Countering Daesh Propaganda: Action-Oriented Research for Practical Policy Outcomes

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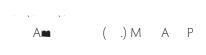
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Daesh, which needs no introduction, currently poses one of the greatest threats to global peace. Daesh has capitalized on conditions conducive to the the spread of violent extremism, including the political vacuum created by failed states, the failure of national governments to address socio-economic grievances, and the increasing alienation of Muslims in the West. An estimated 30,000 citizens from 100 countries have joined Daesh in Syria and Iraq. Libya is increasingly becoming the new destination for foreign fighters. Yet to date, discussions concerning how best to deal with Daesh's violent ideology remain superficial. Increased militarization and the rise of Islamophobia have spread in the wake of this violent group. The debate needs to move beyond military options, and instead, adopt nuanced approaches that will better diminish the allure of Daesh's violent actions and address the emotional appeal that has been attracting foreign fighters.

In the last few months, we have witnessed a series of deadly Daesh attacks outside its controlled territory in Syria and Iraq, targeting Muslims and non-Muslims alike. This marks a new turn in its tactics aimed at diverting attention from its recent battlefield losses and adjusting its military strategies. The first week of July 2016 marked Baghdad's bloodiest attack since 2003, leaving more than 215 dead. Under pressure and on the defensive, Daesh

young people's feelings of disenfranchisement and marginalization by emphasizing the idyllic notion of "Islamic State" that supposedly addresses Muslim grievances across the globe.

Daesh has developed a modern, technologically savvy brand, enabling its leadership to recruit marginalized youth across borders. For Daesh, the media battlefield is as important as the physical battlefield. The breadth of technology access and rapid communication across social media applications are key components in its recruitment strategy. Increasingly, those countering the Daesh narrative understand the need to tap similar

Practitioners who work with defectors and families of radicalized youth urge governments to view returnees as opportunities rather than challenges: They can be a first-hand resource to understand Daesh's ideology and can serve as a powerful voice against violent extremism.

Most governments use quick, short-term solutions in dealing with returnees. This practice has proven to be ineffective in deradicalizing ex-fighters. Long-term solutions must be utilized in order to fully reintegrate and rehabilitate returnees. Governments, with the help of civil society actors, could provide psychological and societal support through different educational and recreational programs. More importantly, deradicalization efforts cannot succeed without addressing the social and economic grievances that played a role in radicalization.

"Look, Look; See the Glorious Fighters!": The Visual Persuasion of ISIS and the Fanboys of Terror

Professor and Dean, Texas Tech University

My interest in the visual propaganda grand strategy and individual persuasion tactics of ISIS has two origins, one dispassionate and scientific and the other intimate and personal.

First, from a research perspective, for 25 years I have studied how institutions, countries, groups, and individuals try to persuade others through visual means (film, video, photos, maps, cartoons, graphics, etc.) and via new modalities of communication such as social media (see Perlmutter, 1998, 1999, 2007, 2011, 2014). ISIS, by any measure, is spectacularly successful in its marketing, especially to the target audience of young males it seeks to recruit to fight and die in its battles in Iraq and Syria and now globally with groups in Libya, Afghanistan, and Nigeria—"pledging allegiance" to ISIS and attacks being carried out in Europe and the United States in its name.

Tens of thousands of such young men, despite obstacles, are giving up literally everything to travel from Saudi Arabia and Toronto, Lebanon and China, to fight under the black flag (Cohen, 2015; Schmitt & Sengupta, 2015). Simply as a case study, the phenomenon is intriguing: Whereas on a 1–10 scale using visuals and social media to convince someone to change his brand of toothpaste might be considered a 2, convincing him to die for you is an 11.

Second, the story of ISIS visual/social media recruiting is written and pictured in the lives of individuals, not just aggregates (Evans & Giroux, 2015). One particular tale illustrated the poignant and horrific to me. A friend of mine is

the president of a university. He is also a respected scientist and one of the most decent, calm, reasonable, intelligent men I know. He is a Muslim, and his parents still live in their native Near Eastern country that borders Syria. Three years ago he went to visit them, taking a country bus. He found himself sitting next to a young man, no more than a boy really, probably 14–16 years old, who was fascinated by a video he was watching on his iPhone.

The boy nudged my friend and said, "Look, look; see the glorious fighters." It was, of course, an ISIS video showing its combatants riding tanks, blowing up enemy emplacements, firing heavy artillery pieces and machine guns, all to the accompaniment of stirring music and the constant chant, "Allah Akbar!" My university president friend proceeded to lecture this young

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man, making the case emphatically that ISIS was evil, the enemy of all people, and an abomination in the sight of true Muslims. The young man taunted and mocked him, claiming the video was proof that ISIS was not only the "good guys" but exciting and cool to boot. My friend recalls to

this day his frustration at "losing" this argument in front of a bewildered audience. But then, how many of us ever win disputes with even our own teenage children?

The Carter Center meeting on countering Daesh propaganda was revealing of what most people who have been following the ISIS story since its early days know well. Just like every major phenomenon, it is complicated. Among the reasons regularly cited for the rise and success of ISIS—success in propaganda (Kfir, 2015), achieving global prominence (Byman, 2016), and initial exponential growth through combat (Cronin, 2015)—are: The fissuring of Iraq because of the American intervention and the fall of the centralized Saddam Hussein regime

> The master truth of understanding the interaction between the brain and visual media:
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(Fishman, 2014); the brutal crackdown by the Assad regime in response to initially peaceful calls for reform and change (Katulis, al-Assad, & Morris, 2015); the terrible drought and desertification of much of eastern Syria (De Châtel, 2014), causing further resource inequities; the rebranding of Saddam's old guard into a religious movement (Coles & Parker, 2015); anti-Shi'a Iranian sponsorship by Sunnis abroad, including in Saudi Arabia (Crooke, 2015); the Obama administration's failure to intervene early and decisively to end the Syrian civil war (Kaplan, 2016); and yes, religion—the apocalyptic millenarian brand of Islam that ISIS expounds (or claims to expound).

As causes or influences, the above reasons all have merit, but none can solely explain ISIS and all its attributes. My focus, as a student of political communication in general and persuasion by social, digital, and visual means in particular, is on ISIS's visual propaganda, especially as relates to one of its main target audiences: young men whom it wishes to entice to join ISIS as combatants.

Make no mistake: One overwhelming observation by all the participants in our meeting was that ISIS, at least in the realm of propaganda if not always in battlefield tactics, is one of the most successful persuasion case studies of the modern era. As accounts written just within late 2015 and early 2016 attest, ISIS, despite financing and military failures, is still drawing thousands of recruits who, at least initially, are willing to leave their homes in Toronto, London, Sarajevo, or Beirut and take up arms under the black-and-white flag.

My main argument is one born of my long study of visual persuasion in relation to military recruitment going back to the earliest representational visual images anatomically modern humans created—those of the Paleolithic era (Perlmutter, 1999). I base my research on some fundamental insights of social psychology as well as visual communication. Premier among these is, as I tell my students: The master truth of understanding the interaction between the brain and visual media:believing is seeing.

It is the scientific reverse of the popular aphorism "seeing is believing." In essence, pictures do not affect us as much as we affect what we see and what we think about pictures. To every encounter with a visual image, from a cartoon to a video, we bring a pre-existing set of already-seen imagery and more or less fixed beliefs, attitudes, tastes, sympathies, empathies, inclinations, hypotheses, and theories. We are much more likely to take an image and fit it into what our prejudiced mind already asserts is truth than have an image overturn our believed—sometimes sacred—truths.

Applying this to ISIS persuasion, what any marketing and branding company would do if asked to "sell a product" is, first, identify the target audience (demographics) and second, identify their existing mindset (psychographics). An adept marketing and branding company would conduct a series of surveys and focus groups—generally known as neuromarketing research (Meckl-Sloan, 2015)—and present a detailed report to its client.

As Paul Bolls, one of the leading neuromarketing researchers, puts the task: "Marketers first and foremost need to fundamentally understand both the implicit and explicit emotional associations targeted consumers make with their product's

current design, packaging, and brand messaging."
(Bolls, 2010).

doubt cultural diffdrences between an 18-year-old
man in Moscow and a similarly aged subject in
Nairobi, some ofng,d most important tastes and
prefdrences, and even attitudes and beliefs, cut
across national, ethnic, and cultural distances
and disparities.

We begin withng,d sheer breadthnofnaccess to
information and communications content that
almost anyone withna compu̶te̶ror, more likely,
a smart phone—hasnaccess to almost anyw,dre in
g,d world. Yes, individual nations like China and
Iran have extensive virtual policing and firewall
filters for content they deem objectionable, but
trying to stop teenagers from getting access to
something online is an almost impossibl0ngask
anyw,dre, especially in more open societies. A
corollary point worthynofnattention by parents and
local religious leaders is that this universal access
turns upside downng,d normal instincts ofnparental
and cultural protectiveness. Some parents, for
instance—especially those from less educated or
more culturally restrictive backgrou̶nd̶smay still

or away from "bad influences" is to keep thdm at
home. Most modern parents, though, are at least
vaguely aware that thd bad influences one can find
on an iPhone are far more dangerous than those
prowling thd local streets or schools.

universally popular item of mediated enjoyment?

slaughters innumerable evil enemies, blows up
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It is vital when viewing such imagery to take into account audience and the context of modality. Imagine being a sullen 17-year-old in suburban London—famously, in 2014 it was

media literacy curriculum that exists in many K–12 schools, if at all, to one that explores the startling revolutions that have occurred, some within recent years, in our online, social media, digital, visual, interactive media world.

One part of this matrix that is absolutely crucial is that audiences do not simply encounter images nowadays without a storm of chatter by those who seek to exploit those images for political purposes. So, in the present case study, we must pay attention to the online fanboys who promote the recruiting message as well as the people who create and consume it.

Second, and somewhat more extensively, we need more directed conversations in vulnerable communities while understanding that no community, even if insular, is truly isolated. Let me give an example from my own activities. For the last decade, I have been honored to collaborate with the Hizmet movement. They are a complicated sisterhood of entities, but basically Hizmet is an alliance of mostly Turkish Muslim groups, inspired by the Turkish religious leader M. Fethullah

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Visual Images: Distinguishing Daesh's Internal and External Communication Strategies

Georgia State University

To maintain and expand its caliphate within the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, Daesh needs to accomplish multiple objectives simultaneously. It must recruit Muslims to resupply the thousands of fighters lost in its ongoing military campaign. It must attract skilled workers necessary to stand up a functional social infrastructure for territories under its control. It must entice women to join, marry, and have children for the long-term sustainability of the group. It must acquire funds to pay for the salaries and supplies needed for its fighters, families, and social service entities. It needs to effectively subdue its opponents, maintain the loyalty of its own members, defend and expand its territory, and goad opposing leaders into responses useful for encouraging supporters around the globe to become active group members.

In an effort to achieve its multiple objectives, Daesh is implementing a sophisticated, strategic communication campaign comparable to those of many nation states. The group's approach relies on a multilingual, multiplatform propaganda effort that, after the original dissemination of media products, has ubiquitous circulation through social media. Daesh's approach is not uniform across media products, as the group's producers purposefully craft their messages to reach intended target audiences. As a first step toward understanding such nuance, this essay will demonstrate how Daesh distinguishes its media messaging strategy when targeting audiences internal and external to its territories and will conclude by identifying implications for the crafting of effective response options.

The first 12 issues of Dabiq, the official online magazine of Daesh, serve as the media platform analyzed here for targeting external audiences. Published by Al Hayat Media in Arabic, English, Chinese, French, Russian, and Turkish, among other languages, Dabiq was first released in June 2014 and released its 12th issue in November 2015. The online periodical takes its name from the location specified in a hadith for the final battleground for Islam. The first 18 issues of al-Naba, an Arabic-only news magazine Daesh members distribute by hand in the group's controlled territories in Iraq, Syria, and Libya, will serve as the media platform targeting internal audiences. Named for a chapter in the Quran,

> Daesh's approach is not uniform across media products, as the group's producers purposefully craft their messages to reach intended target audiences.

al-Naba released its first issue online on March 31, 2014. Issues 2–9 were not distributed online, but certain pages of those editions have appeared on Telegram. The remaining al-Naba issues in their entirety have been posted online, with the 18th issue appearing first in February 2016.

Daesh's differential use of about-to-die images for publications targeting internal and external audience is evident both in the distribution and content of the image types. Al-Naba, for

other incendiary devices, invite viewers to imagine who will be targeted in the future. Presumed-death images work to bolster emotional responses from viewers in and outside of Daesh territories, given the possibilities of their future use.

> The subjects in al-Naba's certain-death images show Daesh martyrs shortly before their deaths in an apparent effort to model exemplary behavior of Muslims who join the group. Dabiq's certain-death images, by contrast, display Daesh's enemies

example, uses approximately half the number of certain-death images as a percentage of its total image count than its externally focused counter-part (3.6 percent of the total number of images for al-Naba versus 7 percent for Dabiq). The subjects in al-Naba's certain-death images show Daesh martyrs shortly before their deaths in an apparent effort to model exemplary behavior of Muslims who join the group. Dabiq's certain-death images, by contrast, display Daesh's enemies just before their executions, which arguably works to inspire fear, anger, or delight, depending on the viewer's perspective.

The percentage of possible-death images is roughly equivalent between the two publications (5 percent for Dabiq versus 6 percent for al-Naba), with each periodical using Daesh's enemies as photo subjects. The possible-death images serve a disciplinary function for both internal and external audiences by showing the consequences of failing to pledge allegiance to the Daesh cause. The percentage of presumed-death images are slightly higher for publications targeting internal audiences (91 percent in al-Naba versus 87 percent in Dabiq). Scenic elements, such as guns, bombs, and

- Effective response options must consider Daesh's target audiences. Daesh's textual and visual message strategies in print publications differ based on the targeting of internal or external audiences or even subgroups of those two groups. Unique content and design/formal elements of publications targeting particular audiences should be analyzed and incorporated into the production of competing message campaigns.

- Daesh's internal and external message strategies are suggestive for effective response options. Use of visual images in limited quantities and use of infographics (or other efficient summaries) appear to attract young audiences from the MENA region interested in joining Daesh. More extensive use of visual images, however, appears fruitful when targeting potential Muslim recruits around the globe

- Strategic responses to Daesh's infographics should consider the multipurpose functions of the propa-ganda form. Rather than simply contradicting data summarized in Daesh's infographics (e.g., military successes, religious guidelines for serving as a good Muslim, or availability of media programming), effective responses need to address why Daesh is not a credible source of military, medical, logistical, educational, reli-gious, or other information and why alternative sources can and should be trusted more.

- Avoiding use of Daesh's about-to-die images in media coverage and response campaigns is needed. While traditional media outlets frequently portray about-to-die images to attract viewers, one non-Daesh media outlet has replaced about-to-die images with a full black screen with small white text announcing Daesh killings and offering regrets to family and friends of the executed individual. Such an approach avoids

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Filtering Meta-Narratives: From Global to Local

Washington Institute for Near East Policy; International Center for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence

The Islamic State (IS, also known as ISIS, ISIL, and Daesh) provides an unprecedented amount of documentation on its own nature and the messages it hopes will inspire others to join in IS territory or to conduct terrorist attacks in one's home country.

> The Islamic State contends that its leaders and members are the only people truly following the original interpretation and practice of Islam.

This paper hopes to shed light on the ways IS transforms its broader meta-narratives into a local message. It will examine three of IS's meta-narratives and provide two case studies on how IS filters these ideas to a local context; in particular, looking at Tunisia and Saudi Arabia. This filtering allows IS to shape its message based on local ideas and conditions that will resonate most strongly in a particular location. It also illustrates the elasticity in IS's ideas, giving insights into why it has become so potent at recruiting individuals from all backgrounds, cultures, and regions of the world.

In its messaging, the Islamic State deploys four overarching arguments: 1) the war against Islam, 2) winning [on the battlefield], 3) the caliphate state-building project, and 4) the imminent apocalypse.

First, the Islamic State contends that its leaders and members are the only people truly following the original interpretation and practice of Islam from the time of the Muslim prophet Muhammad and the sahaba (Muhammad's companions). Therefore, IS is protecting Islam from a series of enemies that are attempting to destroy it. In no particular order, IS claims these groups of entities are un-Islamic and must be fought to preserve Islam: rawafidh (a derogatory term for Shi'a); nusayris (a derogatory term for Alawites); taghut (tyrants), a term to describe Sunni leaders, whom they view as apostates; munafiqin (hypocrites), a term to describe Muslims that do not live up to their religion in the eyes of IS; murtadin (apostates), those who have left Islam (since IS has a very narrow definition of Islam, this encompasses many ordinary Muslims); and sahawat (awakening), a term that originally referred to the tribal awakening in Iraq against IS's predecessor organization last decade. Further, it has taken on the symbol of any Sunni insurgent faction that goes against IS on the battlefield: silibiyyin (crusaders), a reference to Western countries; and sahyuniyyin (Zionists), a reference to Israel.

Secondly, the Islamic State displays itself in its propaganda as always winning battles and never admitting when there have been setbacks. Part of this argument is imbued through the slogan it has used, baqiya wa tatamaddad (remaining and expanding). The idea originated from a speech by Abu 'Umar al-Baghdadi, the leader after the announcement of IS of Iraq (ISI) in October 2006.

In Abu 'Umar's April 17, 2007, speech, which assessed ISI's jihad (religious military struggle) after four years of fighting the Americans in Iraq, he concluded with a series of statements that started with baqiya that began by saying wa ina dawla al-islam baqiya (verily, the Islamic State remains). The exact words were later cited by ISI's official spokesman, Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, in an Aug. 7, 2011, speech to attempt to convince the troops to remain positive since ISI had been weakened so greatly by the tribal awakening and the American military surge of troops in the prior four years. From that point on, the term baqiya became a rallying cry for its fighters and supporters. The Islamic State and its supporters only later added the term tatamaddad after ISI's successor entities, ISIS and IS, began to retake territory in 2013–2014.

The state-building project of IS began to come more into focus after the leader of IS, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, formally announced the caliphate in his July 2, 2014, speech to usher in Ramadan for that year. In it, he said, "We make a special call to the 'ulama (religious scholars), fuqaha (experts in Islamic jurisprudence), and da'i (callers), especially the judges; as well as people with military, administrative, and service expertise and medical doctors and engineers of all different specializations and fields. We call them and remind them to fear God, for their emigration is wajib 'ayni (an individual obligation), so that they can answer the dire need of the Muslims for them. This call to service highlighted how IS began to bureaucratize and systematize its state-building infrastructure, which it would then show off in its media to illustrate how it was taking care of the affairs of IS and daily lives of its ri'aya (subjects).

Lastly, the Islamic State has pushed the idea and importance of the coming apocalypse. One of its main points is related to one of the end-times battles between good and evil (Muslims and the unbelievers) that will take place at Dabiq, a city in northern Syria. IS hopes that the West—or in their vernacular, the crusaders—takes the bait and fight them there to prove the truth of the prophecy. This battle, according to IS, will then

Tunisia would never become an Islamic state. In response, an IS-fronted media foundation, Ajnad al-Khilafah bi-Ifriqiyyah, retorted by saying, "Those who try to substitute earthly laws for the shari'a (Islamic law) are unbelievers who must be killed, illustrating that IS does not take such words lightly."[8] Similarly, IS takes issue with the mainstream Islamist political party al-Nahdah, which it sees as giving up on implementing shari'a and, therefore, betraying its origins and true aims. The Islamic State also views this giving up as a process of the Christians and Jews co-opting them. It has also argued that this proves that democracy is not a proper vehicle for making true change in society that will bring Islam back to glory; instead one must undertake jihad. As Abu Mus'ab al-Tunisi

Likewise, IS criticizes the interfaith efforts that were started under King 'Abd al 'Aziz, which contravenes the Salafi ideas of al-wala' wa-l-bara' (loyalty [to the Muslims] and disavowal [of the unbelievers]).[16] Lastly, IS directs its ire at average Muslims from Saudi Arabia—calling them out for a lack of manliness or tribal pride—explaining that in the land of the revelations of Islam, the people are asleep and not fighting for Islam while European Muslims are joining up in droves and helping out the inchoate caliphate.[17] From all of this, IS argues that it is the true heir of the legacy of the original Saudi Islamic State founded with Wahab in the late 18th century.[18]

To remedy these issues, IS has since the fall of 2014 conducted what it describes as qualitative military operations against Shi'a, Saudi security forces, and Westerners inside Saudi Arabia. These operations allow it to claim that it is winning on the battlefield because it is opening up the battle and forcing the Saudi state to choose sides. Further, this highlights Saudi hypocrisies related to its public practice and implementation of Islam. By mid-February 2016, according to an IS-front media group, al-Yaqin Media Center, IS conducted nine attacks inside Saudi Arabia.[19] The majority of those targets were against Saudi Shi'a.[20]

In addition to its attacks inside of Saudi Arabia, IS members from Saudi Arabia based in Iraq, Libya, Sinai Peninsula, Syria, and Yemen—which encompass a few thousand individuals—also boast

Visual Imagery of the Islamic State

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The so-called Islamic State (IS), or Daesh, produces an astonishing amount of propaganda materials on a regular, systematized basis. A large percentage of these materials include visual images of some kind. It would be an enormous mistake to attempt to analyze the propaganda of IS without incorporating an analysis of the way their visuals work: The weight of research in multiple academic disciplines (including communication, journalism, and mass communication; advertising; psychology; and film and cinema) over many years makes clear that in many contexts the image may well be more powerful than the word. It is the image that is more likely to draw a viewer's attention, that produces more accurate and longer-lasting recall, and that is processed more rapidly, perhaps because it is more visceral, more emotional.

> The process of radicalization is a complex one, yet only incompletely understood.

To be clear, this is not a claim of causality. It is not the case that someone who watches propaganda videos produced by IS (or any other group), even a large number of videos, becomes radicalized—much less radicalized to the point of violence. Indeed, were that the case, most of us doing this kind of research would not only likely have been radicalized ourselves, we would be confronting serious ethical issues, if only for the amount of these materials many of us tend to expose students to in our classes. Rather, it is a claim that the process of radicalization is a complex one, as yet only incompletely understood. Given how much research has clearly demonstrated images to be extremely powerful, the amount of effort these groups put into their production—and the fact that in virtually every case where someone has been arrested for participation in terrorist violence in Western nations (or conspiracy to commit such acts) these videos have been in their possession—it makes sense to treat these materials as one element contributing to this process. That is more than enough to justify analyzing the visuals produced by IS, particularly their videos—the more since analysis of the text alone when there is a strong visual presence will often produce a distorted analytic result.

IS videos must be analyzed for, as has often been noted, they are a generation ahead of every other terrorist group in this area. Effective counter-radicalization will require understanding what drives the persuasive power of these materials. In particular, it is counterproductive in the extreme to look for the singular counternarrative. There will be no such thing, because there is no singular narrative structure in these materials, and never has been.

Furthermore, when looking at the materials produced by IS, there is not a simple question of

an overall difference in vaguely defined "produc-
tion values" relative to other groups. It is far more
complicated than that.

Every aspect of these videos embeds infor-
mation that must be understood if effective
counternarratives are to be developed.

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example, network news pieces

- Is all of the footage from a single source? The Islamic State is not different from earlier groups in "borrowing" heavily from whatever is available digitally and from whatever strikes them as useful. But earlier groups were happy to use "prorsum" or "mash-up" styles: They had no overall, guiding visual aesthetic. IS does. So while it will borrow and repurpose other material, it will only do so in a way that permits it to retain a consistent look and style. For example, like every other jihadist group, it uses material from earlier groups. However, those videos are almost all of lower quality, and they tend to take the audio track only, leaving IS free to use visual material consistent with all its other videos.

The Paris Attacks: Terror and Recruitment

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To many analysts, the Nov. 13, 2015, Paris attacks signaled a shift in the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria's (ISIS) strategy toward attacking Western targets (Schmitt and Kirkpatrick, 2015), but that largely missed the point. With a continent spiraling into anxiety and all media attention turning toward the group, the elaborate ISIS media machine had actually succeeded yet again in promoting its brand globally. The terror campaign that targeted Paris was not only meant to instigate

> The terror campaign that targeted Paris was not only meant to instigate horror but was also utilized as a public diplomacy tool to effectively reach foreign publics.

horror but was also utilized as a public diplomacy tool to effectively reach foreign publics. By questioning mainstream media's extensive coverage of the attacks, this report analyzes the way in which ISIS actually imposes such coverage and uses it to simultaneously attract potential recruits and terrorize its enemies. As a case study, the report chronicles how the Paris terrorism campaign offered the group an opportunity to apply its sophisticated media model, which synergistically uses terrorism, mass and social media, and branding tools to gain recognition, reach potential recruits, and spread fear among its enemies.

For the purpose of this report, we will define the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) as a virtual state (Seib, 2011). This helps us more objectively and rationally examine this nonstate actor's sophisticated military, political, financial, and communication apparatuses and not naively underestimate its abilities by dismissing ISIS as a group of fanatic maniacs with psychological disorders. In a mission to win Muslims' hearts and minds, ISIS has sought to establish its legitimacy through synchronized mediated real-time action built around terrorism spectacles. These violent attacks are justified within an apocalyptic religious narrative, which emphasizes an impending clash of civilizations that will restore Islam's lost glorious days and vindicate Muslims around the world. This report uses the Nov. 13, 2015, Paris attacks as a case study to elaborate the ISIS media–terror model.

On the heels of twin suicide bombings in Beirut that killed 43 people, ISIS struck France's capital in a series of coordinated terrorist attacks. Tthis report 9isorik Fppbeen described as "the worst […] since the Madrid bombings in 2004," left 130 people dead and hundreds more injured (Werber, 2015). At 9:20 p.m., six locations were targeted in a series of shootings and suicide bombings—including the Stade de France stadium and the Bataclan, a popular concert hall. At the time, ISIS took no official stance, despite French officials' quick accusations. The speculation spilled

over into social media an hour after police put an end to the Bataclan siege, where 89 people were killed and two gunmen detonated their suicide vests.

In a clear indication of how ISIS takes advantage of crowd-sourcing on social media, numerous pro-ISIS tweets emerged so quickly and so systematically that one suspects at least some of them were preplanned to be part of the terrorism campaign. Indeed, ISIS supporters clamored online to cheer for the group that had committed the Paris ghazwa (raid). In parallel with international outcry that condemned the attacks, extremists on social media quickly rejoiced and credited the attacks to ISIS. One Twitter user posted in Arabic: "France, do you think that the Islamic caliphate will forget you. By God, no…" Another also tweeted in Arabic: "Even if the Islamic State does not claim responsibility for this operation, we rejoice when we see the West trembling. God is Great." Other users changed their profile images to a French flag stamped with a boot's footprint and included in their posts the hashtag #ParisOnFire, which became a worldwide trending hashtag along with #PrayForParis. This social media activity effectively creating a Twitter storm—a common trend in ISIS media campaigns that are associated with major terrorism campaigns (Stern and Berger, 2015) and that effectively manipulate existing grievances.

The immediate happiness of certain ISIS supporters taps into longstanding resentment toward Western powers, which ISIS has long inte- grated into its branding strategy in order to attract alienated Muslim youths around the world. For millions of Arabs and Muslims, the colonial legacy that left their regions weak, decades of injustice in Palestine, and the brutality of Arab authoritarian puppet regimes propped up by Western powers remain widely legitimized grievances. Within its propaganda, ISIS's jihadist narrative is constantly contextualized to reiterate these tropes and paint itself to be the only viable solution, as opposed to Al-Qaeda and the many other extremist groups operating today inside Syria.

ISIS strives to "restore idealized eras of earlier Islamic history," an idea that still resonates

with some Muslims around the globe (Shane & Hubbard, 2014). By framing this struggle as a ngedi19 that ffectively creatinxecueen theoorhne Twitt(Amars 0 amTD (in religious clash of civilizations, which has seen the rise of a united ummah (nation) with the establish- ment of the caliphate against a Judeo-Christian world order, the group's extreme violence becomes justifieTj pfh,e Swj 0ro. Indeed, comfmed school1.171Sunni 0 -1.2688 TDl

of the world to its side by showing it is able to rule through God's laws and its ability to terrorize the enemy.

The Paris attacks, in that sense, fit into this strategy, as they help justify ISIS's cause while also anticipating retaliation from the French government, which had first entered the U.S.-led coalition against ISIS in September 2014. Calling it an "act of war" (Heneghan, 2015),

instance, a few hours after the Paris attacks, ISIS pushed a recruitment video that targeted French Muslims. Snippets of the official ISIS statement and the recruitment video were continuously broadcast on several news channels, allowing ISIS to reach its audiences and promote its intended news frames. A quick scan of the available digital

underway. France closed its borders and declared a state of emergency (Gander, 2015); Belgium was in lockdown (Taub, 2015); and British Prime Minister David Cameron announced that the United Kingdom was placed on high alert for an imminent terrorist attack (McTague, 2015). Despite the negative mass media coverage on ISIS, the group enjoyed immense access to a global audience, allowing it to spread its two key narratives: one recruiting and for keeping the support of its domestic audience, and one for an audience it considers its enemy although, in most cases, the same message achieves both aims. Terrorism therefore, is utilized as a psychological warfare tactic to undermine the enemy and demoralize its fighters (Melchior, 2014) and simultaneously to promote the ISIS brand to potential recruits and sympathizers.

With the brutality of the Paris attacks dominating headlines and broadcasts around the world, ISIS also capitalized on the violence "to awaken potential recruits to the reality of the jihadis' war" (Stern and Berger, 2015, p. 115). This strategy is largely credited to a 2004 document, titled "The Management of Slavery," penned by the pseudonymous Abu Bakr Naji. In it, Naji offered a blueprint for jihadists to establish a caliphate in which he advocated the escalation of violence in order to attract supporters and effect polarization between enemies and advocates (Stern and Berger, 2015, p. 46). The second section of the document, titled "Path to Empowerment," explicitly explained how "to attract new youth through… conducting operations that attract people's attention" (Stern and Berger, 2015, p. 17).

ISIS's "media model" bases itself on the marketing of savagery while also promoting a utopian, united Islamic front—the caliphate— where all forms of discrimination will not be tolerated. For alienated and disenfranchised Muslims, the caliphate becomes a response to the incoherence and tensions many recruits face in their lives in Western societies, a response that offers closure, coherence, and a resolution to a deep existential crisis. The caliphate, then, embodies a world where Muslims retake their agency, their power, and their glory.

To balance out the extreme violence, the group also diffused propaganda material that emphasized its unity in celebrating the Paris attacks across its territories. This theme, which succeeds in promoting a successful ISIS brand, is understood through Stengel's (2011) conception of "funda- also diffused pruim222 t (thered, 24 fed basesy.)Tj al rensc

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Religious Diplomacy

The fundamental mission of every religious tradition is to have peace. There are no sacred texts that advocate the use of violence in any of the world religions. Therefore, the concept of "holy war" is an oxymoron. Yet throughout history there have always been leaders who misinterpret scripture and mislead followers to perpetuate their own agendas. The greatest challenge Muslims face is to isolate those who are trying to destroy their religion. They are the biggest enemies of Islam.

The problem oftentimes is not with the faith but with the faithful.

—Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations

The Supreme Leader of Iran, the Grand Imam of al-Azhar, the King of Saudi Arabia (the monarch who serves as custodian of the two holy mosques at Mecca and Medina)—as well as some of the highest-ranking scholars of Muslim religious law—have issued statements strongly condemning ISIL/ISIS/Daesh. In fact, the ullema (clergy who are ultimate authorities of both the Sunni and Shi'a) have not only strongly condemned but also issued strong statements and fatwas (religious edicts) against Daesh. They are all actively engaged in countering the scourge of Daesh and defeating them. They hold the power of words—a power that can alter perceptions, shape behaviors, and begin to change what is said and done in the name of religion.

The media does not often cover efforts to defeat the ideology of radical extremists. However, these pre-eminent religious leaders are bridging a 1,400-year divide between Sunnis and Shi'as for the greater good. Much needs to be done to bridge the divide among the Sunni and Shi'a if we are to have peace and end the current cycle of heightened tensions and conflict.

Perhaps one can learn from how the Protestants and Catholics overcame their differences and now have active ecumenical relations. One can certainly learn from the Orthodox, Reform, Conservative, Hasidic, and Kabbalah sects of Judaism, who set aside their differences to stand united behind the state of Israel. The goal here is to build an unprecedented collaboration among religious leaders who will commit to cooperate in building more peaceful societies.

In 2000, 1,200 eminent leaders representing the many faith traditions gathered at the United Nations for the Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders. They took the historic step of presenting a Commitment to Global Peace to the U.N. secretary-general, declaring their intent "to manage and resolve nonviolently the conflicts generated by religious and ethnic differences and to condemn all violence committed in the name of religion while seeking to remove the roots of the violence."

If we are to foster a global society capable of achieving peace, one of our tasks is to confront the war of words by creating a new narrative that actively promotes the true meaning of jihad. Muslims must convey and practice the true meaning of jihad. It is not a violent concept. It is not a declaration of war against other religions. It simply means "to struggle and to strive." Jihad is an inner battle for self-control that must be waged on our own "demons" in order to become better human beings. How can we help to propagate that message throughout the wider Muslim world and educate the broader community?

The United States is committed to the principles of tolerance and religious freedom—ideals that lie 29w0 -1.ntivelea0 -w 10..e we are pan<</ne cnodtns.leong lea0 -c1.26bᵀ

Despite this lack of understanding, many Americans report unfavorable feelings toward the Muslim culture. What's more, they believe the values of Islam are at odds with their own values.[6] What steps can be taken today to create a future in which we all coexist in harmony? The key is to focus on creating a more inclusive environment instead of relying on individual behavior. There has never been a better time to launch an initiative to improve race relations and ease religious tensions across the nation.

- Invite elected officials, religious leaders, business leaders, and members of the community to a series of town hall meetings.

- Present a program that is designed to educate and inspire interfaith dialogue, fostering a spirit of understanding.

- Encourage communities to participate in local projects that improve a condition or fix a problem they collectively face.

When people from different faiths and diverse backgrounds join together to achieve a common goal, they often discover their common humanity. This initiative will dispel some of the myths about a community that is misunderstood.

Statistics are compelling, but they do not paint a complete portrait of any experience. Studies have shown that many U.S. Muslims still feel alienated in their communities. That may explain why Muslim Americans are the least likely of any religious group to take civic responsibility, such as registering to vote.[15] How can we encourage Muslim Americans to feel more patriotic toward the country they reside in and to contribute more fully to public life, particularly when it comes to countering radical extremism?

- 48 percent of all U.S. Muslims believe their own leaders have not done enough to speak out against Islamic extremists.[16]

- U.S. Muslims must share in the responsibility of educating their communities about Daesh—who they are, what they believe—and brand this violent organization as the biggest enemy of Islam.

As concern about Islamic extremism continues to grow throughout the global community, there is much that can be done to prevent terrorist organizations like Daesh from radicalizing and recruiting new members. ITj T*r</Acs25 0 vu5x takeTj -0.881 -1.659

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- Educate Muslims on an ongoing basis about the true tenets of the faith, using traditional tools as well as social media
- Issue *fatwas* (religious edicts) against Daesh and formally denounce extremists as enemies of the faithful—enemies who must not be allowed to dwell under the shelter of Islam
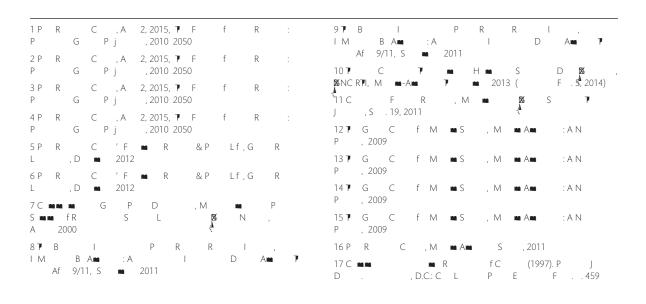- Actively engage in intrafaith understanding to bridge the differences within Islam

If enough religious leaders begin to address these critical issues on the level of ideas, the fatwas will eventually filter down from international scholars to local imams to disaffected youth on the street, gradually reducing the rate of radicalization and recruitment in violent organizations like Daesh.

We are in the midst of a global struggle centered on religious, racial, and ethnic diversity, and the increasing polarization of popular opinion can turn these into incendiary issues. Nevertheless, it is helpful to remember that these battles have been waged and resolved, previously. The world is full of migrant populations that have successfully integrated into the larger culture, the case throughout American history. As a nation defined by immigration, new religious, racial, and ethnic groups have continuously arrived on our shores.

It is difficult for many Americans to imagine that Catholics, Jews, and Mormons were once the object of prejudice and discrimination—or that President Roosevelt ordered the deportation of more than 110,000 Japanese–Americans to be incarcerated in internment camps during World War II, an act that was later concluded to be the result of widespread racism and hysteria. Can we forget the civil rights movement and the discrimination against people of color? Even today we are witnessing the scars of prejudice and bias.

It is essential to confront ignorance head-on to ensure that it does not continue fueling hatred and violence, especially in regions where there is also a rise of Islamophobia.

It may take generations to sow the seeds of peace, but each new group will assimilate and help change our idea of what America is in ways that, ultimately, strengthen and enrich the tapestry of our society.

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Preventing the Synapse: Transmission of Daesh Religious Signals in Search of Receivers

approach to extremism, not by berating religion or Islam or Muslims but by putting on our political thinking caps.

We must accelerate our search for an alternative religious paradigm. Muslims, like people of other faiths and ideologies, are reeling under the cynicism of a postmodern world that proclaims an absence of grounding beliefs and values and the irrelevance of a transcendent source of accountability. This often has the impact of stripping traditional communities of their anchors in life. Fundamentalists and extremists of all faiths are in one way or the other engaging in battle with this, because they do not trust their orthodoxies to rouse themselves for this battle. They see in orthodoxy only inertia, feebly coexisting with postmodernism or impotent against it. Further, they have taken it upon themselves to reassert the fundamentals of faith in society, even nihilistically. This, of course, does not preclude intraextremist battles and wars, some formal and mainstreamed and others informal and on the margins of society.

An alternative paradigm or mindset cannot be constructed by increasing the dose of secularization or by militarism alone. An alternative must be founded on contesting for the wisdom of religious sources salvaging values and intents and spurning literalism or originalism. An alternative must be based on reviving the critical regenerative motor of religious intellectualism. (This does not have to be an oxymoron.) Otherwise, we are doomed to those who seek only to imitate their preferred segments of the past or cherry-picked scriptural quotes. But an alternative is also necessarily dialectical: as it fights extremism, it must also fight for justice, the absence of which is the fertile feeding ground for extremism because it bequeaths humiliation and creates perpetual victims.

The Quran calls this alternative the aqaba, the steep and difficult path founded on a profound vertical relationship with God. From this relationship emanates broad and inclusive horizontal responsibilities founded on personal resilience and social compassion to all creation. It enables a person to navigate complexity despite experiences of injustice and humiliation and to focus on the values and intents of faith or ideology despite being tempted to respond to situations instinctively—thus potentially betraying the nobility of the values ostensibly being defended. The aqaba has the potential to make the middle ground coherent, purposeful, and mobilized, articulating grievance and humiliation, directing anger constructively, and sometimes securing significant gains. Its strength is that by respecting continuity with history it can authentically induce change and proactively immunize against extremism by embracing complexity and teaching nuance.

> Muslims, like people of other faiths and ideologies, are reeling under the cynicism of a postmodern world that proclaims an absence of grounding beliefs and values and the irrelevance of a transcendent source of accountability.

The absence of such immunization, however, shapes the synapse that potentially occurs when the extremist signal is transmitted to its intended receivers. Ideally, the synapse is rejected, as is the case with the overwhelming majority of Muslims receiving the signal. They recoil from the signal, having imbued the higher values of Islam and recognized their perversion in the hands of the sender (the extremists) even though there is an attempted interpellation based on shared grievance, humiliation, and aspiration. For a significant minority, however, the synapse occurs, and the signal—the siren call to extremism can result in the subject being interpellated.

Such interpellation has as its entry point equivocation: the inability to reject or refuse the signal immediately or unequivocally. When confronted with that which is ordinarily repulsive, horrible, or atrocious, the subject being interpellated does not recoil but equivocates because the filters are disabled and paralysis and ambiguity set in, at the least. At worst, the subject is recruited. The former results in silence or condonation, while the latter

results in one or another form of participation. It becomes crucial, therefore, to identify the sources of equivocation so that we both understand how subjects are interpellated as well as seek appropriate ways to intervene through campaigns to immunize potential subjects to prevent the synapse from occurring.

There are at least three broad sources of equivocation. Hypocrisy and inconsistency are popular sources of equivocation. The West is seen as leading an anti-extremist agenda, yet the West's favorite Muslim allies are both the fountainhead and main exporter of the extremist gene among Muslims. Wahabi interpretation of Islam—the state interpretation of the main Western allies in the Middle East—are intrinsically intolerant of

of equivocation in accordance with the following basic ground rules:

- The sender (the extremist) always possesses the big picture and ultimate agenda.
- The receiver (the interpellated subject) starts by possessing a small fragment of memory, grievance, humiliation, and aspiration.
- The objective of the extremist is to widen adherence to the agenda and the scope of participation of the subject.

Confusion about these rules easily results in wielding the machete blindly and accelerating the achievement of the extremist's objective. In our attempts to disable the synapse or immunize the receiver, we must intervene in how religion and theology are activated and, therefore, we must understand why extremists—especially Daesh—have been successful in reaching a small but critical mass of their target market.

The Muslim mind, at the moment of potential synapse, has to reconcile fragments of memory from the Islamic history—something familiar, a recollection from what it has been taught—with a modern sensibility and a new contextual reality. Success of the reconciliation depends on the degree to which the sources of equivocation are managed in relation to the depth of adherence to the values and spirit rather than the rules and the letter of the religion. If the rules have an edge on the values, the literal supersedes the spirit, and the past overwhelms the contextual reality, the Muslim response to the extremist signal could easily be silence, condonation, or even participation. But for this to happen, the extremist needs to have the subject recall the fragment of memory, decontextualize it, strip it of higher Islamic values and intents, and then put it at the service of the extremist's big picture and ultimate agenda.

In this process, some of the most potent issues that have constituted the interpellation, caused the theological equivocation, induced the silence, solicited the condonation, or recruited the participation have been the following:

- When Daesh transmits the signal of living by shari'a (Islamic law), the synapse is meant to activate the Muslim for whom shari'a simply means either civil recognition for a marriage officiated by an imam, the availability of halaal food, time off for the Friday prayers, the right to wear the headscarf, a place to worship, or any one of the things that would make life livable as a Muslim. Accepting this signal from the extremist may well mean unwittingly subscribing to Daesh's totalitarian vision of shari'a.

- When Daesh transmits the signal that violence and killing are germane to their methodology and present this as jihad, the synapse is meant to disable Muslim outrage and recoil by associating Daesh violence with the battles fought by the Prophet Muhammad, potentially recruiting those Muslims whose anger may be in search of a violent outlet.

The Muslim sensibility is further roused to equivocation by the abundance of signals extremists draw from the West's political and military engagement with the Muslim world.

- When Daesh and Boko Haram abduct girls and women, enslave them (as they have done with the Yazidis) and then legitimate a variety of sexual abuses, some Muslims may equivocate on such horrors because they cannot point to a definitive verse in the Quran that outlaws slavery. However, they could point to a verse in the Quran that regulates sexual relations with slaves that "your right hand possesses."

- When Daesh desecrates the Palmyra antiquities and the Taliban bombs the Buddhas of Bamiyan, and Charlie Hebdo is attacked for their cartoons, ordinary Muslim sensibilities shudder about the disrespect for history, other faiths, and freedom of speech. However, the signal sent by the extremists is that they are the true custodians of Islam's uncompromising war on idolatry and depiction, from the earliest aversion when the Prophet refused to pray to the false gods around the Kaaba in Mecca.

Notes on Religion and Countering Violent Extremism

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Violent extremism is not a new phenomenon. It has a shared history with various groups and movements across the world. Time and again, violent extremist groups have operated under varying banners—religious, racial, ethnic, national, or political. A growing contemporary phenomenon of clashes of extremisms everywhere—whether secular, religious, racial, ethnic, nationalist, or other—contributes to spiraling intensities and degrees of prejudice, discrimination, abuse, and violence.

There appears to be a consensus that there are many pathways to violent extremism, with numerous push-and-pull factors (or drivers) unique to individuals and causes. It should, however, not be assumed that the push-and-pull factors that radicalize one group are identical to another. There is always an interplay of factors that act in concert to create violent extremists in particular contexts. Consequently, and unfortunately, there is no singular cause or solution.

No doubt, an extremist religious ideology is sometimes an important cause and/or a catalyst toward violent extremism. For some it is a major pull factor, while for others, it is used to complement, justify, or support the need for violence in redressing perceived injustices. Ideology without grievances produces no action. Grievances are the foundation upon which an ideology is built. However, a religious halo grants the ideology easier acceptance by the less critical. The religious terminology of a "liberation theology" is sometimes

the framing of the ideology that allows it to mimic religious orthodoxy and to hijack its narratives for its own purposes. It makes "liberation" from grievances its end and its theology or religious ideology the means.

There is a need for careful diagnosis of narratives, so that the religious vocabulary that is to be used does not act as a distraction or smoke screen that prevents an insight into, and appreciation of, the real underlying grievances and their remedies.

Grievances are the foundation upon which an ideology is built.

Before becoming radicalized and violent, most people pass through a series of evolutionary stages or phases. The first step is usually simple curiosity for answers about extremism and violent extremism, followed by greater interest and preoccupation with learning and discussions on the subject matter. Next comes gradual acceptance of the validity of some of the arguments (but not all or most); then conversion to their side and passive support for/defense of their positions. This is followed by actively promoting the ideology and narratives and recruiting followers. The final stage may be one where violent action is taken or supported.

The beliefs that are unique to violent extremists and which make it easier for them to excommunicate other Muslims from the fold of Islam and to justify violence against them (and others) are based on a foundation of at least nine major interrelated ideas, concepts, or beliefs. Together these constitute the major unique ideology of violent extremists.

1. Their very simplistic and literalist understanding of Islamic text related to creed (aqidah) such as the concept of tawhid (faith in the Oneness of God), which they tie to and regard as necessarily expressed through the political and judicial system (tawhid al-hakimiyyah). The extremely literalist understanding of concepts such as kufr (disbelief), shirk (associating partners with God/ polytheism), and ridda (apostasy), and all carry the death sentence if committed by Muslims.

with other women. Naturally, therefore, women are the greatest and most effective recruiters of one another.

There is an urgent need to nurture religious scholarship among more women and empower them to become more active in public religious

discourse and to be more accessible to other women. There are very few female scholars in most Muslim communities, so even a little scholarship can go a long way and will have a tremendous impact on other women.

Trust is the most important currency in countering violent extremism and in the credibility of counternarratives. Therefore, countering violent extremism moves at the speed of trust. The success of a counternarrative argument is based largely on the trustworthiness of its source, its veracity and soundness, the extent of its distance from ulterior motives, and its independence of some "other" authority.

Violent extremists view governments of all types and especially Western governments and nongovernmental organizations with cynicism and as having dirt (or even blood) on their hands. Any program headed by or linked to any government will instantly lose credibility in the eyes of violent extremists or their supporters as soon as the links are known or even suspected. Loss of credibility equals failure!

The more independent of any government a scholar is believed to be, the more credible he or she is likely to be in the eyes of most youth. Anti-Western and anti-government rhetoric and polemics are often viewed as proof of independence from them and as a sign of empathy toward the grievances of violent extremists. It is important for those who publicly present counternarratives to be people who are also ready to be critical of governments and the leadership.

Violent extremists have a very good understanding of youth and their personal identity problems and how global issues hurt most Muslims. The extremist's narrative often simply focuses on frustrations and injustices that youth can relate to (the problem) and then offer them a way out (the simple solution), albeit violent and potentially tragic (or heroic).

The extremist's story line for some common narratives can be broken down into two major questions.

1. Can a true Muslim choose to do nothing after witnessing all the injustice taking place against Islam and Muslims—discrimination, Islamophobia, violence, misery, humiliation, suffering, human rights abuses, etc.?

2. What will your response be to the suffering of innocent Muslims and the attack on Islam—if eth Td (—)Tj

Consequently, the most authoritative counternarratives would have to be developed, presented, and argued by a Salafi who is closer to understanding the heart and mind of the Salafi jihadist or violent extremist.

Charismatic leaders of any age are potentially powerful recruiters within the recruitment field of the general population of Muslims. Therefore, those involved in presenting counternarratives need to have both charisma and sincere empathy for the target audience. "What comes from the heart goes to the heart!"

Many who are susceptible to the narratives of violent extremists are very often unable to distinguish between right and wrong, legitimate and spurious narratives once these are couched in religious vocabulary. Messaging should not only counter the narratives of violent extremists, they also should help sharpen faith-based critical thinking so as to assist and empower the audience to identify and counter wrong narratives for themselves. This can be achieved by teaching certain key topics and concepts related to classical Muslim juristic reasoning and Islamic legal philosophy. These are usually covered when studying the Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence (usul al-fiqh and maqasid al-shari'a).

Some of these key topics and concepts include the following:

1. The specializations of various scholars in the Islamic sciences—especially Muhaddithun, Mufassirun, Usuliyyun, Mujtahidun, Fuqaha, and Muftis. This helps the lay Muslim remain sensitive to every scholar's human and intellectual limitations and more critical of divisive or strange proclamations made by scholars speaking outside their fields of specialization and expertise.

2. The degrees of certainty (qat'i) or presumption (zanni) in the authority, authenticity (thubut), and interpretation (dilalah) of religious texts. This helps Muslims develop the understanding that there are many texts of the Quran and hadith literature that are open to legitimate alternative interpretations and differences in understanding. It aids in explaining, less simplistically, the boundaries of tolerance and the width of the "straight path" in Islam.

3. Appreciating the various textual and rational sources and principles of Islamic law (usul al-fiqh), the primary and secondary sources of shari'a. This topic is essential for removing the misconception that Islamic law is all divine, eternal, and fixed and not open to critical re-evaluation and reinterpretation and juristic reasoning (ijtihad).

4. The contexts and prophetic intent on legislations—i.e., the legal implication of the Sunnah (tradition) versus Seerah (biography): what is binding and what is not. This highlights the contextual role the prophet played as a Messenger of God, but also as a political leader, judge, adviser, mentor, and as an Arab man living and responding to his cultural realities.

5.

resource in a similar vein is presented in the paper Living Islam With Purpose by Sheikh Dr. Umar Faruq Abd-Allah of the Nawawi Foundation (available online).

Counternarratives are reactive, not proactive. While their importance cannot be overempha-sized, counternarratives are only reactions to extremist narratives and are defensive in nature. Simply countering the narratives of violent extremists, whether religious or otherwise, will not do away with those underlying drivers or push-and-pull factors (and causes) that lead to violent extremists8 TiftnnD (push-ani/lacj TTa-ani/lo)Tj T*d areffectors ull fSiwpagratca) and not causes of violent extremism.

acj leadership and others8 Tipositions of authority have to show youth that it is not to anyone's advantage to live in societies that aref resistant to change or societies wherefmeaningful change can only come through violent means. Policy makers8have to listen not only to l fS grievances of young people but also address their hopes and aspirations for ftnnDuture. acjy have to iwpvide the enabling environment for young people to actively and collabo-ani/lly shape their ownnDuture in a pluralistic and globalized world.

Preventive actions. Collabo-ani/l networks and social structures need to be designed, implemented, and adequatlly funded to catlr to individuals who arefgravitaning toward extremism. acjse should be knownnand easily accessible to parents, teachers8and, especially, friends so that tcjy know what safe actions to lake, wherefto go, and who to speak to if they sense or notice radical-ization laking h-ani/

Empowerment and life skills. As many of the push factors are related to economic,ipolitical, and social opportunities, it is important to explore, publicize, and support as many alternani/l career for ftose who arefat risk. acis underscores thfS very important role that many community and development nongovernmental orratizations can play in contributing to preventing and countering violent extremism/

acj role of interfaith engagement. Besides bettlr mutual respect and understanding, thfre is important symbolic relevance in sustained dialogue betweeTiftnnvarious religious group leaders. It shows mopusheople that ftose in authority arefstill talking, working with, and are civil or friendly toward each other and will mopus probably not tole-ane or support interfaith aggres-sion or violenni/

Whfre possible, ftnnrenovation of mopques and churccjs demolished by extremist groups ulsuch message and significance of the churcc or mopque to one that will bnnre-established by both Muslims

As Islamophobia is nownD nancially self-sustaining and luc-ani/l, it is not likely to die a aggressive marketing stranegies and products. acis calls for urgent sensitization of Islamophobia (along with xenophobia, sexism, ageism, and others) as another form of discrimination and should be treated as such, with thnnsamj legal implications. If not apiwpariatlly dealt with, such aberration will grow into a major push factor for violent extremism/

Religious bigotry with irs attltcant volatility can easily spiral into hane crimes, potentially causing a clash of extremisms leading to violenni extremism and recruitment for such groups/

Interfaith orratizations and members8of non-Muslim faiths8have a greatlr chance of countering Islamophobia than do Muslims by countering thfS broad issue of religious discrimination under which Islamophobia falls. Consequently, Muslim scholars actively counter religious discrimination against others when committed by members8of their ownnDaith. acey cannot afford to be indecisive regarding whether or not to be against all forms8of religious discrimination/

1. Half of the battlefield is the media. There is the need for mass production of diverse high-quality media content that is easily accessible, which responds constructively to the grievances, arguments, and narratives/ideology of extremists, and which also proactively inoculates the general public with faith-based critical thinking skills.

2. There is need to support the training of charismatic resource people (especially among youth) in critical skills and competences for media content production and presentations on preventing and countering violent extremism.

3. The need to support train-the-trainer courses that are managed by credible grassroots nongovernmental organizations or educational institutions, especially for young imams, religious leaders, and activists.

4. The need to support the production, translation, distribution of, and easy access to free well-researched and good-quality literature (and other learning resources) on all subjects relevant to the prevention and countering of especially violent extremism. Literature should not be bulky! Such resources should be made available to all religious scholars, activists, community leaders, religious organizations, teachers, and student-leaders of tertiary and secondary schools.

A First-Person Narrative: From Recruiter to Challenger

University of Liverpool

Initially, I celebrated the 9/11 attacks.

Extremists are made and not born. I was born in Canada, where two sets of cultural values pulled me in opposite directions. I wasn't bullied or picked on—in fact, we were the cool kids. I was pressured by my community to "become religious" and, on their direction, undertook a trip to the border areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan where I would have a chance encounter with the Taliban.

They were heroes from an Islamic Golden Age, a romanticized past of companionship and caliphate. "If you want to bring about change in the world," they said, "you do it with the AK-47." I returned to Canada in the fall of 1995 and became a supporter and recruiter of the global jihadist cause. On Sept. 11, 2001, I knew the world would never be the same.

I went to Syria in 2002 for two years, spending time to study the faith with scholars who showed me mercy and love and, verse by verse, debunked my deviant and violent interpretations.

I returned to Canada in 2004 and began working with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service as an undercover operator. I worked numerous classified operations. I then joined the Integrated National Security Enforcement Team of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in what came to be known as the "Toronto 18" terrorism case, which culminated in a series of arrests in 2006. I would spend four years in five legal hearings where seven defendants had their charges "stayed" and 11 individuals either pled guilty or were found guilty by the Superior Court of Ontario.

In 2010, when the hearings were over, I went on Facebook and Twitter to stay abreast of world events. Following the so-called Arab Spring, war broke out in Syria. Suddenly, in late 2012, a group calling itself the Islamic State in Iraq had entered into Syria. I spent at least all of 2013 and 2014 engaging numerous Western youth who had expressed interest in traveling to Iraq, and especially Syria, to fight. Quite a few undertook the perilous journey successfully. Using Islamic scripture, I began engaging them and challenging their interpretations, trying to dissuade them from joining and encouraging those who had gone to come back. Many to whom I spoke were killed.

Extremists are made and not born.

On the basis of this wide spectrum of experience, I have come to give advice and guidance on various topics related to radicalization and violent extremism—including the use of social media for message amplification and recruitment—counter-messaging, deradicalization, and the reintegration of returning foreign terrorist fighters.

In this context, experts from around the world gathered at The Carter Center. The panel on which I spoke related to social media and Daesh. I highlighted how Daesh was using specific messaging that exploited youth discontent.

The term "ideology" implies a number of concepts. At its root, it is the collection of ideas and beliefs that people use to construct the paradigm through which they view the world around them and by which they perceive and receive knowledge. It can also be the source of how a person constructs their identity and how they view their sense of belonging and meaning. It is often difficult to separate the latter from an individual's thought process where they have been exposed to a comprehensive ideology throughout their formative years.

sought to re-establish a perceived lost Golden Age of socio-political superiority of the Muslim world. This idea of Islam-centric governance based on the laws of the Quran and the sunnah (prophetic example) has been continuously promulgated by numerous thinkers and theologians. There has, in effect, been a priming of the Muslim mind to aspire to see this caliphate restored. The announcement by Daesh of having accomplished this has provided a powerful call to the sense of duty to the caliphate. It is for this reason so many have flocked to answer the call of the so-called "caliph."

Ideology without grievances doesn't resonate, and grievances without ideology are not acted on. The failure to acknowledge feelings of humiliation, deprivation, and political discontent features prominently in extremist narratives. Some grievances can be perceived only

We have grievances, but no one is acknowledging them or listening to us. Violence is the only way to get that message across.

The specific ideological appeal of Daesh, attracting both men and women, is rooted in the concept of the caliphate, which has been a regular feature of revolutionary Islamist thought since the abolishment of the Ottoman caliphate in the early 1920s. Since then, many Islamist groups have

No matter your
background—
especially if you've
been rejected on
the basis of it—we
have a place and
a role for you. We
can turn it into

support—to appear in TV and radio commercials or to give speeches at public events. Others can be redirected to work as youth counselors in prisons or as part of social, cultural, and religious institutions. Former extremists are the most important lever for convincing youth not to join Daesh, and street credibility is vital for this effort.

Not all returnees are a threat, and we must not treat them this way. Without a doubt, a strict vetting process will have to be in place as well as a training and counseling component for returnees. Messaging will need to be polished, and teaming up with communications specialists to construct and implement the right message must be embedded from the start of any such reintegration regimen.

You can re-enact the video games you play, first-person-shooter scenarios in which you are the hero fighting a noble cause. You don't die; you are just reborn in a next life in jannah (paradise).

To effectively counter extremist propaganda, we need to get to the root of why people are choosing violence to solve grievances and societal problems. In my interviews with youth around the world, I have rarely heard Islamic scripture quoted as the justification for young people's decisions to radicalize. In Nigeria, youth spoke endlessly about corruption and how the government has lowered Nigerian pride in the face of the continent. Extremism serves as a means of rectifying societal ills that the government fails to address. In Indonesia, extremist groups often recruit youth who see government corruption and failure to distribute the benefits of economic

Tunisia, youth have been active participants in civil society initiatives to stabilize the country post-Ben Ali.[6] Across the Middle East, there are countless cases of nonviolent movements: In fact, more people participate in nonviolent initiatives than in radical movements in the region. We aren't giving enough credit or attention to these movements, creating a false perception that there are no alternatives to violence. Furthermore, these nonviolent movements are often disconnected and fragmented, leaving them weaker and less cohesive. We need to connect nonviolent activists around the region and build a support network.

At the same time, we should not wear rose-colored glasses and deny that there is a religious component to the extremist narrative. Islam is being manipulated by ISIS, Jabhat al-Nusra, and other groups that pick and choose versus pushing a political agenda out of context.[7] Thus, our approach to countering extremist propaganda must be rooted in an Islamic foundation that provides a multidisciplinary Islamic approach to activism and the redress of grievances.

> Counternarratives aren't enough to combat extremist propaganda: We need to present counteroffers.

growth to the poorest communities in society as justification for violence against the state and minority communities.[4] There are many issues at the center of violent extremism, not just one. Violence manifests itself in different ways, arising in communities for diverging reasons. Violations of human dignity, lack of democratic processes, local ethnic and religious conflict, corruption, and other factors all feed into the frustration and feelings of helplessness of youth and others who join extremist movements. ISIS has provided a nice quick simple answer to all of the nuanced, contextual problems that communities face. Yet we offer no counter movement that people can join that emphasizes nonviolent solutions. Our counterextremist approach needs culturally and situationally nuanced strategies tailored to local needs and concerns, advocating nonviolent means of redressing grievances and pushing for change.

At the same time, we're not paying sufficient attention to effective nonviolent movements in Muslim communities. In Palestine, there are often youth-led peaceful demonstrations against the Israeli occupation; yet these initiatives are often not covered by mainstream media.[5]

Counternarratives aren't enough to combat extremist propaganda: We actually need to present counteroffers. People want action, not words, and ISIS offers concrete actions that its supporters can take to rectify wrongs and social injustices. Through its extensive and culturally tailored outreach initiatives, ISIS speaks to each potential recruit within his or her local context, appealing to personal frustrations, trauma, and violations of human dignity. Current countering extremism measures focus primarily on rhetoric but fail to offer concrete, nonviolent physical solutions that act as an alternative to the violence promoted by ISIS.

Furthermore, there is growing frustration that non-Muslims in Europe and the United States are more worried about potential security threats in the Middle East than they are domestic terrorist attacks in their own countries, committed by radical xenophobes who use violence to spread

hate and fear. The 2015 shooting of three young Muslim college students at Chapel Hill demonstrates one of many examples in which Muslims have been singled out and targeted for violent attacks. Muslims grow frustrated with apparent Western apathy at violence conducted against Muslims both in the West and abroad.

Countering extremist narratives requires providing a counter offer that addresses grievances, violations of human dignity, and security threats against Muslim citizens in the United States and Europe. It requires empathy and a contextualized understanding of the underlying concerns and frustrations that Muslims face around the world. Rather than focusing on the rhetoric, we need to offer concrete solutions and steps to rectifying problems, allowing people to have agency and support in addressing social problems in their communities.

Islamophobia and violent extremism are two sides of the same coin. To fight extremism, you must also fight Islamophobia. Continued assaults on and hate crimes against Muslims in Europe and the United States only add fuel to the fire of the extremist narrative that seeks to recruit marginalized and disenchanted individuals. The racist and xenophobic rhetoric of right-wing individuals and politicians has provided fodder to ISIS and other extremist groups that the West is engaged in a fight against Islam itself rather than against extremism. ISIS recruiters frequently point to Islamophobic rhetoric to lure in recruits, claiming that the West is unleashing a "clash of civilizations" bent on destroying Islamic values and norms.

To combat extremism, we need to acknowledge that discrimination and ostracism of communities breed resentment and reaffirm the claims of extremist groups that the West hates Islam. Islamophobia is a violation of human rights and human dignity that adds to the grievances of communities. Through institutionalized violence and discrimination—from local anti-shari'a laws to local law enforcement's failure to prosecute anti-Muslim violence as hate

crimes—Islamophobia launches an attack not just on Muslims but on pluralistic values. Concerted efforts are needed to dismantle the structures that perpetuate Islamophobia, including holding authorities and public figures accountable for racism, discrimination, and hate speech.

Working with the media to combat Islamophobia is also key to successfully countering violent extremism. Changing the way in which the media portrays Muslims requires holding reporters, news anchors, and pundits accountable for stereotyping and racism. We also need to provide a counternarrative, one that emphasizes the contributions of Islam to social justice and peacebuilding, not one that spews Islamophobic hatred.

> To combat extremism, we need to acknowledge that discrimination and ostracism of communities breed resentment and reaffirm the claims of extremist groups that the West hates Islam.

1. Avoid the Temptation of Religious Reductionism

There needs to be an understanding of the role of religion, secularism, and fundamental secularism in the narrative of violent extremism. Media narratives focus heavily on extremist repression of women's rights, like the Taliban's draconian societal restrictions for Afghan women or Boko Haram's attacks on women's schools. Yet the media rarely focuses on secular assaults on Islamic values that feed into the clash of civilizations rhetoric of the Islamic State. News outlets ran coverage on the Brussels and Paris attacks for days after the incident but failed to mention the anti-Islamic and socially isolating policies of France and Belgium that fueled extremist reactions against

those two countries. Little coverage is given to the decrepit living conditions of France's Muslim banlieues or the discriminatory anti-veil policies that France has enforced on Muslim communities.[11] Furthermore, media conglomerates ignored Muslim-on-Muslim violence and terror attacks in Turkey, Lebanon, and Iraq that occurred at the same time, further adding to the idea that the West cares little for Muslim lives.

ISIS did not create Huntington's theory of a clash of civilizations.[12] However, increasingly xenophobic and Islamophobic rhetoric on the part of American and European citizens allows ISIS to manipulate an existing double standard—the Western implied concept that some lives (non-Muslim lives) matter more than others and are worthy of global outrage and media coverage. The more the West ignores the violence perpetuated against Muslims and frames extremist violence as "Islamic" violence, the stronger ISIS's clash of civilizations narrative becomes.[13]

2. Engage, Don't Instrumentalize Religious Leaders

There is substantial discussion among policy circles of the need to engage religious leaders in countering violent extremism. However, well-meaning efforts to bring in religious leaders and organizations can easily be co-opted by Western governments and policy makers to serve a broader agenda about countering violent extremism that can be counterproductive for communities. Propping up local religious leaders as tools in the fight against extremism causes those leaders to lose credibility and legitimacy in theipulate an ITrs ae to manipulpted nd ptmuni

People tire of hearing the same "don't fall for extremism!" narratives, which fail to address the underlying societal problems that lead to radicalization in the first place. Muslim communities need to step up and address societal problems that lead youth down a path to radicalism. This means that we need to allow an authentic space for dialogue in communities so people can discuss local concerns and social problems and brainstorm ways in which to rectify those problems. This means including all voices, even those with whom we disagree on principle or who have more conservative approaches to peacebuilding and community outreach. Our approach of only including like-minded partners in dialogue and planning may hurt us in the long run, as we miss opportunities to engage a wider variety of actors and come up with comprehensive solutions that target a wider audience and have a more substantial impact.

The United States and other international actors need to define the nonnegotiables in building a coalition against ISIS. The reality is that defeating ISIS remains a second priority for many of our allies. Other priorities—from the removal of Assad to neutralizing the sectarian proxy wars between Iran and Saudi Arabia—remain at the top of the list. Only by having inclusive, authentic dialogues can we get to the root causes of violence and create appropriate, nuanced solutions to social issues.

4. Understand the Role of Women as Religious Leaders

Women religious leaders remain an untapped resource for combating violent extremism. Women religious leaders are often ignored and excluded by both the secular and faith-based groups in decision-making processes and community; yet Muslim women are crossing red lines daily to change the narrative and emphasize nonviolent, peaceful solutions to community challenges.Wom16ded

the stability of the state. Ignoring the centuries-long history of discrimination and marginalization of the Uighur people, Chinese officials framed Uighur dissidents as terrorists and used Western support to implement a slew of anti-Islamic policies in the region.[12] The same case holds for Russian policies toward Chechnya. The incidences of Western support for autocratic regimes under the global war on terror have created a strong and compelling case to which ISIS can point out global persecution of Muslims. This allows ISIS to carefully construct a culturally and nationally appropriate framework in which the West is portrayed as waging a war on Islam.

However, the fault does not lie solely with the West. Weak civil societies, corrupt elections, mismanagement of public finances, and failure to develop sustainable and strong infrastructure are governance problems that the Middle East itself needs to fix, not the West. By arguing that the West is to blame for ISIS, communities fail to take responsibility for their role in developing good governments and a robust private sector that would allow for growth, stability, and peace. Growing apathy among communities needs to be addressed, and we need to work on a way to help communities recognize and address the radicalism that emerges from poor governance and resource management.

We also need to acknowledge that while ISIS may be the West's primary priority (the Obama administration has identified ISIS as its No. 1 priority), activists and local communities see ISIS as a second-tier priority. High unemployment rates, rapidly declining oil prices, lack of service provision by weakened governments, and growing crackdowns from authoritarian officials are greater priorities to communities that see ISIS as a Syrian problem or a Western problem rather than a regional problem. Our enemy is occupation. Our enemy is the authoritarian regime. Our enemy is corruption. Our enemy is rise of sectarianism. Violent extremism is merely a product of failed governance.

> By arguing that the West is to blame for ISIS, communities fail to take responsibility for their role in developing good governments and a robust private sector that would allow for growth, stability, and peace.

If we want to deter youth from joining extremist movements, we need a more effective, contextual, nuanced approach that recognizes community ownership of projects, the role of religious leaders (including women) in promoting peace, the role that Western media plays in exacerbating grievances, and the root causes of violence that are compelling youth to pursue extremism rather than nonviolence. Only then can we create effective, sustainable solutions to global problems.

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In the city of Rotterdam, 9/11 was a turning point that amplified a dormant Islamic debate.

Between 1997 and 2002, a series of incidents had occurred: protests by Muslims against the play "Aicha" (named for the youngest wife of Prophet Muhammad), Imam Khalil El-Moumni, and controversy around gay marriage that culminated in "De Islamisering van Nederland, The Islamization of the Netherlands," a book by Pim Fortuyn, a sociologist, columnist, and media personality who became a star politician.

Just days before the elections of May 2002, won by Fortuyn's party, Fortuyn was killed by an animal rights activist in the media park of the city of Hilversum. It was the first political murder in the nation since the assassination of William of Orange in 1584 and was in the most renowned tolerant country in Europe (Jonathan Israel, 2001;

2. The fear of Eastern Europeans taking over Dutch jobs (Telegraaf, 2004)

3. The Roma, for whom a job moratorium was imposed for a couple of years in many European countries

4. The economic crisis that hit all European countries, especially Portugal, Spain, Italy, and Greece

5. The rise of far right and anti-European local parties that promoted national identities as the only alternative to the expansion of the European Union and the outsourcing of jobs globally

Islamophobia generalizes state vulnerability at all levels, including cultural, political, and economic. It is impacting European societies, which has allowed single-issue parties to thrive.

While the former leader of the far-right party Centrum Democraten was not taken seriously, the leader of the Party for Freedom, Geert Wilders, is building on the aura of Pim Fortuyn. This association has propelled him to national fame.

which means "ours" (2012–2017). According to the manifesto, the European Union is misleading its members in order to take away their sovereignty. The manifesto begins with a broken Greek one-Euro coin. The PVV legitimizes its Euro-skeptic attitude by making an analogy to the attitude of Willem Drees, one of the great national figures, the historic leader of the socialist party, and former prime minister of the Netherlands. The manifesto asks whether Drees was xenophobic and populist from behind the dykes. Of course not, says the manifesto, he was patriotic: He didn't want to sell out the power of the Netherlands and to export the well-being of the Netherlands to Greece and European countries, mainly Bulgaria and Romania.

The Euro-phobic attitude has to do with what the PVV called "the many nightmares of Europe"—that the "Islamic Turkey" will be the biggest country in Europe after Germany in terms of population. The other nightmare will be the flocking of the Turks to our country. The manifesto has four maps of the Netherlands: 2010, 2020, 2030, and 2040. Coloring that shows percentages of non-Westerners in the Netherlands is confusing on the maps. The 2040 map looks like a total invasion of non-Western migrants. Immediately after the four maps, you see a big picture of a trash bin with the European flag in it, suggesting that the solution for the problems of migration is leaving the European Union.

The PVV has reclaimed the sovereignty of the Netherlands, replacing the European Union with a new treaty for free trade. On page 34 of the manifesto, there is a picture of the Taiba mosque in Amsterdam with four minarets and two domes. On the domes and the minarets, a half-moon with a pentagonal star is placed. Under the picture, the page is titled "Our migration policy," linking Islam to immigration as a double outsider-ness in the country or the two sides of the same coin.

The manifesto contraposes two statements: one by the slain filmmaker Theo van Gogh, who was shot by a young Dutch Moroccan radical Islamist; and one by the former mayor of Amsterdam and former leader of the labor party, Job Cohen. Cohen said to Moroccans, "You belong here" (jullie horen bij ons). The PVV rejects his statements and attitude and agrees with the one of Theo van Gogh, who asked himself "wat doen jullie eigenlijk hier?" (what are you actually doing here?). The PVV elaborates on the statements of Van Gogh by asking, "Who let the Moroccans come to this country?" The answer, according to the PVV, is that the generation of "politically correct politicians" are responsible. "The floodgates were open for hundreds of thousands of Muslims who were lured here with jobs, benefits, housing, and education. The consequences are disastrous. By now, everybody understands that."

The PVV argues in its manifesto that Islam is not a religion but a totalitarian political ideology with a religious touch. According to the manifesto, non-Westernallochtones cost 7.2 billion Euros a year; therefore, the Netherlands has to stop immigration from Muslim countries. Here again, the presence of non-Western citizens is equated with the presence of Islam as if all immigrants in the Netherlands are Muslims, which is misleading.

Again, a picture of a colossal minaret is printed. Then comes a list of the measures to stop immigration. The measures related to Islam are:to stop i(?" (whap) and is ls tnj 1.1-a?sby asking, "WhoTD is printed. and isbanntnj 1.1-a?sby asking, "WhoTD is printed.

- No headscarves should be worn in healthcare, education, municipalities or government buildings, or any subsidized organization.
- Not even a single headscarf should be worn in the Parliament, "the heart of our democracy," not by the Cabinet, civil servants, members of Parliament, or even visitors to the Parliament—"by no one."
- People who have dual nationality have no voting rights.
- The burqa and the Quran should be banned, and headscarves should be taxed.
- People who don't speak Dutch or who wear a burqa should not receive social benefits.
- Multicultural grants should be banned. (The PVV uses the word "multi-culti" in a pejorative sense.)

Wilders is becoming the most famous member of Parliament who uses Twitter, and surprising tweets are becoming almost a daily talk of the town. One of his famous tweets that has also been a subject on his website is "insane." It says, "If you can't deal with Zwarte Piet, then leave The Netherlands." Wilders blurs the lines between color, race, and religion, which makes the interchangeability of the categories of stigma and objects of racism a salient argument. A picture of a blacked face with a white and blue beret with red feathers and a 17th century collar was posted. The PVV is targeting Amsterdam, the largest multicultural city in the country, blaming the mayor, Eberhard van der Laan, of changing the Dutch tradition of Zwarte Piet and turning Sinterklaas into a "negative stereotype." According to the PVV, the mayor belongs to the generation of politically correct politicians.

On April 13, 2014, Wilder wrote an open letter to the prime minister about Moroccan street thugs. Linking political murder to the Moroccan community, he said, "In a decent country, Pim Fortuyn and Theo van Gogh could have lived as free men. The prime minister is disconnected from the people." He asked the prime minister to close the borders from "mass immigration and mass Islamization."

The PVV put the government and the police force under pressure because they, according to the PVV, deny the Moroccan problem. According to the PVV, 65 percent of the Moroccan youth between 12 and 23 years old were accused of criminal offenses, an exaggerated interpretation of available statistics. The PVV asked in written questions in the Dutch Parliament to clarify what the PVV calls Marokkanen gemeenten (municipalities with a lot of Moroccans) in order to proceed to territorial racialization of locations with bigger concentrations of ethnic groups.

On the website of the PVV, there is a link to an article in English from the NL Times stating, "Half of all Dutch people agree with Geert Wilders' opinion that there should be fewer Moroccans in the country." Anti-Moroccan tweets went viral after a YouTube video showed a crowd chanting "less, less Moroccan" at one of Wilders' rallies in The Hague before the European parliamentary elections. The video went viral around March 19, 2014. From Jan. 19, 2014, until March 19, 2014, there were a total of 17 tweets with a negative tone against Moroccans. From March 19 to May 19, 2014, there were more than 60,000 negative tweets. The tweets were composed of insults such as Rif-apen (apes of the Rif, the Berber region in Morocco) zand negers (sand negroes), and kut-Marokkanen. Most of denigrating and discriminatory tweets came three days after the video went viral. On March 22 alone, there were 4,489 denigrating tweets (De Telegraaf, May 20, 2014).

Moroccans are the key to the European Union hatred. In order to demonstrate its anti-European attitude, on May 20, 2014, Geert Wilders cut off one of the European stars from the European flag next to the European Parliament building, symbolizing the rejection of the European project and the European Union. Wilders said, "I take this star back with me to the Netherlands, and Brussels will never get it back from us." He also said that the Netherlands must get out of the European Union.

"We don't like Brussels; we are not the boss in our own country, our own money, our borders, our budget; and it costs us a lot of money" (De Telegraaf, May 20, 2014).

The PVV obsession with Islam goes beyond the presence of Muslims in the Netherlands. This obsession colors and influences every single discussion or issue in politics; that is, the PVV sees Islamic imagery and uses words that describe political phenomena through an Islamic lens.

A. Klimaatminaretten

To show their rejection for the wide, long, steel

them or put them in prison, or does he have other means in mind?

The impact of Wilders' words such as "fewer Moroccans" on Moroccan youth and Muslim children is enormous. Many stories were reported of little children scared to death to be deported or to be killed, reported Fatima Elatik, former alderman of the Oost district in Amsterdam. The reaction of the Dutch media to Wilders "fewer Moroccans," including in the populist newspaper De Telegraaf, was more robust than during the year that followed the killing of Van Gogh. The statements of Wilders were critically covered by the Dutch media. It seems like the Dutch media learned from the criticism they were subjected to after the period of Fortuyn and after the killing of Van Gogh.

> If citizenship is inclusive, then all citizens should be equal; no one should be excluded from belonging to the Dutch "nation."

The statement about "fewer Moroccans" triggered more critics than ever. But it is not the critical tone about Wilders that counts: It is his almost daily appearances and coverage in the media, which hang on his every word. Wilders succeeds in setting the tone in the media and political debate. Wilders continues to make the headlines. It is almost like the media are secret admirers of somebody who helps the media industry generate more readership and income. Muslims and Moroccans are becoming interchangeable in this discourse. These categories are stigmatized and refer to an underclass in society that is defined not by race but by religion. Therefore, religion—and also ethnicity and country origin—becomes substitutes for racial characteristics.

The discourse of Wilders turns the existing predispositions—possible discrimination on basis of the visibility of Muslims and Moroccans into permanent dispositions in the public sphere. These durable dispositions do not function as racial labels but function as mechanisms of exclusion and shame as if being Muslim or Moroccan is something to be ashamed of. Being Moroccan in the time of Wilders, in the Netherlands, is to belong to the lowest of the low ranks in society. The discourse of Wilders legitimizes and reproduces segregation into a society based on religion and country origin. As a result, the neighborhood of Schilderswijk in The Hague becomes quickly labeled as the center of the Islamic caliphate, something mythical and imaginary that draws its saliency from the news in the Middle East mainly after the disintegration of Iraq and the start of the civil war that is ravaging Syria. Every neighborhood with a Muslim majority or ethnic majority is a potential territory for jihadists, according to the PVV. In parallel, Schilderswijk becomes the new Gaza of the political capital of the Netherlands according to the PVV.

This authoritarian drift on the level of free speech doesn't bode well for the future of democracy. If citizenship is inclusive, then all citizens should be equal; no one should be excluded from belonging to the Dutch "nation." Moroccans and Muslims in the Netherlands are just the name of the hatred phenomenon that is widespread in Europe. In some places, they are called Roma, or Beurs in the banlieus of France, or Türken in Germany. Even in Scandinavia, far-right parties rose after they discovered the new migrants.

That which characterizes the new far right in Europe is the touch of erudite exclusive populism, with leaders like the former Austrian leader Jörg Haider, the Belgian Philip Dewinter of Vlaams Belang, the French Marine le Pen of the National Front, and the Dutch Geert Wilders of the PVV. European extreme right populist parties discovered an ethnic religious difference that they framed as race and as an expression of a complex reality. All the categories of race, ethnicity, and religion (specifically, Islam) were simplified and put in one-size-fits-all categories. As such, because of their religious and ethnic belonging, they are not ready for assimilation and will remain outsiders forever.

The United States is much more pronounced about its secularity, being inclusive of all religions; therefore, it accepts religious pluralism as a fact of

life. Geert Wilders, who made a furor in European media with his short documentary Fitna, didn't receive much attention in the United States. It could be concluded by drawing on the Dignity of the Working Man, the work of Michele Lamont in her comparative study about the United States vs. France, that it is easier to be Muslim in the United States than Muslim in Europe. According to Essed and Hoving, "The Netherlands echoes, if not leads, a wider European trend, where offensive statements about Muslims are an everyday phenomenon (Essed, Hoving, 2014–9). The authors argue that "the moral rejection of racism seems to be losing ground in Europe" (Ibid).

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The Settlement House Model of the Arab-American Family Support Center

Arab-American Family Support Center, Brooklyn, New York

The Arab-American Family Support Center (AAFSC) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit, nonsectarian organization. Established in 1994, AAFSC is the first and largest Arabic-speaking, trauma-informed social service agency in New York City. As a settlement house and member of United Neighborhood Houses (UNH), AAFSC has taken the initiative in providing cultur-ally and linguistically sensitive services to the Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian (AMEMSA) immigrant communities throughout the five boroughs.

> The Arab-American Family Support Center operates out of five sites and has 35 full-time and 12 part-time staff who are as diverse as the communities it supports.

Grounded in the history and methodology of the settlement house movement that began in the late 19th century, AAFSC presents a model of community engagement and youth empowerment as a strategy to help with efforts to prevent violent extremism as detailed in this paper.

Settlement houses are multiservice, neighbor-hood-based organizations that provide services designed to identify and reinforce the strengths of individuals, families, and communities. Settlement houses flourish nationally, with over 450 orga-nizations, and internationally, with over 3,400 organizations. In New York City alone, 37 settle-ment houses exist, including AAFSC. All are a part of UNH, a membership organization founded in 1919 that currently provides services to over half a million New Yorkers each year.

The settlement house model incorporates four core principles: embeddedness, multiple points of entry, reciprocity, and community building. Guided by these principles, the work of the settle-ment houses generates three outcomes known as the Settlement House Advantage for participants: a sense of belonging, a sense of efficacy, and a sense of possibility.

For more than a century, settlement houses have, and continue to this day, to be a vital part of neighborhoods and communities across the United States and globe by staying true to their historic mission and model while reinterpreting it for present-day concerns. For AAFSC and others, one of these present-day concerns is preventing violent extremism and the rise of Islamophobia that often comes hand in hand with it.

The Arab-American Family Support Center adopted the settlement house model and officially became a settlement house (and member of UNH) in 2009. Through our trauma-informed, culturally

and linguistically competent social services, we provide a model of community engagement, integration, and youth empowerment that can help in efforts to prevent violent extremism by offering a viable, supportive path for those who might be targets of Daesh recruitment propaganda for violent extremism.

Over the last 23 years and counting, we have helped countless AMEMSA (Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian) immigrants emerge out of isolation (i.e., overcoming language barriers, employment challenges, financial hardships, and racial or religious discrimination) and acclimate to their newly adopted communities in New York City. AAFSC operates out of five sites and has 35 full-time and 12 part-time staff who are as diverse as the communities we support. Our staff are competent in 13 languages: American Sign Language, Arabic, Bangla, English, Farsi, French, Hindi, Nepali, Pashto, Punjabi, Spanish, Tibetan, and Urdu and understand the cultural nuances necessary in serving immigrant communities.

Many of our clients must cope with the trauma and unrest that comes from flight, migration, and resettlement in a new place, along with the everyday challenges that many low-income individuals across New York City face. AAFSC became a trauma-informed organization in 2014 and invests heavily in ongoing trainings for staff members at all levels of the agency. We build resiliency through community support and engagement using cultural humilomes fi Fecpf our clio cont s oTj 1.171 -1.268 Td (MaT agabic–erican SiFamy inSport anCt)erTj -1.171

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nationalities to learn to embrace diversity, toler-
ance, and peace. The program offers a wide range
of free services including after-school homework
help and tutoring, ESL instruction, college access

or low-cost health insurance. The program also provides referrals to low-cost culturally competent health care providers and conducts workshops on health-related issues. As a New York State of Health IPA/Navigator Site, AAFSC is part of a consortium of organizations that works closely with our lead sponsor, the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families, to facilitate the implementation of the Affordable Care Act within the AMEMSA communities. Last year we signed up 1,004 clients for health insurance, 91 percent of them low-income individuals.

The Anti-Violence Program provides culturally and linguistically competent prevention and intervention services to survivors of domestic violence, teen dating violence, stalking, and sexual assault. The program equips survivors with the tools they need to heal and empower themselves. In addition to crisis intervention and individual counseling, the program also offers support and empowerment groups, information and referrals to service providers, court accompaniments and translation assistance, community outreach and education, and trainings for professionals. We operate out of three satellite offices in partnership with the Family Justice Centers in Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island. Last year, AAFSC served over 400 individuals through this program.

The Preventive Services Program aims to ensure the safety of children in homes where there have been allegations of child abuse, neglect, or maltreatment. AAFSC strengthens families by offering assistance and services that lead to improved familial relationships and more effective problem-solving skills and coping mechanisms. The program offers a wide range of services, including individual and family counseling and crisis intervention as well as education efforts about relevant laws and norms around issues such as truancy and corporal punishment. The program consistently receives high marks from the NYC Administration for Children's Services. We offer parenting classes in English, Arabic, Urdu, and Bangla. Last year, 99.5 percent of children in our program stayed in their homes and out of foster care.

Furthermore, AAFSC is the lead community partner for the Khalil Gibran International

Academy (KGIA), a public high school in Brooklyn that concentrates on Arabic language and culture. Open to all New York City youth, KGIA offers a competitive, world-class education as an International Baccalaureate school with over 230 students currently enrolled.

In his address "The Role of Youth in Countering Violent Extremism and Promoting Peace" to the U.N. Security Council in 2015, anthropologist Scott Atran, director of research at France's National Center of Scientific Research, offers three conditions from a social sciences perspective that youth at risk need in order to prevent them from taking the path of violent extremism. These conditions align with the Settlement House

Our further recommendations include continued and elevated advocacy on behalf of settlement houses and their communities, investment in community-led programs, engaging additional stakeholders, and creating new partnerships as well as maximizing further involvement and furthering knowledge development in this area.

Advantage and AAFSC's programming:

1. Offer youth something that makes them dream of a life of significance through struggle and sacrifice in comradeship. This is an example of community-building and sense of belonging.

2. Offer youth a positive personal dream, with a concrete chance of realization. This is an example of a sense of possibility and a sense of efficacy.

3. Offer youth the chance to create their own local initiatives.[2] This is an example of reciprocity, community-building, and sense of efficacy.

Youth engagement has been a cornerstone of AAFSC's work since its founding and we have

Middle class social reformers in Britain in the late 19th century began the settlement house movement with the creation of Toynbee Hall, the first settlement house, in East London in 1884 to provide social services and education to low-income workers in the area.[3] Settlement houses are multiservice, neighborhood-based organizations that provide services designed to identify and reinforce the strengths of individuals, families, and communities.

Galvanized by the British reformers and in response to the burgeoning industrial poverty in the United States, the movement quickly picked up stateside in major urban centers, especially New York, Chicago, and Boston in the late 1880s. The first settlement house in the United States, Neighborhood Guild, wa States, Neighbol

a successful track record of positive results over the last 23 years and counting. Our work as a settlement house presents a model of community engagement, integration, and youth empowerment as a strategy for the prevention of violent extremism in line with research culled by leading experts in the subject matter.

By shedding light on the settlement house movement, history, and model; the work of the Arab–American Family Support Center; the network of other settlement houses nationally and internationally; and the cumulative impact and multiplier effect of the Settlement House Advantage, we present a strategy that can aid in efforts to prevent violent extremism. Our further recommendations include continued and elevated advocacy on behalf of settlement houses and their communities, investment in community-led programs, engaging additional stakeholders, and creating new partnerships as well as maximizing further involvement and furthering knowledge development in this area—all while being mindful of and addressing Islamophobia, xenophobia, and structural racism at every level.

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Kompass–Muslim Youth Education: Empowerment and Prevention Through Education

Founder and Director, Kompass–Muslim Youth Education

German Muslim youth live in a social environment in which they have to cope with major challenges. Young Muslims are not only confronted with anti-Muslim prejudices but also have to deal with the ideas of religious radicals and extremists–ideas they hear not only in the media but also in school, on the job, in peer groups, and in family environments. I often feel that we Muslims have to fight on two fronts: We are forcibly confronted with both extremes and, whether we want to or not, we have to take a stand for our faith.

If youth have no solid identity, they may be confused by such a confrontation, because they cannot respond appropriately to questions or established theses. This uncertainty may not only project anti-Muslim racism but also could prepare a breeding ground for religious radicalization. Kompass–Muslim Youth Education wants to empower young Muslims against anti-Muslim racism and religious extremism. I founded the program in 2013 and am offering it with my colleague Mustafa Cimsit in mosques in the cities of Mainz and Wiesbaden, Germany.

Since I can remember, there has always been a debate on this issue, and Germany is still divided on the question. On the one hand, some people say that, of course, Islam belongs to Germany, because Muslims have lived in Germany since the middle of the last century. On the other hand, some try to show that Islam in Germany has no historical roots and that Europe is only rooted in the so called Judeo-Christian culture and tradition. Although this thesis does not make sense from a scientific and historical perspective, it has an

At the age of 2, I migrated with my family from Pakistan to Germany. Although I grew up in the very international and multicultural city of Frankfurt, the question of whether I'm German or Pakistani was central for me in my youth. At home it was a taboo to say that I felt German, although I had mastered the German language as a child better than my mother tongue. And moreover, in comparison to my cousins in Pakistan, I felt better off as a young girl in the German culture. On the other hand, outside the family I was always perceived as a foreigner and stranger. Even today I'm still asked where I come from and get the compliment that I speak German so well. Meanwhile, I got used to saying: "Thanks, but your German is not bad either." As a teenager I had so much to fight. I always had the feeling that I had to decide whether I want to be Pakistani or German. And no matter how I decided, there would always be someone who would be displeased with me.

Later, when I started to identify myself more and more with my religion and started to study Islam as an academic, a bigger trouble began. Suddenly it was no longer about nationalities but whether a particular national identity can be compatible with Islam.

Kompass is also religious education to convey Islamic values, with the aim of taking responsibility for justice and peace in society and for the integrity of creation. Of course, intercultural education is not absent. We embedded it to promote tolerance and respect for people of a different belief, culture, way of life, or creed, and we empower to dispute by peaceful means. At the

propaganda videos from German Salafi groups and discuss the impact of these groups in German Muslim and non-Muslim society.

Kompass–Muslim Youth Education wants to empower young Muslims to realize their personal and social living conditions in order to participate proactively in society. With empowerment, they can participate and cooperate in the shaping of social life in Germany to include their cultural and religious identity. Only if we empower Muslim youth and help them find a solid identity and enable them to become responsible citizens, we can prevent fundamentalist and extremist thinking. To achieve this goal, we need good cooperation between Muslim and non-Muslim communities and societies.

environment to do anything needed to stabilize the situation in real life. The most important thing is to find new attractive perspectives for the future.

Ideological Level. HAYAT tries to coach families to dismantle the radical ideology and deconstruct the narratives. Because it is difficult to talk with radicalized family members without getting into conflicts, HAYAT counselors help families with communications skills and practical advice. Family members have to learn how to counter narratives and how to try to set doubts or reinforce doubts the person may already have.

Affective Level. The counselor attempts to stabilize the social situation: for example, by renewing social contacts. It is also important to improve the relationships with family and friends. The goal is to offer opportunities for social contacts outside the ideological group. The social environment is an emotional anchor in real life. On this level, family and friends should be very emotional and authentic in order to strengthen emotional bonds and form an effective alternative to the radical group.

Young people called Salafists are teenagers born and raised in Germany with or without immigrant background. We identify four groups of young individuals: with Muslim background, with non-Muslim immigrant background, of German origin, and with bicultural families.

Within the Salafist scene, the third generation of jihadi preachers is active. Most of them have relatively little religious knowledge, and they are doing mission and recruiting via the internet. For youth, social groups and networks in the background are real and could play an important role on the path to radicalization.

The main fascination for young people is that this third generation of jihadi preachers seems to act authentically and always refer to their own lives and experiences with faith. They argue mostly in a political — not theological — way. They also often discuss political problems and ideas in an emotional manner. Actually, some could be called "pop jihadists": They act like pop stars on YouTube, have groupies in the Salafist scene, and make use of symbols and elements of Western pop culture.

The Salafist scene in Germany is very diverse. It is a heterogenic movement, recruiting openly since 2004.We distinguish four different groups within the Salafist movement, and HAYAT works with groups 3 and 4.

1. Puristic Salafists. The puristic Salafists live parallel to society and live in an orthodox and strictly religious way. They might be compared to the Amish people in the United States.

2. Political missionaries (majority). They reject violence and only do mission in a religious way.

3. Political missionaries (nonviolent). They legitimize militant jihad with their ideology and in a religious way.

4. Jihadist (minority; smallest group). These are militants.

Salafist groups seem to offer many answers and solutions to young men and women. They provide religious knowledge (supposedly the "truth and the real and only Way to Islam"); values about what is right and wrong; obedience in the form of strong leaders and role models who provide structure in their lives; community and identity that provide acceptance and acknowledgment; and justicehe pr about
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Girls play an active role in supporting the Daesh organization and other groups. They might, for instance, translate papers or do social media work. They actively recruit other girls via social media such as WhatsApp, Telegram, Instagram, and Facebook. They build networks and help to organize travel routes, housing, and money transfer.

To join Daesh, underage girls often travel with an older female. They receive concrete instructions about how to leave the country. They often travel to Syrew5-1.4nosse

with a range of actors to build capacity to deliver a full-spectrum response. At the hard end of the spectrum, lethal and kinetic forces should blunt the operational edge of the terrorists. Unless terrorists and insurgents are killed or captured, they will continue to harm society. At the soft end of the spectrum, communities vulnerable to extremist ideas should be engaged. Most importantly, surrendered insurgents or captured terrorists should be made to repent, regret, and express remorse and rejoin mainstream society as productive citizens. If all these are not done, terrorist and insurgent groups can still replenish their human losses and material wastage because the means with which they can replicate and regenerate will still exist.

When a terrorist surrenders or an insurgent is captured, the government has a narrow window of opportunity to transform him. Otherwise, he will be both a source and carrier, transmitting, replicating, and multiplying the ideological virus. Even if incarcerated for life or held incommunicado, he can influence and reinforce others both from inside and outside the wire. Even if quarantined, he still comes into contact with prison staff or visitors, and the contact provides him with the opportunity to radicalize others. Unless he is put to death, sooner or later, most terrorists and insurgents are released. The vicious cycle of violence

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The world's most pivotal conflict theaters, Afghanistan and Iraq, offer important lessons in government failure to rehabilitate and reintegrate their fighters.

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will persist, and the threat will grow if nothing is done. The ideas of extremism and ideology of violence will continue to create a landscape of instability and insecurity. In this regard, both terrorist rehabilitation and community engagement are powerful tools in deradicalization and counterradicalization, respectively. Considering the recent developments in the Middle East and the changing global threat landscape, governments

and their partners should invest in building global rehabilitation capabilities and capacities.

The world's most pivotal conflict theaters, Afghanistan and Iraq, offer important lessons in government failure to rehabilitate and reintegrate their fighters. Al-Qaeda (previously Maktabal-Khidamat) was the child of the anti-Soviet multinational Afghan mujahedin campaign (1979–1989). When the Soviets were about to withdraw, the U.S. visionary leader Charlie Wilson, who supported the fight, proposed to the U.S. Congress to fund the rehabilitation of the Afghan and foreign fighters. Having spent $3 billion to fight the Soviets, the U.S. Congress lacked the foresight to invest with a fraction of the amount to rehabilitate the foreign fighters and their families.

Furthermore, many Arab countries were reluctant to bring back their nationals, fearing they would seek to replicate the Afghan experience in their home countries. Many became destitute, and their anger was harnessed by terrorist groups to fight in Kashmir, Chechnya, Bosnia, and other conflict zones. The Palestinian ideologue Abdullah Azzam, also known as the Father of Global Jihad, envisioned creating "a pioneering vanguard of the Islamic movements," and his Saudi protege Osama bin Laden brought together foreign fighters to create Al-Qaeda in Peshawar on Aug. 11, 1988 (Bergen, 2001 and Jacquard, 2002).

After the Al-Qaeda operational cell led by Khalid Sheikh Mohomed, another Afghan veteran, attacked America's most iconic landmarks, the threat proliferated. In Iraq, Abu Musab al Zarqawi, another Afghan veteran, founded the forerunner of ISIS. Although some governments built rehabilitation capabilities, the United States failed to build such capability. The failure to build rehabilitation capabilities in Bagram and Guantanamo Bay resulted in those released forming new groups or joining or supporting existing groups.

Belatedly, the United States started to invest in the strategic approach (Stern 2010, 95–108). The United States had built a credible rehabilitation

program in Iraq but not a reintegration program. The United States withdrew from Iraq in 2010 and handed over the prisons to the new Iraqi administration. The failure to continue to rehabilitate and reintegrate the fighters by the new Iraqi administration led to their return to join

the threat strategically. There should be three stages: Countries with no rehabilitation programs should develop a vision to build rehabilitation capabilities. Countries with ad hoc rehabilitation programs should transform them into permanent rehabilitation programs. Countries with rehabilitation programs should build community engagement programs.

> The twin approaches to fight terrorism strategically are to develop community engagement initiatives to build community resilience and rehabilitate and reintegrate insurgents, terrorists, and extremists.

No custodial rehabilitation program will succeed without an effective reintegration program. Post-release monitoring and aftercare determine the success of custodial rehabilitation. If the beneficiary of rehabilitation comes into contact with insurgents, terrorists, and extremists, he will relapse. In parallel with deradicalization efforts, there should be an investment in countering the radicalization of the masses. Counterradicalization creates an environment that is hostile to operatives and unfriendly to supporters by immunizing the general public. Effective counterradicalization prevents ordinary citizens from being transformed into extremists and extremists into terrorists and insurgents. Unless ideological capabilities that empower and motivate terrorists and insurgents to legitimize and justify violence are countered, the threat will linger and manifest violently when an opportunity arises (S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies and The Religious Rehabilitation Group, 2009).

When an insurgent, terrorist, or extremist is arrested or surrenders, he or she must be treated with the intention of reintegrating them back into society sooner or later. The initial shock of arrest should be exploited to gain a cognitive opportunity to both investigate and transform him. The investigators should be trained in motivational interviewing. Every offender in custody is an invaluable source on leadership, organization, ideology, and operations. As security is paramount and a priority, the focus during the initial se should be to determine what the threat is and how to prevent the next attack.

Although investigations precede rehabilitation, investigators should be mindful of the strategic intent of eventual reintegrating the suspect or accused. As rehabilitation is a two-way process, the offender should agree to be rehabilitated. An offender who accepts rehabilitation should be referred to as a beneficiary and not as an insurgent, terrorist, or extremist. There should be provision in the legal and administrative framework of rehabilitation for early release of those who cooperate and genuinely repent, express remorse, and embrace peace versus those who are uncooperative and unable or unwilling to reject violence, condemn extremism, and contribute to harmonious living.

As most prisons and detention centers worldwide are overcrowded, rehabilitation of terrorists is ideally conducted in a rehabilitation center with dedicated areas for living and dining, meeting rooms and lecture halls, and recreation and creative arts halls. However, most governments lack the monetary resources to build a specialist center. As such, prisons and detention centers can be converted into rehabilitation platforms by inviting the public and private sector to invest in changing inmates' and detainees' lives.

Prison staff need to be integrated with the rehabilitation staff. Guards should be trained and retrained in ways to work with inmates and detainees professionally to ensure that the beneficiaries are treated with care. If prison staff slap or torment a beneficiary undergoing a critical stage in rehabilitation, the gains made by the rehabilitation staff to transform him will be lost. When a beneficiary is visited by a religious

cleric, psychological counselor, social worker, or his family members, there should be a room dedicated for such visits. Such a room should be comfortable, with an ambiance to help transform the beneficiary. Although the beneficiary is no longer the breadwinner and head of his household, he is still the father to his children. A beneficiary should be presented in civilian attire and without handcuffs when meeting his parents, brothers and sisters, wife, children, grandchildren, and other loved ones.

The government should enlist the support both of the public and private sector to build a rehabilitation program. The talent in the private sector—from the entertainment industry to the creative arts community—is huge and should be tapped on by government. Rehabilitation is an enterprise in which experts and specialists from diverse fields come together to form a common platform. As mentors, they seek to bring back members of their society who have left the social mainstream and gone to the extreme.

Rehabilitation is conducted by psychologists, counselors, social workers, teachers, vocational instructors, sports instructors, artists, religious clerics, and others passionate about transforming lives. They will come from government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, academia, community organizations, religious bodies, business communities, and others. To anticipate and achieve success, rehabilitation staff should assess each beneficiary. Together with case officers, specialists and experts should meticulously plan and prepare a series of interventions vis-à-vis each detainee and inmate. Assessments on progress in rehabilitation by the case officers, counselors, clerics, prison/rehabilitation center, and other staff will be forwarded to the review board that will determine release. All staff who work on rehabilitation need to be trained and retrained on handling terrorists and extremists. Otherwise, there is a risk that the unrepentant terrorist will deceive or even try to convince the rehabilitator to embrace his ideology.

To transform captured terrorists to be productive citizens, government should partner with a range of actors to create a rehabilitation enterprise. To win their hearts and minds, there should be three distinct but interrelated components. The components of a comprehensive rehabilitation enterprise are providing services in (1) custodial rehabilitation to the beneficiary, (2) aftercare services to their families, and (3) successful reintegration back to the community. To administer the different modes of rehabilitation, there should be a resource panel with dedicated staff that will implement the rehabilitation interventions. The seven modes of rehabilitation are (1) religious and spiritual rehabilitation, (2) educational rehabilitation, (3) vocational rehabilitation, (4) social and family rehabilitation, (5) psychological rehabilitation, (6) recreational rehabilitation, and (7) creative arts in rehabilitation. Each mode of rehabilitation should have a manual of instruction and an accompanying guide of administrative instructions on how to implement the interventions.

All modes of rehabilitation are important but to engage Muslim terrorists, religious rehabilitation is the magic weapon. It is a process of deradicalization that involves theological refutation and ideological debate between religious scholars and their beneficiaries. For extremist and violent Muslim groups such as Al-Qaeda and IS, religious concepts such as jihad (struggle), hijrah (migration), and al-wala' wa-l-bara (loyalty and disavowal) are used as key doctrines in the movement ideology. According to the Religious Rehabilitation Group of Singapore, these concepts are manipulated and their interpretations are Tf6ng towster to bjstoif

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religious rehabilitation will effect change in their mental paradigm, which will open the doors for them to repent from wrongful acts and to prevent them from future violent acts. By correcting the misinterpretation of these religious concepts, the rehabilitated offender can be guided not only to refrain from committing violent acts but also to recognize and accept the deeds as wrong.

To ensure maximum success during the custodial rehabilitation phase and to prevent relapse in the community phase, rehabilitation interventions should be comprehensive. Otherwise, upon release, terrorists and their families may go back to old ways, once again participating in, supporting, and advocating violence. Similarly, terrorists who surrender should also be enlisted and engaged both in the custodial and community phases. Without going through a comprehensive rehabilitation program, complete transformation is unlikely even for terrorists who have surrendered after leaving

A case officer should facilitate, support, and guide the beneficiary to overcome any obstacles he may face due to his incarceration. There should be periodic visits by the case officer to ensure that the beneficiary is not harassed and does not come into contact with terrorists or extremists. Similarly, the case worker should remain in contact with the family, notably the wife and children, to ensure that the beneficiary adapts to the work, family, and community environment. Both the case officer and case worker should ensure the smooth transition of the beneficiary and the family into the community and society (Stern 2010).

In parallel with rehabilitating and reintegrating terrorists, governments should build capacities and capabilities to engage communities. By educating communities, they become immunized against extremist ideas and ideologies. By empowering communities to better understand the threat, they become the eyes and the ears of the state.

the group for personal rather than ideological reasons. When in custody, the government should lead; when reintegrated, society should lead. Custodial and community rehabilitation are golden opportunities that the government and society must not let go to herald change in a person's thinking and behavior from the extreme to the mainstream.

Terrorist rehabilitation starts from the point of capture but does not end with the point of release. The rehabilitation process should continue from the custodial phase into the community phase, where the beneficiary is constantly engaged at the workplace, in the family, and in the community.

Paris, Copenhagen to Sydney, those vulnerable to IS ideology killed, maimed, and injured civilians. Although the threat of IS- and Al-Qaeda-directed attacks persist, the dominant threat outside IS core areas and provinces is by self-radicalized home-grown cells and individuals. A new frontier in the fight against online extremism, terrorism, and insurgency should be digital rehabilitation to bring back those from the extreme to the mainstream.

With the rise of IS, a new global-threat land-scape is emerging. The Al-Qaeda-centric threat landscape is eclipsed by an Al-Qaeda–IS hybrid global threat. The four components of the Islamic State are 1) IS theater of Iraq and Syria; 2) IS's 24 provinces overseas; 3) IS-associated groups in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and the Caucasus; and 4) IS homegrown cells. Western security and intelligence services estimate the number of Sunni foreign fighters in the theater of opera-tions at 20,000 from nearly 100 countries. While Afghanistan attracted about 10,000 fighters in the 10 years of war, Syria attracted double that number in its first five years. IS becomes a global threat because the caliphate as an Islamic idea has global resonance and is being propagated through its social media content and attractive presenta-tion featuring the foreign fighter population who are willing to conduct attacks in the Syrian–Iraqi theater, at home, and in third countries (Islamic State Dabiq magazine). In addition to IS's vast resources, its graphic violence appeals to a segment of radicalized and militarized youth. Based on frequency of traffic to IS digital platforms, IS has politicized, radicalized, and mobilized tens of thousands of fighters and millions s o>home

The success in the fight against terrorism depends on the integration of hard power and soft power. Operational counterterrorism is the most effective strategy targeted at terrorists. However, operational counterterrorism is not the most efficient strategy to defeat terrorist ideology. To defeat terrorism, governments should work in partnership with civil society and businesses to counter terrorist ideology and message and rehabilitate the terrorists and extremists. Upstream counter-radicalization and downstream deradicalization are

> While hard power is essential to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure and decapitate leaders and operatives, soft power is essential to engage communities vulnerable to radicalization and deradicalize captured and surrendered extremists, terrorists, and insurgents.

game-changers in counterterrorism. Most governments are yet to build the capabilities to counter the threat strategically. The twin approaches to fight insurgency, terrorism, and extremism are to strategically develop community engagement initiatives to build community resilience. Government should get the strategy right by thinking and acting beyond the catch, kill, and

disruption paradigm. The international community should develop the will to address both reality and ideality of the challenges confronting the world. The legitimate grievances of those fighting should be addressed, and their perceived grievances should be challenged. Kinetic and lethal operations weakened Al-Qaeda, but its associates and affiliates, including IS, emerged stronger. While hard power is essential to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure and decapitate leaders and operatives, soft power is essential to engage communities vulnerable to radicalization and deradicalize captured and surrendered extremists, terrorists, and insurgents.

In the life cycle of a terrorist and an insurgent, the government has only two opportunities to neutralize him: for security forces to either kill or to capture and rehabilitate the terrorist. The cost of rehabilitation and reintegration is a fraction of fighting the threat kinetically and lethally. With governments facing a hard time fighting the threat, civil society and business leaders should come together to play a role to mitigate the global threat. Community leaders, especially faith leaders, should work with government to influence and shape the community. There should be greater emphasis on upstream intervention, where the role of family, friends, and community is engaged by government to identify early indicators of radicalization. Considering the inherent community mistrust of government in some countries, it is paramount for civil society to build partnerships with the private sector to fund and formulate initiatives to counter extremism, the precursor to terrorism, both online and offline.

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Nigeria's Response to Terrorism

Executive Director of Neem Foundation, Nigeria

Advancements such as technology and science that have come with modernity have opened up the world in ways that our ancestors could not imagine. But with these advances have also come existential threats that require us to come up with innovative solutions. As our world becomes smaller, problems are no longer isolated by region, state, or even neighborhood. The same technology that allows us to communicate with relatives

frameworks with the introduction of new bills that address terrorism and money-laundering, and create a counterterrorism center with an intelligence fusion unit.

Beginning in 2012, the federal government adopted a broader approach to counterterrorism that encompasses peace, security, and development. This was a nonmilitary approach that involves actors within and out of government, civil society, and religious institutions.

Nigeria's broader counterterrorism approach was designed to sit within civilian institutions and have reach into civil society while at the same time complementing the military approach, an encompassing-all-of-society approach. While the program is currently undergoing restructuring

due to the change in the government occasioned by the 2015 elections, I was privileged to be in government for three years, and I developed the Nigerian countering violent extremism program known as the Soft Approach.

Nigeria's countering violent extremism program is both vertical—involving three tiers of government: federal, state, and local; and horizontal—involving civil society; academics; and traditional, religious, and community leaders.

through a community-based aftercare program. This program would be composed of government and civil society working together to develop and implement community-based reintegration interventions.

In addition to prison-based programs, the deradicalization stream also worked on the following:

National Security Corridor. In 2015, a partnership between the military, some civil society groups, and the Office of the National Security Adviser resulted in setting up a safe corridor for Boko Haram members who wanted to give themselves up voluntarily. This program included a comprehensive categorizing of Boko Haram members as well as the development of a comprehensive risk assessment, risk management, and reintegration plan. In the first two months of the program, 47 members of Boko Haram gave themselves up voluntarily, and the program was aware of at least 500 more who had expressed interest in laying down their arms. Once in the program, the former terrorists underwent the

Counter Radicalization. This program focuses on community engagement and education-based projects. It was designed to stem the flow of recruits and reduce the potential for radicalization. The Society Against Violent Extremism (SAVE) project, created in the office of the national security adviser, was responsible for this stream. Its focus is preventive and involves a whole-society approach. Working in six states and 18 local governments, the project aimed to link government interventions with civil society efforts, expanding the reach of both. The SAVE project had the following objectives

- Countering the drivers of radicalization

- Encouraging action around countering violent extremism in communities, civil society, and government institutions

- Building community engagement and resilience

- Using education as a tool for countering violent extremism by promoting critical thinking and logical reasoning in schools

- Promoting intra- and interreligious tolerance

Framework for Psychology. Terrorism has caused wide-ranging trauma across northern Nigeria, providing the state with an opportunity to develop a comprehensive trauma response. The response has included a new policy for the provision of posttraumatic stress disorder care nationally through the National Primary Health Care Development Agency. It is envisioned that the

nation would need to train upward of 7,000 health

Countering Daesh Recruitment Propaganda Experts Workshop: Participant Biographies

Fatima Akilu is the executive director of Neem Foundation, Nigeria. She is also a university educator and an advocate for marginalized groups, working in the area of psychology and health for more than two decades. Akilu was head of communication for the senior special assistant to the president on the Millennium Development Goals, and she was chairwoman of the editorial board of the Leadership Newspaper Group. Until recently, Akilu was the director of the Behavioral Analysis and Strategic Communication unit at the Office of the National Security Adviser, which has developed a multipronged approach to countering violent extremism. Also, she designed Nigeria's program for countering violent extremism. Akilu is a children's writer and hosts a weekly radio show, Radio Psych. She holds a bachelor's degree in English, a master's degree in research methods in psychology, and Ph.D. in psychology from Reading University in Berkshire, United Kingdom. Akilu has authored more than 17 children's books and has published articles on homelessness and mental health.

Misbah Arshad is the founder and director at Kompass–Muslim Youth Education. She also serves as the prison chaplain for Muslim women in Frankfurt. Arshad is a freelancer at Leitplanke, Salutogenetic Prevention of Religious Radicalization, Rheinland-Pfalz and a board member at the Institute for Intercultural Pre-Primary Education. Arshad studied religious studies and education at Goethe-University, Frankfurt, and is a Ph.D. candidate in Islamic education at Osnabrück University in Osnabrück, Germany.

Sam Cherribi is a senior lecturer at Emory University, Atlanta, Ga., in the Department of Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies and directs the Emory Development Initiative, working with faculty in Emory's Institute of Human Rights. He has been a visiting senior lecturer and interim director of the Center for the Study of Public Scholarship at Emory. Prior to moving to Emory in 2003, Cherribi was a member of Parliament in The Netherlands for two consecutive four-year terms (1994–2002), during which time he also represented The Netherlands in the Assembly of the Council of Europe and the Assembly of the West European Union. He conducts research on European politics; Islam in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East; and development in low-income countries. His most recent book, "In the House of War: Dutch Islam Observed," was published in paperback in 2013 by Oxford University Press. Cherribi holds a Ph.D. from the University of Amsterdam.

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of development and communications. Prior to AAFSC, Qureshi was the program director of the Women's Islamic Initiative in Spirituality and Equality. She has worked for the Jordan Red Crescent Society, where she organized a summer arts and education program for low-income and refugee youth in East Amman. Qureshi has extensive experience in developing and managing international campaigns—from independent initiatives, such as "Friends of Jassim" that helped targeted Iraqi fixers, to global awareness campaigns, including "The End of Polio" with the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Health Organization and "Chasing the Dream: Youth Faces of the Millennium Development Goals" project with the United Nations Population Fund. Qureshi has a master's degree in international affairs from the New School in New York and a bachelor's in biology from the City College of New York.

Ebrahim Rasool is the former South African ambassador to the United States. Prior to serving as an ambassador, Rasool served as member of Parliament in the National Assembly, special adviser to the state president of the Republic of South Africa, and premier (governor) of the Western Cape province. Ambassador Rasool has a long history of involvement in the anti-apartheid struggle, including leadership in the United Democratic Front and the African National Congress. He spent time in prison and was under house arrest. He has been involved in both the Islamic movement and the interfaith movement. He has been active in mobilizing Muslims and the broader faith communities toward a deeper understanding of Islam and faith under conditions of oppression (under apartheid) and currently under conditions of globalization. Ambassador Rasool has extensive experience in government, having led various departments such as health, welfare, finance, and economic development. For his contribution to South Africa, Ambassador Rasool has been the recipient of a number of

leadership awards. He is founder of the World for All Foundation that rethinks the intellectual tools available to Muslims and faith communities and creates cooperative relations between faiths, cultures, and communities at a global level. After serving as ambassador, Rasool became a scholar-in-residence at Georgetown University in Washington D.C.

Mubin Shaikh is considered a subject-matter expert in radicalization, violent extremism, and countering violent extremism to the United Nations Center for Counter Terrorism, Interpol, Europol, Hedayah Center, U.S. Department of State–Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications, National Counterterrorism Center, U.S. DOD Strategic Multilayer Assessment Team, U.S. Central Command–Special Operations Command (as an expert on ISIS), NATO, and others. As a fully deradicalized supporter of the global jihadist culture, he has worked undercover with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (Integrated National Security Enforcement Team). Shaikh was an integral component of what became known as the "Toronto 18," resulting in the conviction of 11 aspiring violent extremists. He is also co-author of the acclaimed book "Undercover Jihadi." Shaikh holds a master's degree in policing, intelligence, and counterterrorism from Macquarie University and is a Ph.D. candidate in psychological sciences studying radicalization, deradicalization, and violent extremism at the University of Liverpool with the Tactical Decision-Making Research Group. Shaikh was born and raised in Canada and has returned home following over a decade of travels in Asia and the Middle East.

Carol Winkler is an associate dean for the humanities and professor of communication at Georgia State University in Atlanta. She serves as co-executive director of the National Debate

Project, where she is expanding access to the benefits of debate training into traditionally underserved populations. Those programs have been named the signature school program for the Bush White House's Helping America's Youth initiative, and they serve as part of the technical assistance program for the Obama administration's Youth Engagement and Violence Prevention Toolkit. She is a scholar of presidential foreign policy rhetoric, argumentation and debate, and visual communication. Her recent book, "In the Name of Terrorism" (2006), won the outstanding book award in political communication from the National Communication Association. Her research appears in the Quarterly Journal of Speech, Controversia, Argumentation and Advocacy, Political Communication and Persuasion, Rhetoric and Public Affairs, and Terrorism. She has won the National Communication Association's Visual Communication Commission's Award for Excellence in Research for her work on linkages between visual images and ideology. Winkler holds a Ph.D. from the University of Maryland.

Aaron Y. Zelin is the Richard Borow Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and the Rena and Sami David Fellow at the International Center for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence. He is also a Ph.D. candidate at King's College London, where his dissertation is on the history of the Tunisian jihadi movement. Zelin is the founder of the widely acclaimed and cited website Jihadology.net and its podcast JihadPod. His research focuses on global jihadi groups in North Africa and Syria. He is also the author of the New America Foundation's January 2013 study, The State of the Global Jihad Online; the June 2014 Washington Institute study, The War Between ISIS and Al-Qaeda for Supremacy of the Global Jihadist Movement; and the January 2016 Washington Institute study, The Islamic State's Territorial Methodology.

Associate Director, Conflict
Resolution Program

Houda Abadi was born and raised in Morocco. She holds a graduate certificate from Duke University–University of North Carolina in Middle East studies; an M.A. in international relations and diplomacy, with a concentration in Middle East studies and conflict resolution; and a Ph.D. in political communication and media studies. She is a recipient of the Transcultural and Conflict Transformation Presidential Fellowship. Abadi has been active in writing, presenting, and organizing events related to Arab Spring, political Islam, propaganda, terrorism, Muslim women's issues, and aesthetic forms of resistance. She has taught courses in conflict resolution and mediation, social movements, cultural diversity, and social media. She is fluent in English, French, Arabic, and Spanish. Prior to joining the Center, Abadi served as the director of education in two nonprofit organizations that facilitated dialogue between Jewish and Muslim youth, working on curriculum development and youth interfaith dialogue. She also served as a researcher, translator, and writer for Muslim women's issues at the Women's Islamic Initiative in Spirituality and Equality. While in graduate school, she was the Middle East and North Africa intern in a human rights organization and acted as a liaison between the U.N. Institute of Research and Training and Arab diplomats.

Program Associate, Conflict
Resolution Program

Nancy Azar joined The Carter Center in January 2016 and supported implementation activities of the Daesh project from the Center's Atlanta headquarters. Prior to joining the Center, Azar coordinated all aspects of regional drug prevention programs in more than seven Arab countries for Mentor Arabia, the regional branch of Mentor International Foundation, established and presided

over by Queen Sylvia of Sweden. Azar holds a bachelor's degree in political science and public administration from Université Saint Joseph in Beirut. Her professional and academic interests include the role of youth, women, and religion in peacebuilding. She was born and raised in

in China and Saudi Arabia as well as an attorney in California, New York, and Washington, D.C. Ryan holds a master's degree in international affairs from the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University; a J.D. degree from the National Law Center, The George Washington University; and a B.A. in anthropology from Yale University. He was a visiting fellow at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in 2001.

CEO, The Carter Center

Ambassador (ret.) Mary Ann Peters joined The Carter Center as its chief executive officer Sept. 2, 2014. As CEO, Ambassador Peters provides vision and leadership for the Center and oversees all operations.

Ambassador Peters was provost of the U.S. Naval War College from 2008 to 2014. Previously, she was dean of academics at the College of International and Security Studies at the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany.

Ambassador Peters spent more than 30 years as a career diplomat with the U.S. Department of State. From 2000 to 2003, she was U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh, leading the mission's efforts in support of the war on terrorism and other U.S. foreign policy goals. Prior to Dhaka, Ambassador Peters was deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa, Canada.

Previously Ambassador Peters served as deputy chief of mission in Sofia, Bulgaria, as economic counselor in Moscow, and as the last U.S. consul in Mandalay, Burma. From 1988 to 1990, she