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HEZBOLLAH—THE PARADOX OF INFLUENCE

Nadine Chafik*

This study examines the origins and maturation of Hezbollah from a loose confederation of street fighters to a political force that is able to adapt, transform and expand in one of the most unstable regions of the world. Labelled a terrorist organisation by some of the world's most powerful nations, this paper argues that Hezbollah's influence cannot be confined to a reputation born in the violence that gripped Lebanon during its civil war and occupation by Israel. So, what is Hezbollah? Is it a terrorist group, a political party, a social movement, an international power broker? This paper examines its evolution and metamorphoses into its present state of being. Regardless of the general world view, this study finds that Hezbollah has not completed its metamorphoses, for it is still evolving.

Keywords: Hezbollah, terrorism, counterterrorism, organisational change, Lebanon

INTRODUCTION

Responsible for some of the most notorious acts of terror in the 1980s, Hezbollah proved to be an innovator of mass casualty, suicide terrorism and kidnapping in its formative years. However, the last decade has seen Hezbollah evolve into a military and political machine, capable of influencing and participating in national politics and regional conflicts at the tactical, operational and strategic levels. As the organisation expanded into civic and social welfare and organized criminal activities, a paradox emerged, as well as a problem of definition.

BACKGROUND

Since its inception, Hezbollah has branched beyond its terrorist roots. As an organisation, Hezbollah relies on pragmatism, strategic thinking and long-term planning as it endeavours to expand its influence and power. Militarily, Hezbollah could be viewed by the wider public and mostly by its supporters through the prism of its capability to survive major confrontations with a

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regional hegemon that has vanquished regional states in past wars, the State of Israel.

Hezbollah has demonstrated a level of sophistication and has created an image that transcends a terrorist profile, by acting as a lifeline for the Lebanese-Shia community. It has maintained a multi-layered strategy in the course of its evolution that blends the military, social and political. It is perceived as the proxy of Iran and Syria (El Husseini, 2010), and persists with its hard-line criticism of the legitimacy of Israel (Hezbollah, 1985). It simultaneously presses on with its national agenda, embedding itself deeper into the political functions of the Lebanese state. This, in turn, gains it popular support, as it becomes the main arbiter of social welfare in south Lebanon (Ahmad Nizar Hamzeh, 2004).

This contemporary image is the product of its evolution, its international relationships and the actions these relationships produce. As a group it emerged from the ranks of a side-lined, marginalised, impoverished and deprived faction of the Lebanese society. It has been a major figure in the Levant in general and in Lebanese society in particular for three decades. Influenced by the Iranian revolution and supported by its apparatus, it was formed in the 1980s in direct response to Israel's invasion of Lebanon (Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2009).

A MOVEMENT BORN FROM CHAOS

The Shia in Lebanon is the fastest growing community (Norton, 1991), which for years, lived in dire economic circumstances, was under-represented within the political realm and was reportedly ignored by the state. Hezbollah became a protector of the Shia, a means which advanced Shia interests. Revolting against their social status and affected by the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in southern Lebanon, the Shia mobilized and were radicalized. In 1969, a political program presented by the Shia leadership in Lebanon encompassed a call to support the Palestinian resistance and to effectively take part in the liberation of Palestinian land (Alagha, 2006). In the 1970s the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) used southern Lebanon as a launch pad to perpetrate attacks against Israel.

At the time, fighting led to a Shia exodus within the county to East and South Beirut, exacerbating existing economic problems for the Shia there (Haddad, 2006). These poor conditions became the perfect incubator for a growing resistance movement, especially in the aftermath of the 1979 Iranian revolution which provided the Shia with inspiration and leadership (Norton, 1987). According to Bruce Hoffman, these Palestinian fighters and their actions

may be credited with initiating, inspiring, fostering and encouraging the modern era of international terrorism (B. Hoffman, 2007). The Israeli-PLO tug of war influenced Hezbollah in its target selection, whereby the Israeli Defense Forces, their proxies as well as international elements became legitimate targets in the eyes of the group (Jaber, 1997).

Despite its national agenda, Hezbollah became internationally prominent following the 1983 suicide attack it perpetrated against the American Marine barracks in Beirut. A 12,000 pound high explosives ridden truck was employed causing the death of 241 US Marines. FBI investigators described it then as the largest non-nuclear blast ever detonated on the face of the earth (Hammel, 2010). This catapulted to the fore the disparate elements of what came to be known as Hezbollah today (Byman, 2003) and marked the beginning of two following campaigns which allegedly included eleven suicide attacks perpetrated against Israel between 1982 and 1985, and twenty more against Israel and its proxy, the South Lebanon Army, between 1985 and 1986 (Pape, 2005). Hezbollah is considered one of a few Islamic Groups that conducted the most significant and deadly attacks against international entities. It has been influenced by the self-martyrdom tactic of the medieval Assassins and introduced suicide bombing with surprising results to expel foreign troops from Lebanon (Rapoport, 2004).

Hezbollah takes pride in the development and effective use of this most deadly tactical innovation which inspired and was adopted by other groups worldwide (Braun & Genkin, 2011). Regardless of its roots, Hezbollah today has an astounding structure and is headed by a charismatic Secretary General who, over the years, was capable of asserting himself and leading with authority and credibility. As an organisation, it is said to be hierarchical (Berti, 2011). It is governed by a seven member Council which represents its military, social, political, and judicial functional arms (Jackson, 2006). It is also described as robustly centralized, in that control emanating from the governing Council is exercised through the three regional ones based in Beirut, Southern Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley (Qassem, 2005).

In 1989, national Lebanese factions met in Ta'if, Saudi Arabia and purportedly reached an agreement to end the civil war that erupted in Lebanon in 1975. One of the items on the agenda was the dissolution of all militias. Hezbollah rejected the idea distancing itself from the "Militia" label by branding itself as a "Resistance Movement" (Alagha, 2006). Central to triggering an Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon, Hezbollah did not demobilize its military

wing post-war national reconciliation in Lebanon (Krayem, 1997). At the time of this writing, Hezbollah still considers at least one Lebanese village, namely the Shebaa Farms, as still occupied by Israel, hence the necessity to maintain a resistance posture (Salem, 2008).

THE MOVEMENT FINDS ITS PURPOSE

On numerous occasions, Hezbollah's leadership indicated that 1982 was the year the group was founded (Shatz, 2004). However, it is only in February 1985 that Hezbollah formally introduced itself and its ideology to the world through its infamous "Manifesto" as part of a nation led by the Iranian Supreme leader Ayatollah Khomeini (Hezbollah, 1985). Hezbollah's "Open Letter" denoted three main objectives; firstly, to expel foreign entities from Lebanese soil in order to end a colonialist era, secondly, to bring the Phalanges, a Christian Militia to justice in order to atone for crimes they committed in country and thirdly, called upon other Lebanese, mainly Christians to willingly adhere to Islam (Alagha, 2011). Hezbollah identified America as an enemy and stated that the Lebanese political system should be opposed as it was beyond reform. Regarding Israel, Hezbollah adamantly stated that its resistance will only end once this entity is annihilated.

TERROR APPLIED

Labelled as having a terrorist nature, where does Hezbollah fit in the realm of global terrorism? Terrorism is not a new phenomenon. It originated in Russia in the 1880s and thus far has witnessed four major cycles of activity known as "Waves." Rapoport indicated that modern terrorism started with the "Anarchist Wave", followed in the 1920s by the "Anti-colonial Wave" which lasted until the emergence of the "New left Wave" in the 1960s and then to the "Religious wave" beginning in 1979 and continuing. At the heart of the "Religious Wave" is Islam and in it religious and ethnic identities overlap. Hezbollah was inspired and assisted by the 1979 Iranian Revolution which in itself was a major factor in providing a turning point to launch the fourth wave.

While Hezbollah is anchored and has fully developed under the fourth wave of modern terrorism, one cannot deny that it has been influenced by the PLO which thrived and developed under the third wave. Similarly to the PLO supporters in the 1970s, Hezbollah argues that only terror could remove Israel (Rapoport, 2004).

To this day, and despite numerous United Nations conventions on terrorism, the international community remains divided lacking a common approach and a recognized scale by which to define terrorism. In this context, Hezbollah's designation has been a point of contention at the international level (Berti, 2011). Countries differed in their perception vis-à-vis the organisation and their willingness to label it in its entirety as terrorist has varied thus far.

For the State of Israel, there is absolute clarity that Hezbollah's ultimate goal is its total destruction (Alagha, 2011). Moreover, Hezbollah has proved the single most effective adversary Israel has ever faced (Byman, 2003). To this end, Israeli leaders recurrently call upon the international community and especially the European Union to urgently add Hezbollah to their respective terrorist lists.

Likewise, the United States of America which still carries the psychological impact of Hezbollah's 23 October 1983 terrorist attacks against its US Marine barracks in Beirut adamantly labels Hezbollah as terrorist in nature and denounces it as a sponsor of terrorism (US Department of State, 2006). In 2003, the CIA director stated that as an organisation with a worldwide presence Hezbollah is al-Qaeda's equal if not far more capable.

TERROR SHEATHED

Tempered in the flames of Lebanon's civil war, Hezbollah emerged with a cadre of battle hardened fighters with a vision to expand capabilities beyond a network of cells relying on terrorism to apply their will. The pragmatism of the Movement's leadership allowed Hezbollah to relegate terror as merely a method and not its essence. This paved the way for the introduction of its most renowned, contemporary component, its military wing.

It is manned by highly trained, dedicated, motivated and well-disciplined fighters. Having honed their skills under the guidance of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard (Pasdaran), they have created a well-developed intelligence capability of their own and a depth of military power necessary and sufficient to withstand and survive long-term confrontations with professional armies (Ranstorp, 2006). It has been ascertained that religiosity is the most influential factor in triggering support for Hezbollah from the Shia community (Haddad, 2006) and religiously-motivated elements have a deeper commitment to their cause than nonreligious elements, they fight longer wars, engage in riskier behaviour and are more intense than their nonreligious counterparts (Horowitz, 2009).

Religion is a unique motivator that enhances group structural integrity, as well as cohesion and discipline (Kenny, 2010). In addition, the religious values of Hezbollah's leadership permeate the organisational structure protecting its ranks from potential schisms and ensuring unity despite having had to adapt to shifting national and regional dynamics. The group's recruitment strategy is shaped in a way to weed out those unwilling elements that are not highly committed to the cause (Blanford, 2011). While Hezbollah's structure is extremely hierarchical (A Nizar Hamzeh, 1993) it still contains some decentralization at the levels of its mobile command-and-control and its field and special units. The militancy focuses on irregular warfare tactics such as insurgency and terrorism (Gleis & Berti, 2012).

While accurate data on Hezbollah numbers is lacking, it could be argued that the Islamic Resistance of the group is the most professional armed faction in the Middle East region. There is a little more information as to its arsenal, which was reported by its leader, Hasan Nasrallah in May 2005 to include over 12,000 rockets. The group possesses sophisticated weapons including C802 anti-ship cruise missiles (F. Hoffman, 2006), 107mm and 122mm Katyusha rockets, mobile Noor, Hadid, and Awash multi-barrel rocket launcher systems which fire heavier rounds with warheads weighing over 100 pounds capable of reaching targets up to 20 miles away, Fajr-3 (range of 25 miles) and Fajr5 (range of 45 miles) rockets and Syrian reproductions of Soviet BM-27 220mm rocket systems (range 30–45 miles) (Devenny, 2006).

As Canada and the Netherlands followed the US lead in declaring Hezbollah as a terrorist organisation, other European countries were less strict in their approach (Phillips, 2007). They regard Hezbollah as a political entity which possesses a military wing. Along those lines, the United Kingdom and Australia view Hezbollah as a political organisation operating within the Lebanese society and only designated the group's military wing as terrorist (Horne & Douse, 2010).

In contrast, the majority of the Arab world hails Hezbollah's actions and view the organisation as a legitimate resistance movement (Ajemian, 2008). Such admiration emanating from the wide Arab society, especially after Hezbollah's perceived success in its confrontation with Israel in 2006 has antagonized the leadership of core al-Qaeda. This was reflected in many statements by the late al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden and his successor Ayman Al Zawahiri. The Sunni born al-Qaeda views the flourishing Shia entity

as a threat and a physical barrier that stands between them and their ultimate goal which is Al Quds-Jerusalem (Zawahiri, 2009).

INTERNATIONAL BRANCHES FROM A LEBANESE ROOT

Hezbollah is Lebanese by nationality, but its loyalty and actions, more often than not, transcend nationalism. The group is labelled as Iran and Syria's proxy. Both allegedly provide it with guidance, weapons, logistical support and financial aid (Byman, 2003). The group is viewed by many as the extended arm of Iran and is allegedly used by the latter as leverage against Israel and a tool to be activated to further Iran's interests (Byman, 2003). Having benefited for decades from the dedicated support of Iran and Syria, open media suggests that the group has been called upon by its state-sponsors to return the favour on many occasions.

Once more, the investment is reaping dividends in that reports indicate that Hezbollah elements are actively supporting the Syrian regime in the Syrian civil war (Nasrallah, 2013). The victory of the Syrian regime in Al Quseir, robbed the Syrian opposition of a major foothold in central Syria (Fielding-Smith, A. 2013, May 21). Hezbollah's interference in general antagonized the Syrian opposition (Blanford, N. 2013, Feb 20) and the extremist components within its ranks, namely Al Nusra Front (ANF) which pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda and its leader Al Zawahiri in April 2013 (Al-Manar, 2012, Apr 10). The opposition issued direct warnings to Hezbollah to cease and desist or suffer the consequences in its own abode, Lebanon.

This mutual relationship is the embodiment of a marriage of convenience through which the so-called "Shia Crescent" allegedly expanding from Beirut to the Persian Gulf will remain strong. While some view Iran's attempts in the region as ideological, other argue that Iran's attempt to create a coalition of Shia friendly governments is mostly pragmatic and based on a strategic rationale (Barzegar, 2008).

In addition to the above linkages, Hezbollah has also formed ties with Hamas rendering the group part of the "rejectionist axis" in the Middle East originally formed to oppose imperialism in the region (El Hussein, 2010). It could be argued that with the second Palestinian Intifada in 2000, the group armed and trained Palestinian elements and that at the regional levels, Hezbollah operatives went to Iraq to strengthen historic ties with the Shia there (Byman, 2003).

Hezbollah has a wide global reach with its apparatus operating in Europe, North and South America, East Asia, parts of the Middle East and Africa. These internationally deployed cells actively raise funds to support the organisation (Levitt, 2007). Some of its active operatives were allegedly intercepted in France, Spain, Cyprus, Singapore, the tri-border area of Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay in South America, several countries in the Middle East including Egypt and in 2001, US federal investigators dismantled a fundraising cell in North Carolina. The cells have also been accused of preparing for attacks abroad and for widening Hezbollah's propaganda (Levitt, 2007).

It is said that an international Hezbollah cell has three main components:

- 1) A Daawa and recruitment arm which relies on clerics, mosques, Internet sites and broadcasts by Hezbollah's television, Al Manar;
- 2) A financing arm which purpose is fundraising through all means, legal and illegal through organized crime; and
- 3) An operational arm which collects Intelligence and conducts Hostile Reconnaissance and Surveillance against potential targets (Azani, 2009).

A MILITARY ENGINE FUELLING A POLITICAL AND SOCIAL MACHINE

Hezbollah's early history remains ambiguous and it is difficult to know whether the group's political or social operations began first (Harik 2006), nonetheless, the group meticulously and fully developed them both. Hezbollah has built an imposing posture within the Lebanese municipal, parliamentary and governmental sectors. Having become an important actor within the political system, Hezbollah is part of that government and in many social areas, replaced it, or is working on its behalf to support the Shia community (Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2009). It has been suggested that Hezbollah gained votes in return for providing social services to the Shia community (Usher 1997). In reality, the good reputation that Hezbollah's political actors have garnered as being far removed from corruption is what solidified the support of the community in their regard (Saad-Ghorayeb, 2002).

Whereas the social welfare system existed in an embryonic form since the 1970s when Shia leaders provided aid to the community, when Hezbollah came to be, it elevated this mechanism, expanded and refined it. It was the catalyst behind the creation of health clinics, youth camps, Islamic education programmes, food distribution, and health and housing aid (Haddad, 2006).

Hezbollah's expanding social welfare and health systems continue to divide opinion worldwide. Some view this expansion as a cover for illicit and violent activities (Philippon, 2008). However, the Shia community in Lebanon, and other beneficiaries, regard it as their only lifeline. While Hezbollah's social work is not unique, it is distinguished from other examples by the wide variety of services it provides through proximity, efficiency and constancy.

An overlap persists between Hezbollah's social and political party endeavours. Its motive in providing social support was aimed at building and consolidating political legitimacy that could be utilized by the group to affect domestic change without resorting to military action. This idea was further emphasized when social services were labelled as a form of patronage (Abdel-Samad 2007), an essential element to the political process. In the social arena, Hezbollah has secured a monopoly over an expanse of national Lebanese territory as a main provider of social services (Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2009). As such, it cannot be bypassed or ignored by other humanitarian entities that aim to operate in its area of control. This reality forces local and international non-government organisations to engage and cooperate with Hezbollah's social sector.

Based on their names and their purpose, every non-government organisation created under the Hezbollah's service sector was designed to respond to and compensate for direct consequences related to its military operations, influencing the acceptance and resilience of the constituency. Hezbollah's service sector is composed of three units; The Social Unit, the Islamic Health Unit and the Education Unit. The organisations under the Social Unit have specific support functions which compensate for the resulting effects of Hezbollah's military actions. For instance, the Jihad Construction Foundation was crucial in rebuilding southern Lebanon following the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war. The Martyrs Foundation supports the families of those who were martyred in combat as for the Foundation for the Wounded, it assists civilians who were wounded during hostilities (Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2009).

The consideration is that Hezbollah's real motivation for establishing its social activities is to create a society of resistance (Fawaz M. 2000). However, running a considerable social welfare system with such efficiency requires a steady flow of large sums of monies. Albeit readily available, the source of these funds remains a cause of debate. While the US accuses Iran of providing a large amount of funds and accuses Hezbollah of raising the remainder through illegal

activities conducted abroad, (US Treasury Department, 2004), Hezbollah itself maintains that the money is purely the product of donations by the widespread Shia diasporas (Jaber, 1997). According to a recent study produced by the US Naval War College, it is estimated that Hezbollah raises in that area close to \$10,000,000 per year (Taylor, Cirino, Elizondo, Wawro, & Delamer, 2004). As to reports, they indicate that money is generated in the tri-border area in Latin America, an area that is especially important to Hezbollah (Levitt, 2007).

Services provided have a two-pronged benefit, they appear to instil loyalty among the Shia community, and have provided Hezbollah's social volunteers with a platform through which they view themselves as an integral part of the resistance movement that is Hezbollah (Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2009). This entrenched investment in the social arena is aimed at creating a strong resistance community that will support the group's military aims. Hence, the social and political aspects of Hezbollah's operations are interlinked with its paramilitary functions. The Shia constituency has become reliant on Hezbollah for survival to an extent that it may face difficulties if it steps away from it. This choice is further limited when considering the alternative; a weak governmental service system. Social welfare seems to be a stop-gap measure—a mitigation plan that pushes the constituency to accept Hezbollah's military actions and survive resulting consequences (Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2009).

CONTEMPORARY MEDIA FOR CONTEMPORARY TIMES

Supporting the organisational structure of Hezbollah is a crucial element embodied in the form of its media arms. They are considered the backbone of the group and an integral part of the Resistance movement. The Secretary General of Hezbollah, Hassan Nasrallah personally proclaimed to the world that, if it was not for Al Manar Television, the victory would not have been achieved (Nasrallah, 2000).

There are conflicting views on Hezbollah's Media but common agreement that the group's media outlets have been used as an operational weapon. Some view the creation of this sophisticated media apparatus as a machination by Hezbollah to shape public perception and sway it in its favour. While it is very popular in the region, the US reportedly considers it anti-American as it has employed against it the same propaganda methods it usually reserves for Israel. The group's satellite television Al Manar transmits 24 hours a day and reaches people across the world (Khatib, 2009). It has offices in Beirut

and numerous Arab countries and has correspondents in different corners of the globe (Jorisch, 2004).

Another perspective came to light through the work of Zahra Harb, a Lebanese journalist and academic who provided an intimate understanding of Hezbollah's media arms and their purpose when she shared the findings of numerous interviews conducted by those behind the structure itself. She brought to the fore that Hezbollah's affiliated media outlets include Al Manar television, Al Nour radio station, Al Intiqad the magazine and an official internet website (Dukmak, Personal Communication, 2004). Reportedly, Hezbollah had a media plan since the early 1990s and was only reinforced in 1996 (Mohsen, Personal Communication, 2004). Then, Hezbollah became cognisant that it had to address an audience wider than its own constituency and convince them to support the resistance.

The organisation's media strategy underwent a preparatory phase that lasted from 1982 to 1986. It employed an antiquated propaganda method by distributing flyers, leaflets, affixing banners, signs, wall pictures, and conducting political and religious festivals. By the end of the 1980s, a Military Media Unit was formed and a camera crew member became an integral part accompanying resistance fighters during combat, filming and documenting for propaganda purposes (El Hourri & Saber, 2010). This enabled Hezbollah to gain credibility from the wider public including the Israeli populace.

Many of the journalists operating the media structure spoke Hebrew and some even were detained for years in Israeli prisons. Therefore, they well acquainted with the strength and weakness of the messages Israel disseminated to the international community and they started drawing up plans and strategies on how to counter them. In following that course of action, Hezbollah's media allegedly applied organised and defensive counter-propaganda policies (Harb, 2011).

A Hebrew monitoring unit is heavily relied upon as Al Manar television used to broadcast news flashes in Hebrew (Cua, 2007) after every resistance operation against Israeli soldiers in south Lebanon (Erlich & Kahati, 2007). The propaganda entailed that every commentary the Israeli television or press presented on the failures of the Israeli army and abilities of the resistance be re-broadcast. The group also broadcast what the Israeli television had retrieved from Al Manar in Hebrew, such as clips and films of military resistance

operations. The aim was to target the Lebanese audience and the mothers of the Israeli soldiers, show the enemy admitting to the abilities of the resistance and to raise the morale of the fighters and boost recruitment. The credibility of its message is what essentially characterized Hezbollah's propaganda. By revealing footage demonstrating losses denied by the enemy, Hezbollah's media outlets undermined the credibility of the enemy and heightened theirs (Harb, 2011).

CONCLUSION—THE PARADOX OF INFLUENCE

Following the agreement reached in Ta'if, Hezbollah softened its hard stance at the National level (Gleis & Berti, 2012). It toned down its Islamist aims and rhetoric (Alagha, 2011) and became an integral part of the so-called 8 March coalition which combines other faith-based political factions namely Christian, thus creating a strong political front opposing the Sunni led 14 March coalition. Hezbollah has successfully woven its multiple facets including the political, social, and military while using effective media tools to enhance and expand its influence.

Regardless of its roots or its original form, Hezbollah today has a remarkable structure which is designed to effectively support its ideology and goals. Hezbollah has perfected its function as a State within a State which has ultimately served to legitimize its image. Hezbollah is simultaneously viewed as a terrorist organisation and a legitimate State within a State. This perceived duality is a product of the reflexive pragmatism needed by it to adapt to a shifting environment in order to survive while remaining relevant.

As long as Hezbollah maintains the position that the state of Israel must cease to exist, and is perceived to be actively pursuing that agenda, it will continue to carry a terrorist label. In order to survive and remain relevant to its constituency, it therefore needs to maintain a steady flow of funding to keep its welfare programs viable. Only the future will tell how strong Hezbollah will remain with weakened state sponsors and a potential dwindling of fundraising amongst the Shia diasporas in a deteriorating global economy.

Today, through its involvement in Syria, Hezbollah is once again, actively taking pre-emptive actions to ensure survival. It may also yet demonstrate proficiency in self-financing through illicit trade activities in the tri-border area of Latin American in order to keep its operations afloat. Hezbollah's hitherto resilience may also be tested by the regional Shia-Sunni sectarian

struggle that itself is a microcosm of the broader struggle between regional powers.

It could further be tested if it loses many of its operatives while fighting alongside the Syrian regime, this may trigger retaliations by the Free Syrian Army and its affiliates against the group in Lebanon. Overflow from the Syria conflict into Lebanon could change the demographic balance of the country that, in turn, would impact the position of Hezbollah and push it to evolve further to ensure survival. The possibility of future confrontations between Hezbollah and Israel cannot be ruled out and a repeat of its 2006 success is by no means guaranteed. Historical trends demonstrate that Hezbollah's leadership practices strategic planning, and the past is not an accurate and sufficient predictor of the future.

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THE DERADICALISATION OF TERRORISTS

Jason-Leigh Striegher[†]

Governments today tend to grapple with the development and implementation of deradicalisation programs; and as such, the results of such programs have led to varying degrees of success. The programs of three nation states—Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia have been selected for discussion due to the diversity of programs used in these Islamic states. This study focuses on the distinction between disengagement and deradicalisation; and identifying and understanding the affects that push and pull factors potentially have to extricate identified terrorists from violent extremism. It also highlights Jack Roche as an example of someone that in general deradicalised himself as a result of push and pull factors.

“If the development of terrorism is a product of its own time and place, it follows that issues of disengagement (and all that that implies) will also be context-specific and necessarily nuanced . . . in terms of how the programmes are constructed, implemented, and promoted . . .” (Horgan, 2008a: 7).

Keywords: deradicalisation, disengagement, terrorism, counterterrorism, violent extremism

INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to provide an insight into how those who are fundamentally and ideologically driven can be potentially diverted from their radical paths. This will be done by discussing the various terminologies related to deradicalisation; examining and evaluating the distinct demarcation between terms such as disengagement and deradicalisation; by highlighting a range of motivating factors that either support or moderate individuals and organisations to either continue on, or abandon their ideologies of extreme violent action; and, by analysing the processes and programs initiated to disengage and/or deradicalise violent extremists. This will further entail the examination of the inherent

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successes and failures of a number of deradicalisation programs; and what may constitute an effective and reliable program.

The majority of the literature available on this topic predominantly examines deradicalisation programs that have occurred within prison systems and/or post-prisoner incarceration. Through an analysis of these various deradicalisation programs, this study examines the notion that such programs must attempt to address the problems of violent extremism prior to individuals—or groups of individuals—being imprisoned for violent action; not solely after they have “committed the crime.” Additionally, and for the purpose of this paper, the term radicalisation will primarily convey what Bartlett, Birdwell, & King (2010: 8) describe as “radicalization that leads to violence,” not “radicalization that [does] not lead to violence.”

DEFINING DISENGAGEMENT AND DERADICALISATION

It is evident that theories and research pertaining to the purposes and processes of radicalisation far outweigh those theories and research that discuss disengagement and deradicalisation (Noricks, 2009: 299; Ashour, 2009: 3; Gvineria, 2009: 257). Gvineria (2009: 278) and Horgan (2009: 153) outline this further by stating that although research into ending terrorism capitulates a number of insights and ascribes to a number of theoretical structures of disengagement and deradicalisation, it is still a maturing social science that is deficient in its rigidity; and as such will require further analysis, investigation and research to enhance the government’s (community) deradicalisation capabilities.

To begin—and similar to other terminologies used within the context of terrorism—there is not one universally accepted definition of deradicalisation; nor is there a definite process adopted to deradicalise radical extremists. As elucidated by a number of deradicalisation specialists, the many processes and methodologies of deradicalisation programs are inconsistent, and are often dependant on issues far more complex than suggested (Noricks, 2009: 299; Porges & Stern, 2010). “There are many pathways out of terrorism; some leading opposite directions, while others provide alternative routes to strengthen democracy and reduce violence” (Wilkinson, 2006: 196, para. 5). There should not solely be attempts to change the religious beliefs of radicals; but that attempts to change their strategic use of violence to achieve their objectives must also be pursued (Ashour, 2009: 6). So where deradicalisation attempts to

disengage individuals from their path to radicalisation—which may or may not lead to violence — the term disengagement as stipulated by Horgan (2009: 152) refers to “the process whereby an individual experiences a change in role or function that is usually associated with a reduction of violent participation.”

It is important to note that though disengagement would initially be ideal, it does not signify that an individual who remains radical in their views—not necessarily actions—will not re-engage in violent action. Horgan (2009) maintains that in disengaging an individual, it is equally important to “root the concept of de-radicalisation” to ensure that they are not at risk of re-pursuing violence as a means to an end. Specifically, Ashour (2009: 5–6) best defines deradicalisation as the process “in which a radical group reverses its ideology and de-legitimizes [sic] the use of violent methods to achieve political goals, while also moving towards an acceptance of gradual, political and economic changes within a pluralist context.”

Noricks (2009: 300) quotes Horgan (2008) who specifies the need to distinguish between disengagement (behavioural modification) and deradicalisation (attitudinal modification). From an anti-terrorist perspective, disengagement can be viewed as more important than deradicalisation as the individual’s behaviour could be altered to reject violence as a means to achieving their objectives. However if deradicalisation processes are not pursued, there is no guarantee that the ideological beliefs of radical individuals will not be re-interpreted as a justification for re-engaging in violent action. Although the individual may either leave or remain within an extremist organisation, their radical views may remain somewhat intact (Aly & Striegher, 2012). It is herein worth mentioning that the deradicalisation process is not simply a reversal of the radicalisation process (Noricks, 2009: 299) as represented by the Federal Bureau of Investigations (Federal Bureau of Investigations [FBI], 2006: 4), or by any means an indication that an individual has returned to their state prior to becoming radicalised (Horgan, 2009: 153).

As an overview, the FBI stated that there are four distinct stages in the process of radicalisation; pre-radicalisation, identification, indoctrination and action stages (FBI, 2006: 4). Silber & Bhatt (2007: 6-7) also share the view that there are four phases of radicalisation consisting of the pre-radicalisation phase, self-identification phase, indoctrination phase and the jihadisation phase. In establishing the place of deradicalisation in this process, Horgan’s (2009: 151-153) model shows the evolutionary sequence—from pre-radicalisation to de-

radicalisation—of the pathway into, through, and out of terrorism as illustrated in figure 1.

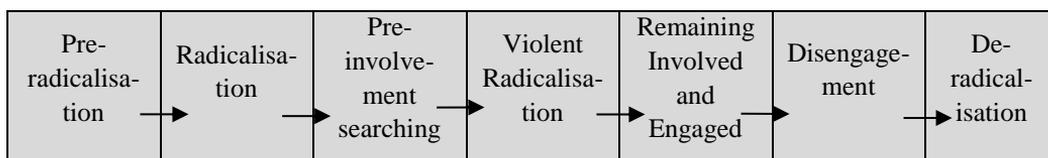


Figure 1—Progression of pre-radicalisation through to deradicalisation

Arguably, and in understanding Horgan’s process, it is the view of the author that specialists should attempt to disengage individuals as soon as they are identified, as opposed to merely considering disengagement programs and processes after they have participated in unlawful or violent action. By disengaging individuals earlier in the process there is a higher likelihood that such preventative measures may keep them from radicalising to a point where they view violence as the only means to voice their political views and/or ideologies. It can thus be surmised that deradicalisation of violent extremists cannot occur at any stage prior to disengaging individuals from their violent paths (Horgan, 2009).

MITIGATING FACTORS FOR REMAINING OR DISENGAGING

In attempting to develop realistic programs designed to disengage and/or deradicalise individuals, it is vital to clearly understand the underlying reasons why individuals enter a path to radicalisation in the first place (Horgan, 2005: 72). The FBI (2006) stated that a number of extrinsic motivations can contribute to an individual becoming radicalised, and that these include “economic, racial, legal, political, religious, familial, or social deprivation” (FBI, 2006: 6). In identifying such potential root causes, Law Enforcement and Intelligence Agencies (LEIA), and government and non-government organisations should work together to design and implement successful programs that prevent individuals from continuing on a path of radicalisation that leads to violence—being mindful of the inherent difficulties in detecting individuals on that path (Striegher, 2013). With law enforcement and community collaboration, there are potentially more opportunities to identify the issues faced by such “troubled” individuals, and there is a higher likelihood of identifying intervention strategies that could prevent them from seeking violence as a means for potential retribution.

Unfortunately government bodies behave as though they are hamstrung by political agendas, allegiances, funding, media and fundamental lack of knowledge of motivating factors. As a result they are constantly in a race to prevent extreme violent action, as opposed to addressing the root causes behind these actions. Once individuals — or groups of individuals — are identified as potential candidates for radicalisation, this is when LEIA and governments are in the best position to interject and attempt to prevent continuation of the radicalisation process that leads to violence (Striegher, 2013). With this, it is vitally important to identify the “push and pull” factors that motivate individuals to disengage from their radical paths (Horgan, 2009; Morris, Eberhard, Rivera, & Watsula, 2010; Björgo, 2005: 9; Noricks, 2009; Fink & Hearne, 2008: 3) in order to be successful in developing effective disengagement and deradicalisation programs.

Push Factors

Gvineria (2009: 280) suggests that the reasons individuals (violent radicals) remain in terrorist organisations are often not necessarily the same reasons in which they were attracted to those organisations in the first place. As previously mentioned, there are a number of reasons why individuals are initially drawn into radicalisation, however over time the fundamental belief systems and religious ideologies shared are often blurred by a group’s collective frustrations and anger, where terrorist acts may become either a natural progression of that anger (and hate), and/or are conceived as a part of their extreme religious ideologies, or a means of practicing that ideology.

When organisations directly (or indirectly) elicit the adoption of such extremist views that lead to terrorism, it would not be unrealistic that some individuals would consider withdrawing from such organisations, however are often conflicted by “the internal pressures to stay competing with the external pressures to go” (Noricks, 2009: 303 quoting Taylor, 1988). What then exacerbates this internal conflict is the “spiralling of commitment” that ensues once individuals deepen their involvement in a terrorist organisation (Björgo, 2005: 9; Noricks, 2009; Roche, personal communication, n.d.). The inconsistencies realised between their belief systems and the organisation’s calculated actions may eventually deter them from the group.

It is important herein to differentiate between individuals who seek to join such groups because of religious ideologies—who are then coerced and manipulated into taking part in terrorist activities—and those individuals who coerce and manipulate them. Often those who see themselves as honourable Mujahidin (freedom fighters) are attracted to the struggle to defend the rights of those who they believe are treated with injustice and unfairness; and as such feel the need to do something to support those who are unable to help themselves (Horgan, 2009: 66-71; Horgan, 2008b: 85).

Noricks (2009), Björgo (2005) and Morris et al. (2010: 4) however explain push factors as those “negative circumstances or social forces that make it unattractive to continue membership in a particular organisation” (Noricks, 2009: 301-302). Upon realising that the recruiters of organisations they have joined have lied, coerced and manipulated them into taking part in unwarranted violence (i.e. against innocent civilians), they may begin to feel disillusionment from the group’s aims and activities, and begin losing confidence in the organisation’s ideologies and political movement—all motivational push factors (Björgo, 2005: 9-10; Noricks, 2009: 303; Fink & Hearne, 2008).

A familiar Australian example of an individual who disengaged from violent Jihad is the story of Jack Roche — Australia’s first convicted terrorist—who effectively “removed” himself from Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) when he was asked to attack Israeli interests that would in no doubt injure and potentially kill innocent civilians within Australia (Roche, personal communication, n.d.). Though Roche joined JI in an effort to fight alongside his Muslim Brothers overseas (with the Taliban and/or Palestinians), he was discomforted by the group’s gratuitous (and violent) activities, and lost faith in their violent ideologies and internal politics (McGeown, 2004, para. 20; Roche, personal communication, n.d.).

Such push factors, as well as criminal prosecution; parental or social disapproval; counter-violence from oppositional groups; ejection from the group; exhaustion from tension or uncertainty as a member of a targeted group; and increased activity in a competing role are potential reasons why individuals may be deterred from taking part in violent action, or are subsequently encouraged to *push* away from the group as a whole (Noricks, 2009: 301; Björgo, 2005: 10-11). In identifying the motivational push factors that may potentially deter individuals from joining or remaining within radicalised terrorist groups, government organisations can be better positioned to identify and provoke individuals at-

risk—those who are fundamentally and ideologically driven to commit a violent act—into reflecting on such factors and compelling them into reconciling their ideologies with other options.

Pull Factors

Where there are internal factors that often *push* individuals away from radicalised terror groups, individuals can also be enticed to leave an organisation because of external factors that could be “opportunities or social forces that attract an individual to a more promising alternative” (Noricks, 2009: 302). Some individuals who join radical groups are not often fully aware of the implications of their actions, and can often be misled into participating in violent action that eventually disagrees with their fundamental ideologies—as was the case with Jack Roche (Aly & Striegher, 2012). Though the high level of investment in a group, the sense of community established, the pressure to continue the struggle, the fears of leaving and/or the concerns of mistrust and uncertainty from within may discourage them from leaving (Björgo, 2005: 12–14; Wilkinson, 2006: 199), there are indeed stronger motivational factors that can pull individuals away from the group.

It is also important not to disregard what Ashour (2009: 1) describes as organisational disengagement where the executives and/or leadership within an organisation decide to change direction. Though changes may be induced by various push factors, pull factors can be equally as effective. This is exemplified in a case outlined by Hoffman (2001) who reports on the complete disengagement of one of the most feared terrorist organisations of the 1970s, the Black September Organisation—the military wing of Yasser Arafat’s Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO). A senior general of al-Fatah described Black September as:

The most elite unit we had. The members were suicidal—not in the sense of religious terrorists who surrender their lives . . . but in the sense that we could send them anywhere to do anything and they were prepared . . . to do it. No questions. No hesitation. They were absolutely dedicated and absolutely ruthless (Hoffman, 2001, para. 5).

Though the atrocious acts committed by the Black September Organisation put the PLO movement onto the world stage; by 1974, the terrorist group had outlived its purpose when Arafat and the PLO were invited to shift their political

direction. With their violent history, Black September was then considered a potential liability to the newfound agenda of the PLO and something had to be done to disengage its members. After much deliberation, Arafat and his most trusted deputy Abu Iyad had found a way to switch-off the most “dedicated, competent, and implacable fighters in the entire PLO.” The PLO would give them a reason to live, as opposed to a reason to die—they would marry them off (Hoffman, 2001, paras. 9–10).

In an extraordinary account, Hoffman (2001) describes how the PLO leadership provided the Black September fighters with a number of pull factors as stipulated by Noricks (2009: 303) to ensure they were disengaged permanently. Though organisational disengagement (from the top and throughout) has a far greater effect on the ability of individuals to move on (Neumann, 2010: 40), an individual’s desire for a normal life, to establish a family, find new employment or educational opportunities, new role models or social groups, new and more compelling social/religious ideologies and belief structures, as well as other changing priorities are all motivational factors that compel individuals to *pull away* and abandon their radical paths (Björgo, 2005: 12; Noricks, 2009: 303).

In the case of the Black Septembers, individuals were introduced to the most beautiful women from the Palestinian communities around the Middle East; were paid \$3,000 to marry; another \$5,000 if they had children; were provided with full housing in Lebanon—with all necessary amenities; and were further employed in non-violent roles within the PLO had they remained disengaged (Hoffman, 2001). The PLO would further test ex-Black September members to ensure they would not re-engage in violent activities again. Though an interesting concept, it would seem the program was a great success. All Black September members accepted the propositions made to them, and it would appear that each would remain permanently disengaged (Hoffman, 2001, paras. 10–12).

DISENGAGEMENT AND DERADICALISATION

“Deprogramming a bomb or a missile is possible—but can you deprogram a terrorist”? (Mohammad, 2009, para. 3) An optimistic answer to this question would certainly demand optimistic responses to many contributing factors. With this, it is also worth considering answers to other questions such as what kind of terrorist is the individual; what kind of environment do they come from; are they

intrinsically or extrinsically motivated; do they function independently or as a part of a larger organisation; are they active or dormant; or are there any foreseeable push and pull factors that exist, that may repel them from their groups?

In dealing with individuals who have been intensively indoctrinated; have been influenced to hate; who are meticulously trained and taught to maintain the highest of vigilance in dealing with their enemies, and who believe that the only important thing in the world is the furtherance of their cause (Wilkinson, 2006: 199), it comes as no surprise that deradicalisation and disengagement efforts become difficult to achieve. This does not take into consideration the bonds that are formed with other members within the organisation, and the aforementioned fears that come with leaving the group and/or “the apparently insuperable difficulties of rehabilitating themselves [back] into normal society” (Wilkinson, 2006: 200).

There are a large number of states that have officially devised and developed ambitious deradicalisation programs that have resulted in varying degrees of success and failure (Rabasa, Pettyjohn, Ghez, & Boucek, 2010). Yemen is cited as one of the first countries to implement deradicalisation programs; followed by Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Iraq, Libya, Jordan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Great Britain, Tajikistan and the Netherlands (Ashour, 2010; Mohammad, 2009; Neumann, 2010: 11; Noricks, 2009: 306; Rabasa et al., 2010; Wagner, 2010). Neumann (2010: 11) further identifies France, Spain, The United States of America, The Philippines, Algeria, Israel, Pakistan and Afghanistan who have also endeavoured to implement such programs.

The majority of the deradicalisation programs developed throughout these countries have an ideological foundation that endeavours to de-legitimise “the use of violence against the state, the society and the ‘other’” (Noricks, 2009: 306 quotes Ashour (2008); Rabasa et al., 2010). Further to this, most deradicalisation programs also provide psychological components alongside the ideological components. These include the participation in psychological counselling, religious dialogue with interlocutors—or government appointed religious clerics (Neumann, 2010: 52; Noricks, 2009: 307; Rabasa et al., 2010), and after-care services that attempt to monitor and support the rehabilitation of newly disengaged members (Neumann, 2010: 54-55; Rabasa et al., 2010).

With all these countries, Neumann (2010) further highlights the importance of understanding the effect the environment has over the success and/or failure of deradicalisation and disengagement efforts. One's environment does not only determine if an individual is intrinsically or extrinsically motivated, but can also influence the degree to which an individual may be actively involved in terrorist activities. With this, it could be argued that attempting to disengage individuals who live in hostile and troubled areas, would be vastly different from trying to disengage someone in a democratic society such as in Australia or Great Britain.

In a country such as Afghanistan, individuals are constantly surrounded by trauma and are continually bombarded with the harsh realities of living in that country. This would make it difficult to implement and maintain the "after-care" required for those being rehabilitated, and deradicalisation and disengagement programs would simply fail as a result of re-exposure to radicalising influences (Neumann, 2010: 55).

It would also be of relevance to the design of disengagement programs to understand what motivating influences encourage individuals to join terrorist groups in the first place. Horgan (2008b: 84-85) outlines some of these factors which include initial emotional vulnerability; identification with suffering victims and their plight; belief that engaging in violence against certain states is not inherently immoral; the sense of reward that may be achieved in death more than in life; as well as the development of kinships and other social ties. Understanding the motivating factors of individuals and/or groups—whether intrinsic or extrinsic—can essentially provide a foundation for how best to design disengagement programs, and what push and pull factors would be appropriate to introduce to encourage an individual to change direction.

Finally and as previously examined, it is also important to identify if disengagement programs are aimed at extracting a given individual from a terrorist group, or if the group is collectively being disengaged and deradicalised. For obvious reasons, and as exemplified by the Black September organisation and Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood (Ashour, 2009; Hoffman, 2001), the latter tends to have much greater success. With the disengagement of members of the Muslim Brotherhood, "the decision to abandon violence [was] taken by the leadership and ... [was] adhered to by the organisation as a whole" (Neumann, 2010: 40) with the support of the government. Such circumstances are rare because very few terrorist groups exist with such strong and authoritative leaders

in hierarchical command that look to disengage from violence (Neumann, 2010). In saying this, in aiming programs at individuals, governments must be exceedingly vigilant in understanding and processing all contributing factors on a case-by-case basis.

DISENGAGEMENT AND DERADICALISATION PROGRAMS

As aforementioned, many states have attempted to implement programs that have been designed to disengage and deradicalise violent extremists captured and held in various prisons around the world. These programs have resulted in varying degrees of success; partial success and abject failure (Rabasa et al., 2010). Successful programs were able to release a greater number of individuals who were successfully re-integrated into society with little or no concern; partially successful programs yielded results where individuals showed neither proper re-integration nor a return to violent extremism; and failed programs produced a number of individuals who have continued to retaliate violently against society—not affected by deradicalisation efforts at all. This does not suggest that either the programs as a whole were ineffective or that some individuals were damaged beyond repair; but that circumstances were highly dependent on how all factors mutually agreed with one another (Neumann, 2010: 56; Rabasa et al., 2010).

Literature regarding the successes and/or failures of deradicalisation programs is limited, and very few evidence-based and independent evaluations are available (Ashour, 2010; Rabasa et al., 2010). Neumann (2010: 48-49) asserts that measuring the success of programs and their effectiveness is not straightforward as results are highly dependent on a number of issues. “Recidivism rates “may not be the best metric with which to measure [relative] success” (Neumann, 2010 quotes Boucek, n.d.), especially when many programs have started only very recently, and many years may be needed to gauge whether or not an individual has been fully ‘rehabilitated’” (Neumann, 2010: 49). Further to this, results may be skewed in favour of programs that may be excluding hard-core militants, in comparison to those programs open to and accepting all categories of militants.

Yemen

Apart from the 1974 account of the disengagement of the Black September Organisation, Yemen is credited as one of the first countries to begin implementing formal disengagement programs (Horgan, 2008a; Porges, 2010a;

Rabasa et al., 2010). The first documented disengagement program entitled “Committee for Dialogue” which began in 2002 was one of those programs that did not yield to success. The sole focus of its initiative was to change behaviour through ideological interventions and the softening of views intended to foster an acceptance by former Jihadists that their pursuit of their objectives (through the use of terrorism) was illegitimate, immoral and unjustified (Horgan, 2008a: 6-7). Though similar strategies would be later adopted into programs devised by other countries around the world, the program’s lack of a holistic approach resulted in failure; and as such was discontinued in 2005 (Porges, 2010a: 28).

Porges (2010a: 28) describes a distinct lack of evidence that suggested that the participants of the Yemeni intervention were at all affected ideologically or behaviourally. She further explains the account of a former al-Qaeda detainee who stated that the program essentially consisted of “short meetings during which prisoners were encouraged to sign a form pledging obedience to [the Yemeni] President . . . as a precondition for release” (Porges, 2010a). Interestingly enough, the pledge did not preclude acts of terrorism outside of Yemen, nor did the program provide any after-care once prisoners were released. Even with the best of intentions, with such an ad hoc approach and in conjunction with its lack of credibility, relevance and support; many of the program’s graduates returned to violent jihad after release (Horgan, 2008a; Porges, 2010a; Rabasa et al., 2010).

Saudi Arabia

Unlike the Yemeni program—which only claimed to manage rehabilitating 30 to 40 percent of its detainees, the Saudi Arabian program was largely the work of a single individual, and was not sanctioned nor institutionalised by the government (Porges, 2010a). Saudi Arabia’s deradicalisation programs began in 2004 and remain a work in progress (Horgan & Braddock, 2010; Porges, 2010b; Wagner, 2010). They are well-financed and use an amalgam of strategies to ensure more successful results (Gendron, 2010: 496-499; McDowell, 2010; Rabasa et al., 2010). These include but are not limited to “a combination of education, vocational training, religious dialogue, and post-release programs that help detainees reintegrate into society” (Porges & Stern, 2010, para. 3; Maclean, 2010; Mullins, 2010; Wagner, 2010). Additionally, the Saudi programs provide support and aide to detainees’ family members in the process, which is strategically dependant on the particular

detainee, and/or their cultural norms (Horgan & Braddock, 2010: 278; Johnston, 2009; Leary, 2009: 115; Mohammad, 2009; Noricks, 2009: 307; Wagner, 2010).

Another critical element in Saudi Arabia's process of deradicalisation was the creation of strong relationships between the prisoners and the program officials—psychologists, guards and teachers (Porges, 2010a: 30; Porges & Stern, 2010; Rabasa et al., 2010). These one-on-one relationships greatly increased the likelihood that detainees were discouraged from re-engaging in violent action and increased the likelihood of successful re-integration back into society. In contrast to the Yemeni program, the Saudi program did not focus the majority of its efforts on ideological rehabilitation—more it identified the importance of focusing on change in behaviour, not necessarily a change in the individual's commitment to their belief systems (Porges & Stern, 2010, para. 4). Although the program as delivered by the Saudi's is amongst the most popular and meritorious in its efforts, the system is not without its flaws (Rabasa et al., 2010).

Early accounts of the program officially declared a 100 per cent success rate in reintegration; later (in 2009) Saudi authorities would come to admit that approximately 10 to 20 per cent of detainees re-engaged in violent activities post-release (Horgan & Braddock, 2010: 278; Porges, 2010b. para. 6; Seifert, 2010). According to Laessing (2010; Stern, 2010, para. 18), this did not necessarily mean that the Saudi program was entirely to blame. He establishes that tough U.S. tactics such as torture used on Guantanamo Bay detainees, accounted for a huge 20 per cent in former Guantanamo detainees relapsing into militancy in comparison to the program's average of 9.5 per cent. With this, the life skills and funding given to "graduate" detainees more often than not ensures they are able to successfully reintegrate into society—yielding high success rates for the program (Mohammad, 2009; Rabasa et al., 2010).

Indonesia

Unlike other deradicalisation programs and initiatives, Indonesia's deradicalisation program was a "police-centred disengagement initiative in response" to continuous terrorism along the Indonesian archipelago (Horgan & Braddock, 2010: 273). Its first full program, which ran between 2005 and 2007, did not pay particular attention to religious re-education; more, they used ex-terrorists as interlocutors as opposed to religious clerics (Coates, 2010; Horgan & Braddock, 2010: 273; Istiqomah, 2011; Neumann, 2010: 51; Rabasa et al.,

2010) to persuade their detainees to stop terrorism. The focus was thus on the disengagement from “the strategic utility of armed force”, and did not focus on the ideological beliefs, principles or religious legitimacy (Neumann, 2010: 51; Rabasa et al., 2010) of their actions.

Similar to the programs in Saudi Arabia, the Indonesian program boasted its use of logistical and financial (including educational) support to elicit cooperation from its prisoners; as well as promoting family involvement (Dunn, 2010; Horgan & Braddock, 2010: 274; Mullins, 2010; Rabasa et al., 210). Kurlantzick (2009) stated that Indonesia has “a cutting-edge ‘deradicalisation’ [sic] policy to stem the growth of militancy.” He further explains how former terrorists are broadcasted on national television describing the “brutality of their crimes and express[ing] remorse for killing fellow Indonesians.” Furthermore, ex-militants are invited to visit convicted terrorists in prison to converse with them on religious issues with compassion; and try to use other softer tactics to dissuade them from the use of terrorism and to cooperate with police (Kurlantzick, 2009; Rabasa et al., 2010).

Though Indonesian officials claim their program is a success due to their use of ex-militants in their program (Horgan & Braddock, 2010: 273; Rabasa et al., 2010), there are those who have bluntly criticised their initiatives (Johnston, 2009). The Indonesian Minister of Justice and Human Rights, Patrialis Akbar stated, “We have to say that generally the program has failed, . . . successes are few compared to those who remain unreformed” (Rayda, 2010). Christanto (2010) further quotes an ex-member of the Jihad command—Umar Abduh, who stated that the government was not employing individuals that were respected by captured terrorists and that that could play a fundamental role in dissuading them from the use of terrorism.

One example of this was an individual who was considered the “poster-child” for Indonesia’s deradicalisation efforts. Abdullah Sunata who was highly cooperative in gaol, and was financially rewarded as part of the Indonesian program for his assistance with renouncing terrorism—immediately re-engaged in violent action upon his release, “catapulting [him] to the top of the country’s most-wanted list” (“Indonesia’s Deradicalisation Programme,” 2010). Christanto (2010; “Indonesia’s Deradicalisation Programme,” 2010) stated that out of approximately 600 terror suspects arrested, only about 20 can be considered reformed; and work legitimately with the Indonesian police.

Though Rabasa et al. (2010: 115) state that “despite the ad hoc nature of the Indonesian effort and lack of incentives to induce cooperation, the program has achieved some degree of success,” Horgan and Braddock (2010: 274) quote Abuza (2009) who stated that Indonesia’s program was not properly financed, properly staffed or properly institutionalised. McDowell (2010) further describes Indonesia’s program as insufficient for its lack in eliciting ideological re-interpretations to its detainees. This deficiency provides foreground for those who remain radical in their religious tenets, to re-engage in violent action upon release (Istiqomah, 2011; & McDowell, 2010); thus raising the question whether someone can disengage without an element of deradicalisation taking place. Both Istiqomah (2011) and Woods (2010) suggests, the change in radical behaviour is primarily due to monetary incentives as opposed to ideological shifts, thus militants often leave prison with their extremist views intact or unchanged.

Though these examples are only a snapshot of programs that have seen partial success and failure, it is still unknown whether a focus on ideological change, or on up-skilling and financial reward is more effective as a deradicalisation strategy. The majority of the literature suggests that the success or failure of a program often depends on factors including the target audience; adequate funding; incorporation of cultural norms; monetary support for families; and aftercare support (Johnston, 2009; Neumann, 2010; Rabasa et al., 2010; Wagner, 2010).

Neumann (2010: 57) stated that effective strategies and programs cannot be “copied-and-pasted” on all candidates and that they must cater for the type of prisoner population, the nature and ideologies of the groups, the society from which they originate, and the dynamics of the conflict with other external influences. He further recommends that programs must use an amalgam of strategies, which mix both ideological re-training with vocational preparation; that the use of credible interlocutors is vital; that prisoner transition into mainstream society is critical; and that discouraging extremists through agreements and commitments towards their families are significant means to dissuade and change the behaviour and ideological direction of violent extremists (Neumann, 2010: 56–57).

“As with radicalisation, leaving a terrorist or extremist group is an incremental process and can take place over a significant period of time” (Fink & Hearne, 2008: 3). It is important however for LEIA to identify the potential push

and pull factors when looking to infiltrate terrorist organisations to disengage its members. Individuals within an organisation are each affected differently by their conditions; and there is no one single path to compelling individuals to change course. It can be surmised from this that identifying and then presenting the right combination of push and pull factors can help provoke individuals into re-evaluating their position within an extremist group. It can also be argued that disengagement attempts would be far more successful if an organisation's leadership were party to the disengagement efforts (Neumann, 2010: 40).

As previously demonstrated, disengagement and deradicalisation programs are traditionally designed for and implemented post-incarceration, and explicitly deal with those who have already committed an act of terror—as evidenced in the aforementioned programs. These types of programs are designed to attempt a reversal of the radicalisation process and reduce the risk of recidivism (Noricks, 2009), but do not generally deal with intervening prior to an act of terror. By actively engaging with at-risk individuals, LEIA and communities are in a position to better identify opportunities to intervene prior to individuals getting radicalised to the point of committing a violent act (Choudhury, n.d.; Cronin, 2009; Goerzig, 2010; Government of Canada, 2013; Spalek, 2012). While being mindful of the civil liberties of individuals who have not committed a crime, push and pull factors when better understood can be used to exploit enticements to abandon the path to violent extremism as well as any weakened links to terrorist organisations (Striegher, 2013).

CONCLUSION

This paper has highlighted the various ways in which counter terrorist officials may seek to disengage and deradicalise terrorists. It has placed importance on understanding the difference between physical disengagement and psychological disengagement; as well as evidencing the disparity between individual decline and organisational decline—stressing the benefits in addressing the individual as well as whole organisations. Further to this, if LEIA, government and non-government organisations use their knowledge of push and pull factors to assist in extricating individuals from the midst of their radical paths, they may be able to prevent individuals from reaching such violent ends.

As initially proposed in this paper, if efforts focused more on identifying individuals who are pursuing a radical path to violence, than on those individuals who have already committed (or aided in the commitment of) terrorist acts; then

it is probable that such complexities faced with deradicalisation programs (post-incarceration) would be minimised. From the various deradicalisation programs discussed—including the 1974 Black September Organisation’s disengagement—it is clear that creative lateral thinking can sometimes accomplish unimaginable results. Though counterterrorist officials often focus their attention on eliminating terrorist organisations, Hoffman (2001) stated that we should attempt to concentrate on weaning individuals from violence. “It could hardly be any less effective than many of the countermeasures that have long been applied to terrorism—with ephemeral, if not nugatory, results” (Hoffman, 2001).

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SHAPE OR ADAPT: THE FUTURE OF POLICING

Garth den Heyer[‡]

Are police shapers or adaptors? Are police able to shape or control their future or do they adapt to outside community and political changes or pressures? This study explores whether police are able to shape their future or whether they adapt. The study examines how police and policing has reacted in the past ten to fifteen years to the rapidly changing operating environment. As a result, seven strategic areas are proposed for police agencies to consider as a basis for analysis. The proposed framework is likely to enable police to become more resilient in the face of further uncertainty and enable them to shape or adapt, depending on the level and nature of the uncertainty.

Keywords: Police reform; strategy; planning; police organisation

INTRODUCTION

Mark Twain is reported to have once said: “I’m concerned about the future because that’s where I’m going to spend the rest of my life.” Using his thought on the future as a springboard, one could ask: Is policing in the holistic sense, capable of shaping the future of society, and therefore the environment; or is policing incapable, and as a result, made to adapt instead?

According to Courtney (2001) shaping and adapting strategies may take many forms; shapers generally attempt to get ahead of uncertainty by driving industry change their way, while an adapter, by contrast, takes the existing and future industry structure and conduct as a given. This study examines both of these perspectives and comes to the conclusion that if the police were a shaper of the environment we would have a society that has radically different values than what we currently have in aggregate. While the police should have a voice in policy development, they are, and philosophically should be, an organisation that adapts to changes in society.

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How powerful is police bureaucracy and to what extent is it able to run its own political agendas and influence public policy? Finnane (1990) argued that there are sound historical reasons for considering why police and police administrators should be very active agents in the political process that affect the conditions of their work, particularly in areas such as police powers and the criminal investigation process. An interesting question is whether police should simply enforce the law and implement policies of government, or should they actively participate in, and influence the policy making process?

Gorringer (2001) argued that all public sector bureaucracies influence policy in some way – either by providing advice in formulating policy or by implementing the policy according to bureaucratic interpretation. However, Smith (1994) contends that if “one assumes that a bureaucracy is concerned for its own survival then it can be concluded that a bureaucracy will use its power of implementation with its discretionary aspects to further the interests of the bureaucracy” (p. 187). Part of this power, according to Smith, is that which concerns the prevention and disruption of new ideas.

WHO ARE THE POLICE?

The key distinguishing feature that makes police unique among public as well as private institutions is the general right to use coercive force (Bailey, 1990). It is also this general right to use coercion that makes a very large part of the police role immutable in the face of rapid social, political, economic and technological change. In other words, what police make available to society is the specific capacity for decisive action that stems, to use Egon Bittner’s (2005) phrase, from the “distribution of negotiable coercive force” (p. 161). That is, police can “handle” all sorts of “problems” falling broadly within the phrase “something-that-ought-not-to-be-happening-and-about-which-someone-had-better-do-something-now!” (Bittner, 2005, p. 161).

The resolution to a problem may involve the use of arrest or may comprise of nothing more than telling someone to move along or to calm down. The point is, that like the police annual budget, a very large proportion of police activities are uncontrollable in a strategic or planning sense, and that many of the ‘problems’ consuming police resources and inhibiting greater flexibility and creativity occur because of the defining characteristic of police work.

In order for police to try to identify what the future may hold, a useful approach may be to identify the options available, and to speculate as to what

can be done using their current level of resources. The current economic environment makes this especially important. It is important to understand that all efforts to appreciate, modify or adapt to the future social environment are predicted on the notion that long-range planning by police is designed to achieve two outcomes. Firstly, to ensure organisational survival and growth; and secondly, to facilitate social intervention, which includes such police outputs as crime prevention and control, and problem solving.

Whether this approach is desirable for the police and for the public is far from clear. The desire to impact on the future may appear self-evident, but complacency with the here and now, combined with a failure to recognise that police institutional rigidity is a barrier to planning and effectiveness has often been underestimated. In addition, police in general, do not have a history of developing strategic plans that provide the type of intellectual skill, experience and capability required for either environmental diagnosis or social forecasting.

POLICE AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

Even if there is police and public agreement over the need for police to assume a shaping role and that they undertake strategic planning, the question remains as to what end should planning be undertaken? Strategic planning for the purposes of adapting quickly and flexibly to whatever happens in the social environment is different from tactical or operational planning for an intervention. Operational or tactical planning is designed to modify the external police operating environment in predictable ways for a specific time period or reason.

An assumption in this discussion is that it is desirable for police to be pro-actively involved in efforts to transform contemporary society; a very contentious and debatable proposition given the historical record of police insensitivity, indifference, alleged corruption, and violence in the communities that are most likely to be the primary target of any planned intervention. Carried to an extreme, what would ultimately emerge would be a society based on what police think is the model citizen. In short, the police would become the state but without the necessity of standing for periodic re-election (Reiner, 1986).

The alternative to police being a shaper of society is that they are an adaptor to society. The perspective that police are an adaptor can be seen from reviewing the evolution of police organisations over the past 10 to 15 years. Over this period, police agencies have evolved rapidly in reaction to changing legislation and government-imposed reporting requirements. The focus of the

1980s on community policing and problem solving has shown significant success and is compounded by increased levels of police involvement in local safety and crime prevention initiatives, reassurance policing and addressing the reality and perceptions of community safety. Police success in criminal investigation, community and road safety has broadened to enable them to assume lead roles in emergency planning and management, whole of government responses to issues such as family/domestic violence, terrorism and international development assistance and advice.

The environment that police currently operate within has changed extensively in the past 10 or 15 years, not least the past five years. The threat from organised criminal activity increased in the 1990s under the combined effects of globalisation, based on innovations in communications technology, including the internet, and post-Cold War instability. These changes have been compounded by the ease with which such groups are able to exploit the global financial systems to facilitate fraud and money laundering. This means that transnational and domestic organised crime syndicates are more and more able to operate in a borderless world beyond the reach of traditional law enforcement and this has resulted in high-tech and identity crime emerging as a significant new criminal threat.

Criminals will continue to take advantage of developments in technology to develop new areas of criminal activity, operate remotely from the location of the crime, and evade law enforcement action. However, as criminals operate across jurisdictions, so indeed do police, through taskforce arrangements, and intelligence and information sharing. To increase the police capability to respond, they will need to further develop the level of skill of criminal investigators, and improve access to state-of-the-art technical support.

Conventional police organisational management is viewed as one of adapting to service delivery demands. Moreover, the usual command and control approach to management has evolved to become one of corporate governance and performance accountability, driven by government imperatives, community involvement, and partnerships with businesses and local leaders. Statistical comparisons of work areas that have been designed to assist in resource allocation and performance measurement are included in the new management approach. These statistical tools may be used to diagnose trends and manage knowledge, enabling awareness and adaptation of successful initiatives to be used in other areas.

THE ADOPTION OF NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT BY POLICE

As an ever- increasing amount of resources were required to fund police organisations during the early to mid-1980s, and governments across western nations explored various methods that would increase the efficiency and effectiveness of public sector organisations. New Public Management (NPM), which focuses on organisational inputs, outputs and outcomes, was introduced to a number of western nations in the late-1980s and formed the basis of police reform initiatives that were introduced in these countries from the 1990s through to the present day. While demand for resources grew during this time, it was generally perceived that the police were providing a diminished level of service (Manning, 2006).

The NPM approach arose from thinking about what is meant by the terms resource allocation, organisational performance and accountability. The basic thrust of the new management approach was to improve incentives for police to perform efficiently, and to provide a framework that would establish efficient and effective police organisations. The comprehensive reform of police during this period was identified as being the era of a 'new policing order' (Cope, Leishman, & Starie, 1997; Gillespie, 2006).

The new era saw a specific emphasis placed upon the police to become more accountable to the community and to achieve government outcomes. In order to meet the concept of community accountability, which was seen as the central component of democratic governing of policing, a realignment of police structures and processes emerged (Gillespie, 2006).

The theory of community policing assisted the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australian police to understand and accept this new, comprehensive, management approach. Using the performance framework of the NPM approach enabled law enforcement agencies to encapsulate high level objectives, and to use relevant performance indicators as a basis for their organisational structures and for allocating resources. The ability of law enforcement agencies to set key objectives ensured that they focused their resources and their service delivery priorities on specific geographical areas and crimes (Loveday, 1995) and to achieve the social outcomes that the government considered important. Social outcomes usually include programmes that increase the living standards of the public by decreasing poverty, and decreasing

the occurrences of crime, as was the objective when NYPD introduced the Broken Windows approach to policing.

The adoption of this approach by police was a significant achievement when it was used in conjunction with a compilation of specific performance indicators at the individual officer, unit and station levels. The adoption of the new management approach by countries such as New Zealand, Australia, Scotland and England enabled their police agencies to measure their performance against the performance of other police organisations, and also enabled them to make comparisons within their own organisations over time.

THE NEW REALITIES OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

The current policing environment did not exist ten or even five years ago. The interaction between demographic, social, financial and criminal variables has changed fundamentally. These changes have occurred at the local, state and national levels. While some researchers agree that these variables have influenced change in policing (Police Executive Research Forum, 2009; 2011), a number of other researchers claim that the tragic events of September 11, 2001, were the catalyst for the current changes (Davis, Pollard, Ward, Wilson, Varda, Hansell & Steinberg, 2010). Whilst 9/11 has had a profound effect on policing (White, 2003; 2004; Cortright & Lopez, 2007), more recent changes have been a direct result of policies introduced in the late-1980s and early-1990s. For example, the implementation of New Public Management approaches, and in the United States, the federal funding of the recruitment of community police officers and the internationalisation of the war on drugs has resulted in two opposing approaches to the delivery of police services (Kraska & Paulsen, 1999).

While a number of factors affect the policing environment, two principle factors have created the conditions for significant change in how policing is organized and delivered. The first factor is the depth of the 2007 financial crisis and the corresponding decrease in police agency budgets, and the second, is the globalisation of crime and the local police response to the occurrence of these events.

The second major factor affecting the policing environment is the globalization of crime and the response to its occurrence. Very little is known about the link between organized and local crime, but police must be able to respond to both. This is important because the globalization of crime impacts on local communities. It no longer makes sense to respond to some crimes in one

locality without referring to what is occurring in other localities or internationally. Furthermore, the number of agencies responding to the occurrence of crime has expanded from state and federal governments to include private security companies and voluntary organisations.

ASSESSING FUTURE DIRECTION

The new operating environment has led to new functions for the police to undertake, including leadership, planning, management and risk assessment. The police workforce is now more gender and ethnically diverse, which brings a greater range of skills, education, and experience to the profession. The previous rules-based direction is giving way to principles based on the empowerment of employees.

In order for police to become more resilient in the face of further uncertainty and to be able to shape or adapt, depending on the level and the nature of the uncertainty (Courtney, 2001), they need to be able to respond to changing market needs. To respond to uncertainty, police need to critically and comprehensively analyse their organisations. This can be undertaken by using a broad strategic assessment process, such as the “7S” framework, developed by McKinsey and Associates.

An organisational analysis framework may be used to critically examine policing in the current environment. The framework is based on seven strategic areas: Leadership, Partnerships, Governance, Staffing, Technology, Information and Intelligence, Performance and Accountability. These strategic areas shouldn't be viewed as being mutually exclusive, but as being interwoven and each area having an influence on others. Adopting the results from an analysis using the framework suggested would potentially enable police to increase their adaptability and organisational flexibility in the current, increasingly dynamic environment.

1. Leadership. An increased level of demand has been placed on police to provide leaders capable of meeting the growing complexity of the criminal and political environment.

Leadership was originally a component of the formal structure proposed by Peel in the 1820s (Neyroud, 2011), but police have used more of a command and control leadership style since the development of the professional model of policing. However, the introduction of community policing has provided debate

and has led to the development of a more inclusive professional style of leadership, which is evolving in parallel with an important discussion about the nature of the knowledge and practice in policing (Neyroud, 2011).

Far from the previously stable environment, police decision makers are expected to lead their organisations in a world of diminished resources, increased transparency and media attention, changes to governance, transnational and organised crime, and workforce diversity. These environmental elements have caused pressure to be placed on the procedure for the identification and training of future police leaders.

2. Partnerships. Partnerships will be required at all levels and across sectors and jurisdictions, to provide innovative and efficient solutions to crime and to the demands made by both local and central governments.

Even prior to the development and introduction of community policing, the majority of police organisations knew that they could not prevent crime on their own and that robust partnerships and relationships were key to problem solving. Strengthening and maintaining partnerships has increased in importance in the post-9/11 policing environment.

3. Governance. Police will need to demonstrate that they have comprehensive and sound corporate governance arrangements in place, owing to the complexity of the challenges that they will face over the next ten years.

The provision of additional resources and increased powers coupled with the inherent political sensitivities that are often attached to policing issues will result in continued momentum for appropriate corporate governance arrangements.

According to Bayley and Nixon (2011), there is a growing realisation among police leaders, politicians and academics that policing is at a crossroads. This junction has been created by impact of the 2007 recession and the demand for more professionalisation of policing. As a consequence, police executives are facing extensive changes in their reporting and governance relationships, and as a result, the cost effectiveness of service delivery and police core services are being questioned (Neyroud, 2011).

4. Staffing. It people who enable organisations to meet their objectives and are an organisation's most valuable asset. The prediction of future labour market needs, recruitment, retention, employee development,

deployment, and industrial relations will be critical to the future success of police organisations.

An organisational staffing mix that represents the community, together with professional, appropriately-trained and deployed staff will be required to implement community policing.

Professionalisation is one of the major institutional and human resource issues facing policing. While professionalisation is principally being experienced in the United Kingdom and the United States, the majority of police organisations around the world are also debating the issue. Professionalism is intended to encourage the development of confident, accountable police services that have established practices and standards that are based on evidence. However, as Neyroud (2011) identifies, the debate regarding professionalism is an example in the shape or adapt discussion, as police can lead the policy development of their own professionalisation, or, if they do not accept this challenge, they will leave a vacuum where other parties may design strategies that police may be forced to meet or agree to.

5. Technology. This will continue to impact on police as they grapple with the capacity to utilise and respond to new components or to the new application of existing technologies. This will include, for example, the need for real time access to information and for efficient processes for investing in the acquisition and development of equipment and technology.
6. Information and Intelligence. This will increase in significance as more data becomes available in electronic form. The ability of cross-jurisdictional police arrangements to allow for the access and exchange of data will become extremely important.

According to Ratcliffe (2007), and supported by Walsh (2011), the use of intelligence by police organisations appears to be broadening in scope and “is evolving into a management philosophy that places greater emphasis on information sharing and collaborative, strategic solutions to crime problems at the local and regional levels” (p. 1). Beyond the type of intelligence support needed for input for the development and review of corporate strategies and policies, a clear need exists to provide intelligence that will aid the organisation to achieve its organisational goals and objectives, and for it to implement its operational tasks.

7. Performance and Accountability. This is a critical factor in contemporary management best practice. The trend is towards an increase in more sophisticated and comprehensive performance measurement in a range of areas including expected levels of performance, effective management of human and financial resources and the maintenance of a corruption-free organisation.

Police organisations have traditionally been structured hierarchically to support the rules-driven culture and strict disciplinary code. However, police are examining the appropriateness and efficacy of the traditional or professional policing model for at least three reasons. The first is due to the acceptance and implementation of community policing. The second is owing to the inflexibility and consequent inability of the current policing model to meet the demands of service delivery efficiency and effectiveness in an environment described as volatile as in any competitive market (Densten, 1999, p. 45). The third reason is that the autocratic style of leadership and the strict enforcement of rules associated with the traditional model of policing is at odds with the expectations of a modern workforce.

Police organisations exist to achieve the crime prevention outcomes that will benefit the society or community they serve. The extent to which they succeed in achieving these outcomes may be termed organisational strategic performance. The importance of strategic performance has been recognised in literature, where a key theme is the difficulty of policing to establish and articulate clear goals and objectives. Rainy (1997) reports that one of the most frequently repeated observations of police organisations is that their goals are vague and ambiguous compared with those of private organisations. The lack of appropriate performance indicators, combined with political processes, often result in goals of police organisations being multiple, conflicting, and intangible (McLeod, 2002).

Police operate in an environment where the public demands efficiency and where police performance is intensely scrutinised by both the public and government. At the same time, the public also demands police effectiveness, timeliness, reliability and reasonableness, even though they may conflict with efficiency (Rainey, 1997). Different parties assess police achievements using different criteria. For instance, judges may evaluate police achievement on reasonableness and process concerns, while politicians or the media may use cost or timeliness.

The second issue is that a number of factors can influence the performance of police organisations in achieving crime prevention outcomes. These factors include the operational environment, political leadership, and internal leadership. Public opinion and pressure from interest groups and the media are often seen as compounding the problem (McLeod, 2002).

CONCLUSION

Any analysis of the future may identify a number of broad trends that would be expected to impact on the state, federal or central government criminal justice sector agencies, including police. The traditional role of police has become more blurred with the police having an increased level of involvement in disaster management and national security, and the globalisation and transnationalisation of crimes such as terrorism, human trafficking and money laundering, and because they are more involved in multi-national and multi-jurisdictional responses. In order to meet these and other challenges, police need to develop a set of flexible, core capabilities around the traditional functions of community, road safety policing and criminal investigations.

The development of flexible, core capabilities needs to be framed within the arguments presented by such authors as Weisburd and Neyroud (2011), and Sparrow (2011), who argue for a systematic application of knowledge in policing and for greater attention to the development of police officers and their leaders at all levels. Indeed, both this discussion and the issues raised by these authors are essentially advocating police to be more self-directed and professionally capable to lead local service delivery to the public.

Although police are involved in the local, central or federal government policy development process, and one could argue, that they are capable of being a shaper, this process is extremely democratic and police often do not have the skills or the political ability in some areas, and are, hence, seen more as adaptors. As a result, police need to undertake an in-depth analysis of the seven strategic areas discussed above to ensure that they are capable of being either a shaper or an adaptor depending on the level and nature of the uncertainty faced (Courtney, 2001).

Such an analysis, with adequate democratic safety nets, would assist police so that they are able to undertake an active leadership role or assume a shaper role within its environment and in its core competencies.

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BOOK REVIEW

Kill Decision

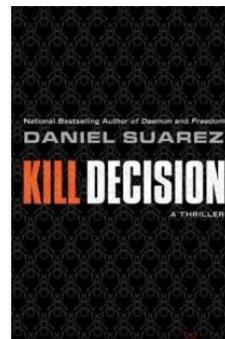
By Daniel Suarez

New York, Dutton, 2012, 400 pp.

ISBN 978-0-525-95261-9

Reviewed by Levi J. West

Charles Sturt University, Canberra



It may seem strange that a novel, and a techno-thriller at that, would make the review pages of an academic journal. It is perhaps even stranger still that this particular piece of speculative (or not so speculative) fiction contains sophisticated intellectual discourse on such relatively obscure and disparate subjects as myrmecology (the study of ants), the manipulation of social media, autonomous robots, and twenty-first century warfare.

These are the literary devices that the author, and former systems consultant and software developer Daniel Suarez leverages. It is his purpose to entertain, but also to engage in a necessary and all-to-relevant and contemporary discussion about the risks and possibilities that are inherent in much of the security technology that is currently deployed in both the domestic and international security environments. Imagine if you will, hordes of swarming, interconnected, autonomous and unattributable drones, armed and authorized to make critical decisions regarding the killing of human beings on the basis of parameters determined by an algorithm.

This is the world that *Kill Decision* inhabits, and it is Suarez at his best. His art, and his valuable contribution to intelligent security debates, which he has demonstrated in his two previous novels, is in taking his intimate technical knowledge of existing technology and combining plausible extrapolation with nefarious purposes. By painting a picture of the mass deployment of emerging technology, in such a believable and realistic setting, Suarez manages to discuss, in a more nuanced and realistic manner than much contemporary discourse, the dangers that may lie ahead if security technology continues its unfettered progress.

The author's use of relatively conventional literary devices, there is a love story layered within, allows the reader to become truly engaged and to connect with the characters, fostering a degree of identification, and in turn an interest in the outcome. As the two central characters battle unknown forces of evil, they face numerous ethical dilemmas, as well as being forced to confront an adaptive, hyper intelligent and evasive adversary. At its core, *Kill Decision* is the story of an academic who researches ants, and the special operations soldier who deems her survival to be central to the future of humanity, or at least to their remaining in the decision making loop when it relates to the killing of another human being.

While it is a novel, and ultimately science fiction, the existence of autonomous robots is a reality. As the author has stated at a TEDGlobal presentation in June 2013, in relation to the emergence of what is called *lethal autonomy*:

. . .there's still a human in the loop to make that lethal firing decision, but it's not a technological requirement. It's a choice. . .because as we migrate lethal decision-making from humans to software, we risk not only taking the humanity out of war, but also changing our social landscape entirely, far from the battlefield.(Suarez, 2013)

Suarez's work presents a thrilling *Terminator*-esque fast-paced and entertaining read, but at the same time it should make all of us think deeply about the kind of future we want, and the price we are prepared to pay to achieve that ever nebulous concept of "security."

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