

The Puzzlement For "Counterterrorism Experts: "No Clear Pattern" Emerges

An excerpt from an article by Nicole Hong in today's Wall Street Journal;

No Clear Pattern Found In U.S. Residents Who Join Islamic State

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U.S. authorities investigating suspected Islamic State supporters have found no clear pattern to the type of American inspired to try to join the militant group, the Wall Street Journal reports. That complicates efforts to thwart terror recruiting. There are some common threads, such as the fact that would-be recruits are often in their teens or early 20s and use social media to express support for the Islamic State, also known as ISIS or ISIL. Overall, the group is broad, including people who were raised Muslim and those who converted, married and single people, male and female, rich and poor, U.S.-born citizens and recent immigrants.

"An estimated 180 Americans have traveled or attempted to travel to the civil war in Syria, says Director of National Intelligence James Clapper. Not all of those are believed to

have joined extremist groups. "An interesting fact on some of the individuals that we investigate for support to ISIL is the lack of a singular profile," Michael Steinbach, head of the FBI's counterterrorism division, told a congressional hearing last week. "We find citizens, legal permanent resident aliens, some folks that are overstaying their visa. There's actually quite a diversity of those individuals who for one reason or another state an intent to harm the United States." "All kinds of different people are being radicalized," said Matthew Levitt of the Stein Program on Counterterrorism and Intelligence at the Washington Institute, a think tank. "Some are loners seeking more of the belonging and adventure. Some have ethnic-identity issues. Some are drawn to the radical ideology."

"Lack of a singular profile." "Quite a diversity of those individuals." "All kinds of different people." It's apparently a permanent puzzlement for a diversity of counter-terrorism experts in and out of the government. But if there are people who are citizens or legal aliens or illegal aliens, if there are those who are "seeking more of the belonging" [sic] and those who have "ethnic-identity issues," and those who are "drawn to the radical ideology" which remains determinedly undescribed, how shall we ever figure out what it is that might explain all of this seemingly bewildering data?

Start with the word "Islam." Start with what is in the Qur'an, the Hadith, the Sira. Start there