

Committee: Specpol 1

Question of: Methods to Halt Radicalisation

Introduction

Radicalisation is an issue which has effected the human psyche for millennia. To be radical is to be significantly different from the norm on an issue. In the modern world, we can see the effects of radicalisation on many facets of society from extreme right-wing demonstrators in America to Radical Islamist in Europe and the Middle East, these people often seek to portray their views through terror and hate in an effort to instill fear in the hearts of the common populace.

The Issue

There are many things which can lead to radicalisation. Currently social media and the internet are key recruiting points with radical groups allowing them to spread and propagate rapidly with well crafted propaganda. The causes of radicalisation can be broken down into three main categories: Situational, Strategic and Ideological. Situational is broken down into enabling (the internet), motivational (racial and religious discrimination) and precipitant (war). Strategic aims both long and short term often using current political situations to turn people to a more radical set of beliefs and finally, ideological radicalisation which often comes in the form of non-negotiable beliefs about the good of society.

Key States/ Organisations

Quilliam- left of centre think-tank focusing on anti-extremism

KKK- right wing organization based in America who fight for white rights

IS- Islamic group in the Levant region who want to found an Islamic State in the region

Most states struggle with radicalisation within their countries so most have projects and scheme which intend to counter it and to reintroduce radicalised people into their societies.

Key Events

Event / Date	Explanation
9/11- September 11 th 2001- USA	Two planes were flown into the twin towers in New York and a third plane was also hijacked killing 2,996 people.
7/7- July 7 th 2005- UK	Islamist extremists used explosives to attack the London transport service killing 56 people.
Charlie Hebdo- January 7 th 2015- France	Gunmen attacked the headquarters of satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo

Paris Attack- November 13 th 2015- France	Deadliest attack on French soil since World War with suicide bombers outside the Stade de France and gunmen in a concert arena killing 130 people.
Brussels Bombing- March 22 nd 2016- Belgium	Two Suicide Bombings in the main airport and a third in a Metro station killed 32.
Nice Terror Attack- July 14 th 2016- France	A lorry driver drove into a pedestrian area killing 84.
Berlin Christmas Market- December 19 th 2016- Germany	Another lorry attack against German capital which has led to new implementations of road defences and barriers.
Westminster Attack- March 22 nd 2017- UK	Driver crashed into pedestrians on Westminster bridge and then attempted to get into parliament with a knife before being killed.
Manchester Attack- May 22 nd 2017- UK	Suicide bomber at a major concert killing and injuring lots of the spectators.
London Bridge Attack- June 3 rd 2017- UK	Driver of a van and knifeman attacked pedestrians on London Bridge killing 8.
Finsbury Park- June 19 th 2017- UK	A van driver attacked crowds outside a mosque during Ramadan in a 'revenge' attack for London Bridge.
Charlottesville- Mid August 2017- USA	Right Wing demonstrators clashed with protestors in a wave of right wing radical attacks and rhetoric which lasted almost a week.

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

Denmark: The Aarhus model

Aarhus, the second largest city in Denmark adopted a policy to dissuade young people from joining ISIS or Al-Qaeda. The city offers specific counselling and mentoring services for those who have radicalised, as well as exit program for those who support or are prepared to carry out violent acts. The Aarhus model is also known for its focus on rehabilitation of fighters that have returned from Syria. Here, rehabilitation involves parents, family networks, social workers and teachers, who all provide support for young people at risk.

United Kingdom: PREVENT strategy

The UK's 'Prevent strategy' is part of a broader framework on countering violent extremism, known as CONTEST. CONTEST is based on four areas: Pursue, to stop terrorist attacks; Prevent, to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism; Protect, to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack; and, Prepare, to

mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack. Prevent is focused on responding to the ideological challenge posed by terrorism and extremism, and the promotion of extremist beliefs.

Singapore: Religious Rehabilitation Group

After the arrests of suspected Jemaah Islamiyah militants, who planned a series of attacks against Western embassies and US naval vessels in 2002, the Singapore government started a large-scale deradicalisation initiative. One of the projects is known as the Religious Rehabilitation Group, an unpaid, volunteer group of moderate Islamic scholars and teachers who offer religious counselling to detained extremists and their families. However, the aims of the program go beyond work with prisoners, the Religious Rehabilitation Group also challenges violent readings of Islam by developing counter narratives based on Islamic scholarship.

Possible Solutions

The possible solutions to the problem of radicalisation are many and varied. The issue is that what works in one society or even in one segment of society will not necessarily work everywhere and will, as has happened with the UK's PREVENT scheme just serve to disenfranchise the target audience so as to make them more likely to stay or become more radicalised. The solutions that work in the Western World will not necessarily work in the Middle East and Asia and this means any resolutions tackling this topic will have to encompass a wide range of issues. One possible solution is counseling of endangered youths but this could just serve to push them away from the society and make them even more reclusive and open to radical ideas. Another solution is organizing co-existence seminars where people from different backgrounds and cultures meet to discuss issues that affect them in their everyday life and to show those at the seminars that the people 'on the other side' are actually very similar to them in many ways.

Another possible solution is to get reformed radicals to come and speak to those at risk and to explain their stories and experience with a hope to show people that radicalised life especially with terrorist organizations is not what is portrayed in the propaganda. This can be furthered by online campaigns to counter radical propaganda and to start conversations that could lead to the decline of radicalisation.

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