

# Promoting Safe and Resilient American Communities

Global Engagement Group  
National Counterterrorism Center

Communities are not the problem ...



... they are an essential part of the solution.

# Ongoing Community Actions



Muslim Storeowner in New York Helps Man Steer Away From Life of Crime



Muslim Students Bring Food, Conversation to Florida



Muslim Leader Forges Interfaith Accord



U.S. Muslims Issue Fatwa Against Terrorism



MPAC Condemns Radical Imam's Latest Message to U.S. Muslims; Releases Videos Challenging Extremism

# We face a wide range of violent extremist threats...

- Right-wing Violent Extremists
- Left-wing Revolutionaries
- Eco-terrorists
- Neo-Nazi and Racist-based Groups
- Christian Violent Extremists
- Other Extremist Groups



This brief focuses on the threat of  
*Al-Qa'ida and Allied Groups (AQAG)*

# Presentation Goals

Share the Federal Government's perspective on the threat of terrorist recruitment in the U.S.

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Garner the perspectives and insights of community members.

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Discuss ways we can work – together and independently – to protect youth and at-risk individuals from extremist radicalization efforts.

*The View From the White House...*

# John Brennan

Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Adviser  
for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism

**Insert Video**

February 13, 2010  
Speech before the Islamic Center of NYU

# What can we do?

## A U.S. Government Perspective

### What can Communities do?

- ✓ Lead effort to counter violent narratives
- ✓ Ask for support when needed
- ✓ Reach out to vulnerable individuals, especially youth

### What can the Government do?

- ✓ Do not securitize communities
- ✓ Prevent and prosecute illegal behavior
- ✓ Support communities in countering violent narratives and terrorist recruitment

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Recent events in which U.S.-based violent extremists plotted or committed acts of terrorism highlight the importance of preventing AQAG recruitment in the U.S.

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Approved for release by ODNI on 04-28-2016, FOIA Case #DF-2015-00054



In the past year alone, there have been at least 15 disruptions, attempts, or attacks potentially involving “extremists” or “terrorists” ...

...all of which had some connection to the United States.

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# U.S. Persons Inspired to Commit Terrorism Domestically

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

U.S. legal permanent resident from Afghanistan  
Age 24

[REDACTED]

U.S. citizen  
Age 39

[REDACTED]

U.S. citizen  
Age 23

\* An indictment is an accusation by a federal grand jury and a defendant is entitled to the presumption of innocence unless proven guilty.

# U.S. Persons Inspired to Commit Terrorism Overseas

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U.S. citizen

Age 30



**Shirwa Ahmed**

U.S. citizen

Deceased

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**Five individuals detained in Pakistan**

U.S. citizens

Ages 17-24

\* An indictment is an accusation by a federal grand jury and a defendant is entitled to the presumption of innocence unless proven guilty.

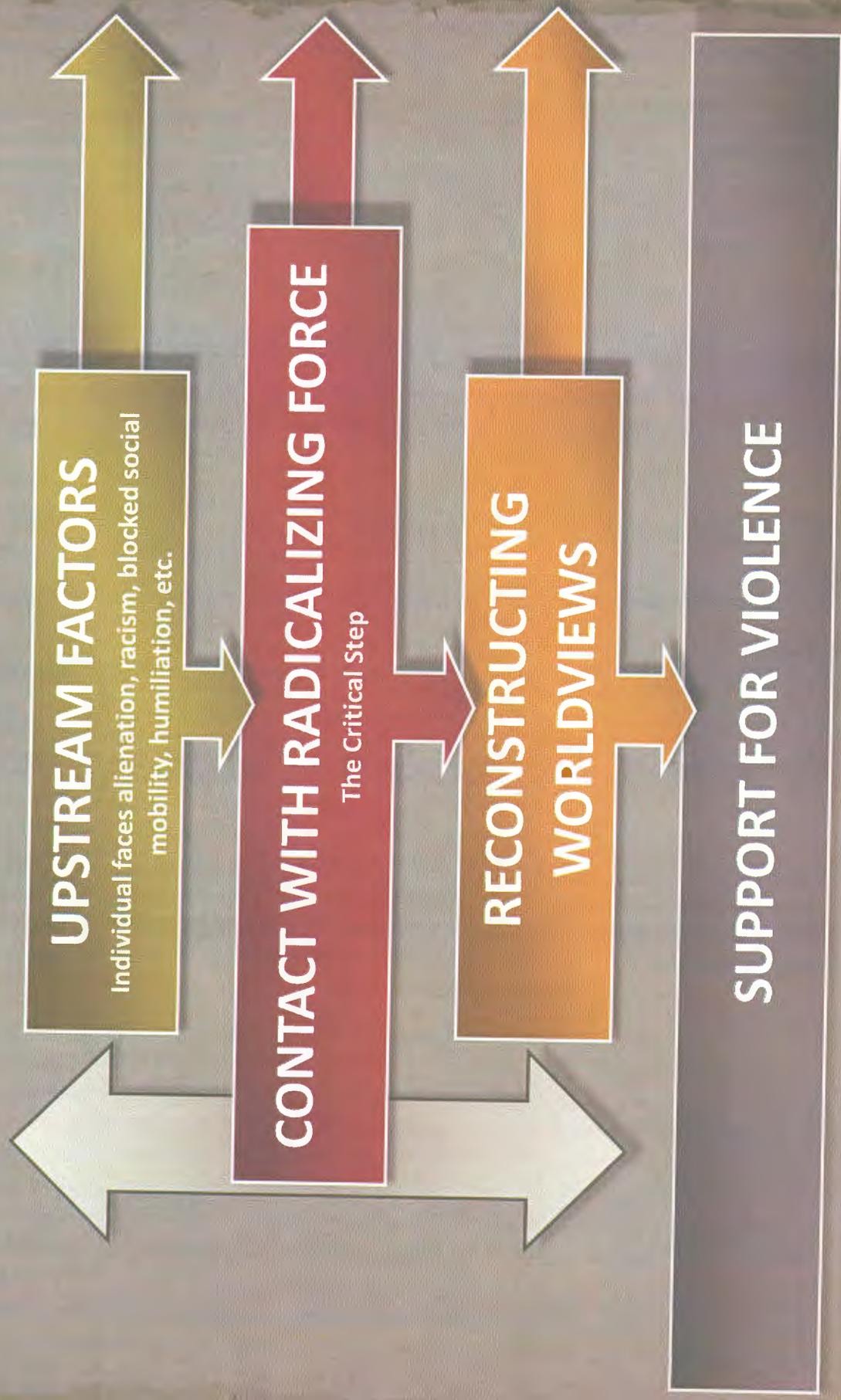
# *Failed Times Square Plot...*

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U.S. Citizen  
Age 30

Note: The charges contained in this complaint are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

# Common Steps Toward Violent Extremism



# Violent Extremist Narratives: An Example

*The radical narrative shapes how violent extremists view the world around them*

- Muslim governments have apostatized as a result of U.S. influence
- The U.S. has brought ruin and disgrace to Islam
- Muslims are the target of U.S. aggression

**U.S. is at war with Islam**

**“Muslims must counter this threat through violence”**

*Violent Extremists in Their Own Words ...*

# Anwar al-Awlaki: A Call to Jihad

Statement Released March 22, 2010

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“How many more  
body bags are  
American families  
willing to receive?”

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**Insert Video**

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“... jihad against  
America is binding  
... on every other  
able Muslim.”

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“... we will fight to  
the last man against  
whoever stands in  
our way.”

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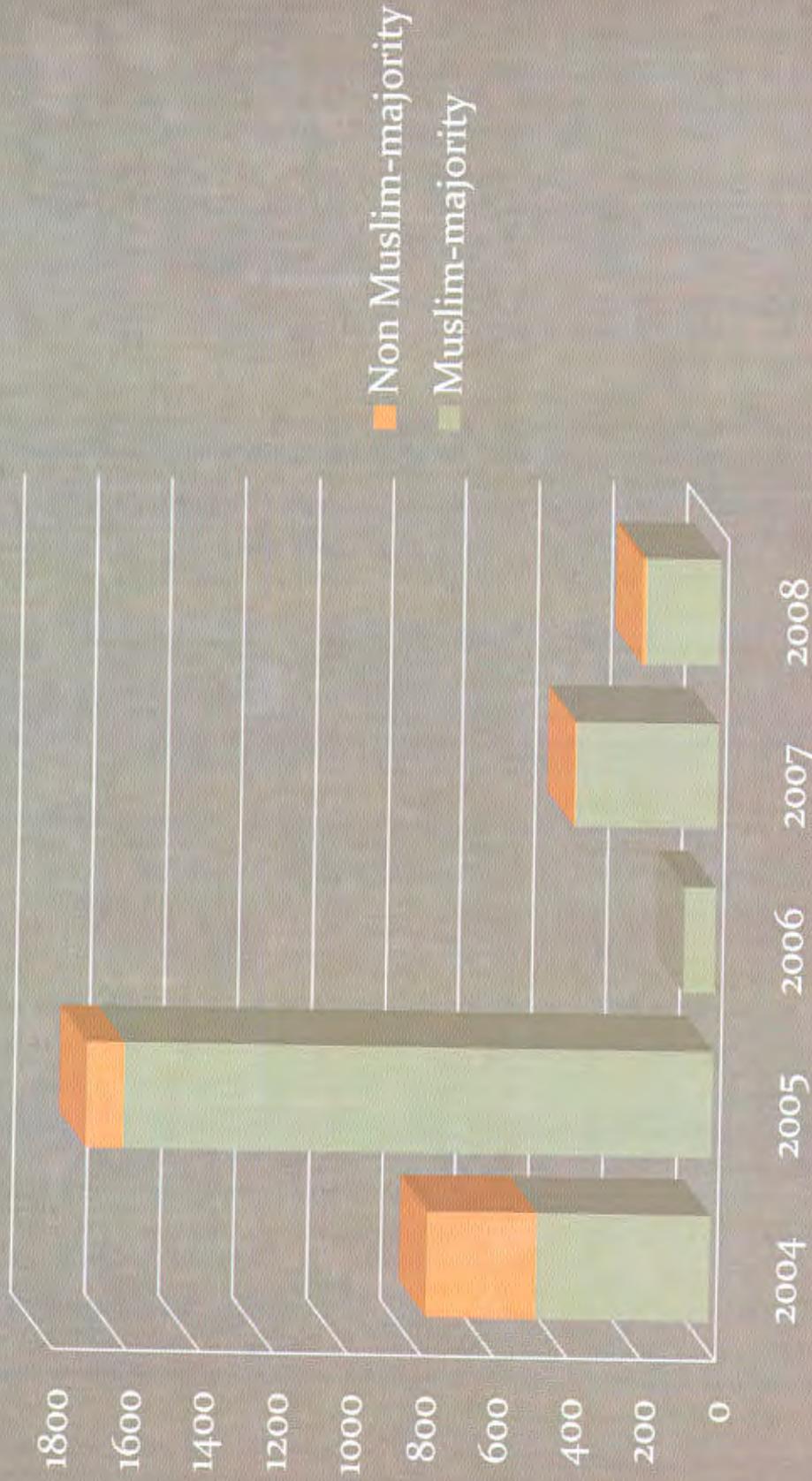
“... standing  
between you and  
your duty of jihad.”

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[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIM6N13\\_kh0&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIM6N13_kh0&feature=related)

# The Victims of Terror ... 85% of Al-Qa'ida Victims are from Muslim-majority Countries\*

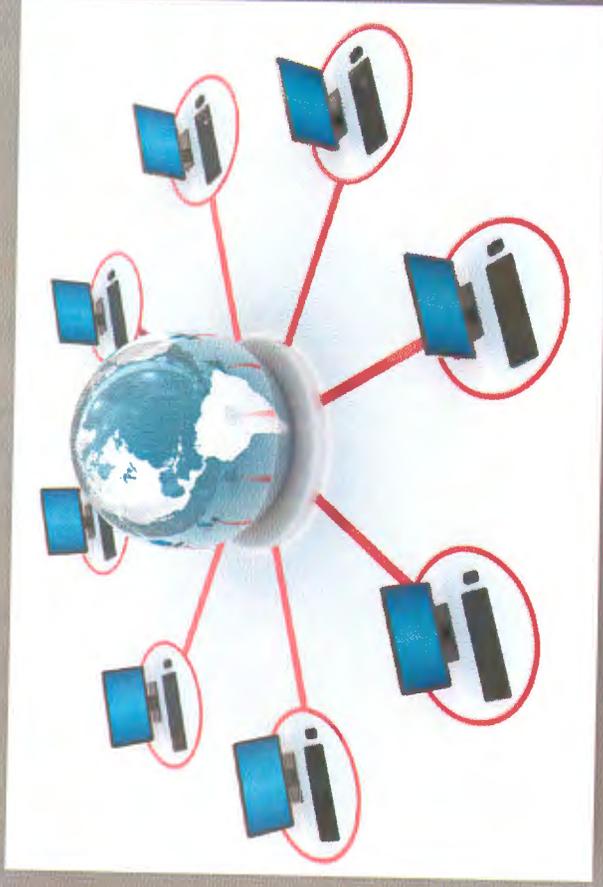
2004-2008



\* Scott Helfstein, et al., "Deadly Vanguard: A Study of al-Qa'ida's Violence Against Muslims," Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, December 2009.

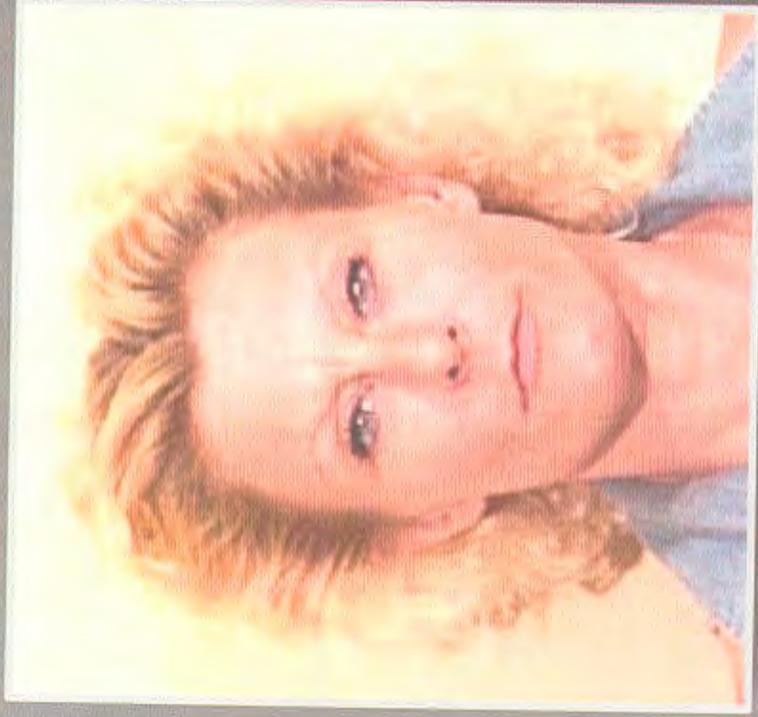
# Violent Extremist Use of the Internet

Recent events demonstrate how violent extremists increasingly prefer the *Internet*, not only for communication, but also for recruitment.



# Colleen R. LaRose

aka "Fatima LaRose," aka "Jihad Jane"



LaRose used the Internet to establish relationships and communicate with violent extremists.

([www.justice.gov](http://www.justice.gov))

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Approved for release by ODNI on 04-28-2016, FOIA Case #DF-2015-00054

*Violent Extremists in Their Own Words...*

# Adam Gadahn: A Call to Arms

Statement Released March 6, 2010

**Insert Video**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1qidkV3KYJg&feature=related>

Note: An indictment is an accusation by a federal grand jury and a defendant is entitled to the presumption of innocence unless proven guilty.

*Violent Extremists in Their Own Words ...*

# Omar Hammami: Ambush at Bardale

aka "Abu Mansour al-Amriki"

Statement Released February 2009

**Insert Video**

# The Reality of Al-Shabaab

Between September 2007 and October 2009, approximately 20 young men left the Minneapolis area to fight for Al Shabaab, an Al-Qa'ida affiliated group in Somalia.

Burhan Hassan  
Age 17  
Killed

Jamal Bana  
Age 19  
Killed

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# Violent Extremist Use of Popular Social Networking Sites

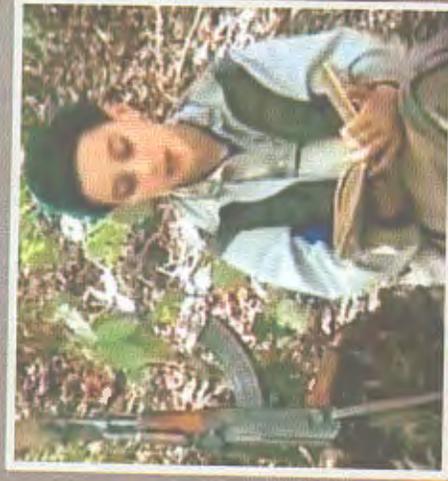
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On 21 April 2009 an item posted to an online dissemination platform detailed "the third phase in the Facebook Campaign."

# Violent Extremist Use of YouTube



On average,  
extremist videos  
posted to *YouTube*  
receive five times  
as many viewings  
as they do on  
official Al-Qa'ida  
dissemination sites.

# Violent Extremists on YouTube...

## Anwar al-Awlaki



Anwar al-Awlaki: "The Enemies of Allah"  
(YouTube, February 2010)



Anwar al-Awlaki: "The Time is Now"  
(YouTube, March 2010)



Anwar al-Awlaki: "Umar Ibn Al-Khattab"  
(YouTube, August 2009)

Year	Al-Awlaki Videos Posted
2007	14
2008	252
2009	436
2010 (as of 3-31-2010)	207



Anwar al-Awlaki: "The Dust Will Never Settle"  
(YouTube, May 2008)



Anwar al-Awlaki: "They Only Wish to Deceive Us"  
(YouTube, December 2009)

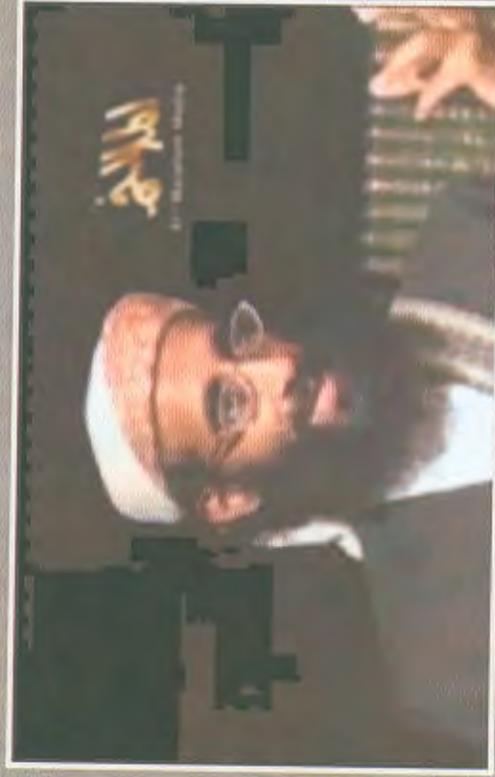
Violent Extremists in Their Own Words...

# Anwar al-Awlaki on al-Malahim

Released May 23, 2010

*"Those who were on the verge of being killed on board an aircraft are only a small drop in the bucket ..."*

*"We will see new Nidal Hasans."*



*"Our unsettled account with America includes at the very least one million women and children."*

*"... no one should ask us about targeting a bunch of Americans."*

*"... the entire American people, they are accomplices ..."*

# Violent Extremist Use of Music

Insert Video

***“Dirty Kuffar”***

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-4283987610134255997&ei=Tf2fs4fjA9GAlghfsdjrDQ&q=dirty+kuffar&hl=en#>

# Responding to the Challenge:

How do we build safe and resilient communities?



*What is at Stake?*

# Mohammed Sidiq Khan

London Transit Bomber

July 7, 2005

**Insert Video**

**Martyrdom Video Released September 1, 2005**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oc8IZvJWKwg>

# Summary

- We cannot “securitize” communities; Muslims should not be defined by violent extremism.
- Violent extremists share few physical characteristics and come from a range of ethnic backgrounds.
- Families and Communities must lead the effort to counter radical narratives.
  - *Internet is key.*
- Government must prevent and prosecute illegal behavior.
- Communities are the solution ... not the problem.

# Possible Community Actions

- Remain active members of American civil society.
- Channel energy resulting from frustrations and grievances into positive action.
- Create a curriculum highlighting the dangers of violent extremism and terrorist recruitment.
- Talk to your children frankly about the positive and negative influences on the internet.
- Go on-line and challenge violent narratives.

*However, the best ideas will come from communities ...*

*The Way Forward...*

# Incorporating Community Perspectives

- What do you think about this information?
- Ideas for initiatives or collaboration?
- What should the government do?
- What should communities do?
- What should parents do?

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