

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Since 9/11, the US seems to be lacking a long-term strategy to confront the threat of terrorists on the domestic front. While, the global world witnesses that currently the American counterterrorism body has been remarkably aggressive, both globally and domestically. Extensive overseas military and intelligence gathering actions, a significantly improve inter-agency coordination and a constant high level of vigilance in general have allowed the US authorities to keep their country safe from terrorist threats. However, it is a fact as well, that the US authorities are unable to conceive a policy that would tackle the issue of radicalization, preventing young American Muslims from embracing terrorist ideology.

After a native Californian, John Walker Lindh, for the first time fighting the US troops alongside Taliban, the phenomena of Homegrown terrorist or foreigners who join Islamic insurgency is on the rise, both in US homeland and abroad. This unprecedented phenomenon in the US history has proved that the threat posed by terrorist on US soil is more complex and sophisticated than what it is appear. These terrorists seemed want to be a part of the "Clash of Civilization" between Islam and the West. In explaining the phenomenon of Homegrown terrorist, there are several examinations that could describe how it grows. One of the most prominent study was done by Marc Sageman, he wrote in

his work *“Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century”*, that there are three waves of global Islamic resistance within the last century. The first wave is referred to those who fought against the Soviets in Afghanistan in the 1980s. In the 1990s, young people, mostly from the middle class, joined the global Islamist social movement, forming the second wave. During this wave, Saudis and Muslim expatriates in Europe became the most important players. Many traveled to Afghanistan to train, and some volunteered to fight in Bosnia, Chèchnya, and Kashmir, while others traveled to the West to carry out attacks. The second wave ended with the attack on 9/11, 2001. The third wave, which began with the 2003 invasion of Iraq, is marked by second-generation Muslims in the West, generally from middle to lower-class roots. Unlike the external threat to the West posed in the second wave, the threat posed by the third wave is an internal, “Homegrown” one, composed of Jihadists radicalized in the West with limited or no training abroad.

Today the US government is entering a new stage of “War on Terror”. No longer is the threat just from abroad, as was the case with the attacks of September 11, 2001; the threat is now increasingly from within, from Homegrown terrorists who are inspired by Islamist ideology to plan and execute attacks where they live. Even though that most American – Muslims, about 68 percents, view unfavorable with al-Qaeda, the number of attacks on US homeland show that American – Muslim community is not immune of radicalization. There are four drivers that play key roles in the radicalization process, Internet,

Intermediaries, Prison and Social Networks. The radicalization process is 16 i

occurred in four distinct phases. The first phase is *Pre-Radicalization*, the second is *Self-Identification*, and the next stage is *Indoctrination* and finally *Jihadization*.

Though resilient and resurgent, al-Qaeda of 2001 is not al-Qaeda of the present. Having been driven out of its haven in Afghanistan in 2001, al-Qaeda has had to reinvent itself as a decentralized network of networks, relying on its component cells to operate locally and independently. Ideology is the lifeblood of this movement, as anywhere this ideology takes root—even within the United States, among citizens born and raised here—a new cell can potentially arise. In this way, homegrown terrorism poses a unique set of threats, as potential terrorists could be anyone exposed and vulnerable (due to social, psychological, and other factors) to seduction by the Jihadi-Salafist ideology and are often very difficult to detect until such individuals are ready to commit acts of violence.

Efforts to combat terrorism have of late relied strongly on military action even though the struggle against terrorism is as much a battle of ideas as it is a battle of bullets. As a result two potential avenues of radicalization have been understudied to date: the U.S. prison system and the Internet.

Many agencies at all levels of government in the US are engaged in counterterrorism activities; however, there is no unified strategy, plan, or framework focused on homegrown jihadist terrorism. The Obama Administration has articulated a broad *National Security Strategy*, and it continues to operate with a counterterrorism plan developed in the George W. Bush Administration that is predominantly focused on the foreign terrorist threat to the United States. The

Obama Administration's strategy addresses the threat of terrorism in the United

States only in general terms and as part of a broad counterterrorism effort. It may be claimed that the strategy is not intended to include specifics and that fleshing out policy and coordinating efforts is best left to individual executive branch agencies cooperating with one another. However, even among the agencies, apparently no such strategy for combating homegrown jihadist exists.

U.S. Government efforts to combat violent extremism include investigative, preventive, prosecution, and intelligence activities as well as engagement with communities to build trust and enhance collaboration. Many also believe that combating violent extremism must include efforts to counter the extremist radicalization that fuels hatred and violence in an effort to "prevent young American Muslims from embracing extremist ideas in the first place." Thus the US authorities have run several programs including deradicalization and disengagement to confront and prevent the process of radicalization within American-Muslim communities.

There are legal, political, and cultural reasons for the lack of an official US interest in domestic counter-radicalization. For constitutional reasons, it is difficult for any level of government in the United States to address the religious component of radicalization, or even radicalization itself. US governmental bodies lack the tools and legal authority to reach out to individuals at risk of radicalization if these individuals have not yet committed crimes. Moreover, US authorities have been reluctant to address the ideological challenge of radical Islamism. All these factors make a counter ideological approach to Islamist radicalization in the United States very challenging.