: Praeger, 1994).

<sup>37</sup> We describe African American Salafism as those practitioners who seek to follow the way and example of Muhammad using a literal reading of the Qur'an. Many adherents are conservative in their orientation, synonymous to southern Baptists in the American South being conservative. In no way is Salafism equated directly to extremism. Instead, adherents seek to adopt a life of mostly literalism, but who seek to find a way to apply these religious values in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with varying degrees of practice and implementation.

<sup>38</sup> See "Third Interview with Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri – 5/2007," May 5, 2007, accessed September 13, 2017 <https://archive.org/details/Third-Interview>.

<sup>39</sup> See "Al Qaeda leader mocks Obama in Web posting," *CNN*, November 19, 2008, accessed September 13, 2017 [www.cnn.com/2008/US/11/19/obama.alqaeda/](http://www.cnn.com/2008/US/11/19/obama.alqaeda/).

<sup>40</sup> "From the Battle of Al-Ahzab, To the war of Coalitions, Wala and Bara Versus American Racism," *Dabiq Magazine* no. 11, p. 18. (Islamic Calendar) Dhul Q'adah, 1436 (2015).

## Who Are the African Americans Attracted to Jihadist Terrorism?

The African Americans who have been attracted to jihadist efforts to radicalize the community

represent a distinct population from the overall set of Americans who have been thus attracted. This is in part a result of several distinguishing factors from the African American Muslim community. This section examines these factors as they relate to the 50 African Americans among the 417 individuals accused of jihadist criminal activity in the New America Foundation's database "Terrorism in America After 9/11."<sup>41</sup>

### Converts to Islam

The African Americans who are attracted to jihadist terrorism tend to be new to Islam and the Muslim community. 84% of African Americans accused of jihadist terrorism-related crimes were converts. This is a far higher rate than for American jihadist extremists overall, among whom 30% were converts. The differences suggested by this comparison demonstrate the need for policymakers and law enforcement to examine how CVE and counterterrorism function in African American communities specifically.

The high rate of conversion among African American Muslims likely has several roots. It is in part a result of the larger percentage of converts among African American Muslims than among other American Muslim communities. U.S.-born Muslims who identify as black are far more likely to be converts than other Muslim communities in the U.S. Among these, 33% were born Muslim and 67% were not born Muslim, according to a 2017 Pew Research Center poll.<sup>42</sup> By contrast, among U.S. born Muslims of other races, 63% were born Muslim, and among foreign-born Muslims, 95% were born Muslim.<sup>43</sup>

Another possible explanation is that established African American Muslim communities, and the CWDM in particular, have successfully integrated into the U.S. As a result, when challenges occur, community members do not have a problem using legal means to express grievances. None of the 50 African Americans accused of jihadist terrorism crimes were members of the CWDM, despite it being one of the largest African American Muslim communities. Finally, converts by definition are "new" to the faith and often do not have deep community ties and relationships that can help them navigate the realities of the faith in a world of challenges.

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<sup>41</sup> The New America database, which is updated regularly, was accessed by the authors of this paper on July 11, 2017, which was then reviewed by the authors and their research team to identify those individuals who met the definition of African-American (U.S.-born descendants of enslaved Africans). The overall database includes individuals accused of jihadist terrorism related crimes since 9/11 who are either American citizens or who engaged in jihadist activity within the United States. The data also include a small number of individuals who died before being charged but were widely reported to have engaged in jihadist criminal activity,

<sup>42</sup> [http://www.pewforum.org/2017/07/26/religious-beliefs-and-practices/pf\\_2017-06-26\\_muslimamericans-06-02/](http://www.pewforum.org/2017/07/26/religious-beliefs-and-practices/pf_2017-06-26_muslimamericans-06-02/) (2017)

<sup>43</sup> [http://www.pewforum.org/2017/07/26/religious-beliefs-and-practices/pf\\_2017-06-26\\_muslimamericans-06-02/](http://www.pewforum.org/2017/07/26/religious-beliefs-and-practices/pf_2017-06-26_muslimamericans-06-02/) (2017)

## Prior Criminal History

African-American jihadists were more likely to have prior criminal records than jihadists overall. 44% of African Americans accused of jihadist terrorism had criminal records. By contrast, only 14% of the overall sample had a criminal record. This finding mirrors relevant prison and criminal statistics, where a disproportionate amount of crime and punishment is found in the African American community, both Christian and Muslim.

## Tip from Community

Policing African American jihadism poses unique challenges. While a quarter of American jihadists were implicated by a tip from a member of their community, only two of the 50 African American jihadists (4%) were implicated by a tip from community members who would personally know them. The government received a tip from the Muslim community when it was observed that Donald Thomas Surrat, a part of the Virginia Jihad Network, was conducting “military-style training.”<sup>44</sup> And the government received a tip on Kobie Diallo Williams, a part of a network that wanted to support the Taliban, when he expressed a desire to fight overseas.<sup>45</sup>

One possible explanation for the different proportion of individuals implicated by community tips is that African Americans, due to their historical experience of policing aimed at the community and continued tensions, may tend to be more skeptical of law enforcement and intelligence services, thus making a “tip” less likely.<sup>46</sup>

## Involved an Informant

Informants have played a larger role in the policing of jihadist terrorism in the African American community than in the policing of jihadist terrorism more generally. In the general sample, 48% of the cases involved an informant. For African Americans, 60% involved an informant. This might be a result of having more informants in the African American community, or possibly more African Americans are saying/doing things that raise alarms. No matter the case, the divergence is worthy of closer, case-by-case examination, alongside a cost-benefit analysis concerning the contested use of informants, mindful that the majority of those informed on had neither the skills nor

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<sup>44</sup> See “Post-9/11 Jihadist Terrorism Cases Involving U.S. Citizens and Residents: An Overview” NAF, Mar 13, 2011, accessed September 20, 2017 <http://peterbergen.com/post-911-jihadist-terrorism-cases-involving-u-s-citizens-and-residents-an-overview/>.

<sup>45</sup> See “Houston Taliban supporter gets 4½ years in prison” CHRON, August 7, 2009, accessed October 17, 2017, [www.chron.com/news/houston-texas/article/Houston-Taliban-supporter-gets-4-years-in-prison-1623347.php](http://www.chron.com/news/houston-texas/article/Houston-Taliban-supporter-gets-4-years-in-prison-1623347.php).

<sup>46</sup> See “COINTELPRO: The FBI's War on Black America,” YouTube, accessed September 23, 2017 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xAz3JIMK714>.

resources to conduct an attack, short of help by the informant who often came up with the idea for a given attack.<sup>47</sup>

**Figure I.**

	<b>Original Sample</b>	<b>African American Muslim Sample</b>
<b>Convert</b>	30%	84%
<b>Criminality</b>	14%	44%
<b>Tip from Community</b>	25%	4%
<b>Involved an Informant</b>	48%	60%

## **4. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations**

Based on our review of the history of African American Islam and the efforts of African American Muslims to confront extremism, the following policy recommendations are to be considered:

### **Promote Inclusion and Leverage African Americans Muslims in Public Policy**

The examples of the African American Muslim family dynamics of having at least three generations of inter-faith families can serve as a model to other American Muslim cultural groups who seek to reconcile their links between their ancestral homeland and America. Learning from the African American Muslim experience could serve useful in their ability to negotiate integration, religious conservatism and peacebuilding. Creating opportunities for more interfaith dialogue could prove valuable, along with integrating the latter voices into the policy making process – to share their experiences and insight.

### **Establish an Art and Culture Advisory Council**

African American culture has long benefitted from the heavy infusion of Islamic identities and motifs. The legacy of the NOI and its offshoots had considerable influence on early and current hip hop artists in America, and drew much of its power from its impact. The CWDM's de-radicalization efforts explicitly acknowledged and accounted for the importance of the identity formation and social reform projects

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<sup>47</sup> See "Al Jazeera Investigates – Informants," *Al Jazeera*, YouTube, accessed September 23, 2017 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMRns4ViuEY>.

that the NOI engaged in. Developing an Art and Culture Advisory Council would be a meaningful first step to help find creative ways to counter the narrative practices of violent extremist groups. Many American hip hop artists like Jay Z, Mos Def aka Yasin Bey, Lupe Fiasco, Tribe Called Quest, Poor Righteous Teachers, and Rakim already frequently use Islamic references in their music and have sought to incorporate positive Islamic and Arabic language memes to reconcile a critique on social conditions in America. For example, imagine if Black Thought (aka Tariq Luqmaan Trotter) from the Roots developed a counter-messaging campaign/freestyle similar to his legendary freestyle delivered on [December 14, 2017](#).

## **African American Muslim Imams**

The community of the late Imam WD Muhammad offers an alternative blueprint of an Islamic community that for decades has been promoting integration, tolerance, and inclusion. The community was the first in America to denounce terrorism over 50 years ago, and has the largest community of veterans who have served in every major American war. Additionally, the community has been strong advocates to be critical and objective when necessary and come from a long tradition of African American activism regardless of faith based tradition.

## **Pilot an Alternative to Prosecution PVE program**

As expressed in this paper and throughout the media, many individuals that are being charged with domestic and material support to terrorism are individuals that had neither the means, the resources, nor the capabilities to pull off a given attack short of support by an informant, who often came up with the idea for a given attack.<sup>48</sup> Additionally, when examining the literature and available data on local, Muslim-community led P/CVE initiatives, there is promise in providing communities and individuals the kind of holistic support that they need to legally and meaningfully function in society.<sup>49</sup> Consequently, we recommend that the USG come up with a framework that identifies vulnerable individuals, but instead of creating the space for them to launch an attack, etc., encourages or eventually compels them to be treated in an off-ramping program.

## **Rapid Response Office and Support Teams within the USG on P/CVE**

Far too often, communities need support “now,” and relevant resources are not available outside of traditional procurement mechanisms. Having a rapid means of deployment will help to aide efforts of those individuals who need the support the most. In addition, working with existing local community approaches and means like

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., and see Trevor Aaronson *The Terror Factory: Inside the FBI's Manufactured War on Terrorism* (New York: Ig Publishing, 2013).

<sup>49</sup> See Michael J. Williams, Ph.D. et al. in “Evaluation of a Multi-Faceted, U.S. Community Based, Muslim-Led CVE Program” *WORDE*, accessed January 2, 2018 <http://www.worde.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Evaluation-of-a-Multi-Faceted-U.S.-Community-Based-Muslim-Led-CVE-Program.pdf>.

efforts addressing gang and drug prevention will aide in building off what already works.

## Appendix A. African Americans Convicted of Terrorism post 9-11

	Convert	CWDM Member	Involved an Informant	Tip from Community	Mental Health	Crime Background
<b>Ernest James (Ujaama)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	NA	No
<b>Jeffrey Leon (Battle)</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	NA	No
<b>Patrice Lumumba (Ford)</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	NA	No
<b>Donald Thomas (Suratt)</b>	Yes	No	No	Yes	NA	No
<b>Hasan (Akbar)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	NA	No
<b>Rafiq (Sabir)</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	NA	No
<b>Gregory (Patterson)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	NA	Yes
<b>Levar (Washington)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	NA	Yes
<b>Kevin (James)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	NA	Yes
<b>Kobie Diallo (Williams)</b>	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	NA	No
<b>Derrick (Shareef)</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	NA	No
<b>Paul (Hall, AKA Abu Jihaad)</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	NA	No
<b>Christopher (Paul)</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	NA	No
<b>David (Williams)</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	NA	Yes
<b>Onta (Williams)</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	NA	Yes
<b>James (Cromitie)</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	According to HRW report	Yes
<b>Abdulahkim Mujahid (Muhammad)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	NA	Yes
<b>Sharif (Mobley)</b>	No	No	No	No	NA	No
<b>Walli (Mujahidh)</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Schizoaffective disorder	Yes

					with bipolar tendencies	
<b>Abu Khalid (Abdul-Latif)</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Dependent Personality Disorder	Yes
<b>Craig (Baxam)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	NA	No
<b>Akba (Jordan)</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	NA	No
<b>Avin (Brown)</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	NA	No
<b>Ali (Brown)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	NA	Yes
<b>Zale (Thompson)</b>	Yes	NA	No	No	Depression, plus family's description	Yes
<b>Douglas (McCain)</b>	Yes	NA	No	No	NA	Yes
<b>Alton (Nolen)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	Not competent for guilty plea, testimony re schizophrenia	Yes
<b>Hasan (Edmonds)</b>	Yes	NA	Yes	No	NA	No
<b>Jonas (Edmonds)</b>	Yes	NA	Yes	No	NA	Yes
<b>David (Wright)</b>	No	NA	No	No	NA	No
<b>Decarus (Thomas)</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Treated for PTSD after being shot during a robbery	Yes
<b>Fareed (Mumuni)</b>	No	No	Yes	No	NA	No
<b>Amir (Al-Ghazi)</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	NA	Yes
<b>Jaelyn (Young)</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	NA	No
<b>Terrence (McNeil)</b>	Yes	NA	No	No	NA	No
<b>Jalil Ibn (Aziz)</b>	Yes	NA	No	No	NA	No
<b>Emanuel (Lutchman)</b>	Yes	NA	Yes	No	Mental health arrests, diagnosed, prescribed medication	Yes
<b>Usaamah</b>	No	NA	No	No	NA	No

<b>(Rahim)</b>						
<b>Edward (Archer)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	Mother, lawyer says yes - hearing voices	Yes
<b>Maalik (Jones)</b>	No	NA	No	No	NA	Yes
<b>Gregory (Hubbard)</b>	No	NA	Yes	No	N/A	No
<b>Darren Arness (Jackson)</b>	No	NA	Yes	No	N/A	No
<b>Dayne Atani (Christian)</b>	No	NA	Yes	No	N/A	Yes
<b>Erick Jamal (Hendricks)</b>	Yes	NA	Yes	No	NA	Yes
<b>Aaron Travis (Daniels)</b>	Yes	NA	Yes	No	Unknown	No
<b>Lionel Nelson (Williams)</b>	Yes	NA	Yes	No	N/A	No
<b>Joseph (Jones)</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	NA	Yes
<b>Edward (Schimenti)</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	NA	Yes
<b>Jason Jerome (Springer)</b>	Yes	NA	No	No	NA	Yes
<b>Alexander Samuel (Smith)</b>	Unknown	NA	Yes	No	NA	NA