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PREFACE

Today, analysts and the world's superpowers are coming to the realization that, to defeat the phenomena of radicalism and terrorism, the use of military force alone is not the solution, as it focuses on alleviating the symptoms, without seeking to diagnose the root cause of the "disease". It has long been assumed that this method of dealing with global issues pertaining to terrorism was useful for ridding nations of radicalism and bloodshed. The military option, however, has not achieved the desired objective. In fact, repeated global scenarios illustrate that the more power is employed, the worse the situation becomes. At first, the war on terrorism that began in wake of the 9/11 attacks was confined to a few countries, but as the conflict has continued to grow and exacerbate over the years, it has now engulfed many nations and engaged numerous armies. Even more so, armed conflicts have expanded significantly and developed into intellectual movements. This book proposes that what is needed to fight radicalization, is a determined and collaborative intellectual effort to encourage people into becoming moderate and peace-loving beings so that negative ideology may not pollute minds.

Rather than containing religious-based acts of violence, the military interventions initiated by the world's superpowers have aggravated the situation, and religious violence has intensified with its roots growing stronger and stronger. In reaction to the 9/11 attack, these superpowers interfered in the internal affairs of Muslim countries which, in turn, destabilized their economic position. Consequently, Muslim nations were put on the defensive when it came to dealing with the Western world.

The menace of extremism and terrorism has plagued the entire globe in general, and the Muslim community, in particular. Indeed, both the Muslim world and Western nations have suffered the negative consequences of terrorist acts. The former suffers in that

in that Muslim youth, unacquainted with genuine Islamic teachings and heavily influenced by the media, ascribe extremism and terrorism to their religion and its preachers, and thus they distance themselves from their creed. Consequently, there has been a gradual turn to atheism, the proliferation of which is exerting a malignant influence on the body of the faithful and its succeeding generations. In addition, Western military and political intervention in Muslim states in wake of the war on terrorism has hurt them politically, economically and educationally. The latter also suffers when some Muslims - albeit a very small minority take the path of radicalism in reaction to the Western war on terrorism, which they equate to a direct attack on their religion. In this respect, it is the aggressive stance of the world's sole superpower that is turning them away from moderation and peace towards armed rebellion. Indeed, the anger of youth towards global events changes into revenge which, develops into extremism and, finally, extremism leads to terrorism. Thus, the Western world must realize that their targeting of Islam is pushing more and more people towards insurgency. It is feared that this chain of events will continue into the future with no obvious end in sight. It is high time that the West refrains from linking Islam to the despicable crime of terrorism, which many Muslim scholars also openly and outrightly condemn, making no exceptions.

The present work highlights the role of education in fighting extremism in Pakistan. The education system before the partition of the Indian subcontinent and after the creation of Pakistan is analysed, exploring the reasons why it has failed to address social ills deeply rooted in the country. Three movements for improving the educational system and their far-reaching effects have been examined. Moreover, the present research-based study argues how the education system alongside effective and targeted curricula may be used in order to fight terrorist ideology and bring about peace. Education needs to be urgently reformed and evidence-based recommendations to this effect have been made. If such recommendations are successfully implemented, we believe this may play a very big role in dealing with terrorism and insurgency.

Furthermore, the present study focuses on multiple factors related to foreign, political and financial influences on these madrasas and the extent of religious extremism in them. The study is based on surveys carried out in religious schools of the Punjab province whose respondents were madrasa students, as well as their parents and teachers, so that reliable information may be obtained and correct interpretations from the data may be made. Modern research methods were adopted in order to reach impartial findings.

The growth and spread of sectarianism has been analysed in detail, identifying the factors which fan the flames of sect-based hatred. To approach and attempt to deal with this despicable mindset, some workable suggestions have been put forward. It is argued that the most important requirement and need for the Muslim world is coming up with a programme for the revival of the Umma.

The role of Minhaj-ul-Quran International (MQI), one of the biggest NGOs in the world, for minimizing extremism and terrorism at the international level, has been discussed. Under the auspices of Shaykh-ul-Islam Dr Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri, Minhaj-ul-Quran International is leaving no stone unturned to promote interfaith and intra-faith dialogue and harmony among different religions and Islamic sects so that our world may become a haven of peace. The efforts of MQI for the revival of the Muslim nation, awakening it and spreading peace and harmony, span over four decades.

Hussain Mohi-ud-Din Qadri





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