Security Dimensions of Self-Isolating Communities

Highlights from a conference organised by the
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Introduction

On 29 March 2010 the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS) hosted a one-day conference on the security dimensions of self-isolating communities in western societies. The event sought to detail the research being undertaken under the broad umbrella of "radicalisation," and brought together experts from a variety of fields, including academia, government, military and journalism, as well as independent researchers. The speakers shared their perspectives about the shortcomings that exist in the international community's assessment of terrorists and radicalised groups and individuals, along with what should be done to address those shortcomings.

Key Discussion Areas

Today, the study of radicalisation is done with the acknowledgement that terrorism is symptomatic of larger issues and with the realisation that not everyone who is involved in a terrorist network necessarily engages directly in the commission of violent acts. As well, not everyone who is involved in a terrorist group has the same experience. To that end, work has been done to develop a typology of involvement in terrorist activity using roles as the unit of analysis.

Individuals involved with terrorism possess different attributes which can be understood along a continuum. For example, an individual with no strong political beliefs may join a group and then, over time and with exposure to other group members and their beliefs, he/she may become highly radicalised. More research needs to be done to understand why (or even if) this movement actually occurs.

It is also true that in the same way that individuals involved in terrorist activity come from a variety of backgrounds, it is also true that these individuals can travel along different paths to radicalisation and play different roles within their organisation. A better understanding of these factors may lead to the identification of possible intervention points and preventive strategies.

For preventive strategies to be effective there must be collaboration between at-risk communities and local law enforcement and social service providers. This collaboration will help to ensure that the strategies better address the community-level push factors and will result in the provision of better services and resources.

One such preventive strategy, community policing, is important because it puts the concerns of alienated or isolated communities at the front of the policing agenda. However, there is always the danger that this type of policing might serve to further marginalise the communities because community members might see the strategy as merely a surveillance device. One way to guard against this is to collaborate with a wide array of groups within the communities and to build broad trust.

Individual v. Group-level Processes of Radicalisation

From the mid-1980s and through the 1990s the group or organization was the primary focus of terrorism analysis; however, since 2005 the focus has shifted to the individual. Today, radicalisation is revisited with the acknowledgement that terrorism is influenced by a number of broad drivers.

At the outset, it is important to understand that violent radicalisation is only one of several possible expressions of radicalisation as a whole. Many people can hold a radical view but not all will engage in violent radical behaviour. The expression of violence is of primary concern. This naturally presents a challenge to governments which wish to *prevent* the eruption of violence.

Similarly, disengagement and de-radicalisation are not synonymous. People can, and do, leave terrorist movements. The key is for researchers to identify why and how this happens and to know that there is not going to be one set of answers to these questions.

Research has begun to identify why an individual might move from being simply "radical" to actively seeking out involvement in a terrorist group. These factors include identification with the plight of victims; a strong urge to move beyond talking about an issue to acting on that issue; the role of chance (being at the right place at the right time); and the expectation of rewards upon joining a group. This latter issue (rewards upon joining) is dominant and is one that can be influenced. Some recruits are crushed when they realise that there is a disparity between their ideal before joining a group and the reality of what happens in the group on a day-to-day basis. This realisation can be a catalyst for disengagement and is one that can be influenced.

Individuals' Roles within Groups

Not everyone who is involved in a terrorist group has the same experience. Work has been done to develop a typology of involvement in terrorist activity using roles as the unit of analysis. The research seeks to understand how roles are acquired, how roles are held, how roles are dispensed with, whether or not single roles are the norm or if multiple roles can be held simultaneously, and whether or not roles can change over time. As well, it is important to understand why some people are drawn to certain types of roles and why occupying some roles change some individuals.

Typologies based on a static ideal are not useful because typologies that work for one group may not work for another. An alternative is to describe individuals involved in terrorism along several continuums as follows:

- Ideological and political motives moving to non-ideological and apolitical;

- High status within the group and leaders moving to followers who want to belong; and

- Socially strong, adapted and resourceful moving to the marginalised with weak social resources

These attributes have often been considered as part of a "conveyor belt" theory, rather than as a set of static positions. Although the theory is often disputed, any individual during his/her extremist life may move from one end of a continuum towards the other. For example, a person may start out as apolitical and, over time, may become more politicised and ideological and may move from being a follower to being a leader. It should be noted, however, that there is no great understanding of how or why this movement, if it happens, actually occurs.

As well, different terrorist groups consist of different mixes of people, who at any given time are at different points along this continuum. For example, some groups may have many followers who are ideologically well-adapted, whereas other groups may start out with few of these strong leaders and with more marginalised members, some of whom may become more politicised over time. These different types of individuals will usually perform different, and complementary, roles within the organisation. It is important to remember that the word "type" should be used cautiously, as a "type" is not static but rather refers to the various positions an individual may move towards or away from throughout the processes of radicalisation or de-radicalisation.

Many people become involved in the "hinterland of violence" (e.g. collecting Internet material, videos, lectures and other messaging) but they never engage in violent acts. The central issue is what distinguishes the violent actors from those who are not violent. Possessing the material might be an element, but it is not the complete story.

Because many people involved in terrorist groups do operate in this "hinterland", stressed a speaker, it may be better to charge them under normal criminal law rather than the sometimes poorly drafted terrorist laws. For example, Ali Beheshti, who operated on the margins of his group, was charged under UK criminal law for his attempt to bomb the home of the author of *The Jewel of Medina*. This is appropriate given the criminal nature of his act. Understanding why Mr Beheshti acted as he did may be important to understand many others within his group, but it will not lead to an understanding of the group as a whole. Many others visited the same mosque as Mr Beheshti; however, no one else acted as he did. Mr Beheshti had a prior criminal conviction for the attempted murder of his father; perhaps this is more predictive of his later behaviour.

Information into Action

It is now well established that individuals involved in terrorist activity come from a variety of social backgrounds and that they undergo different processes of radicalisation. This fact leads to the conclusion that "one

size does not fit all" and that attempting to identify individuals who may be susceptible to committing violent acts from the wider population produces both too many false positives and false negatives. However, clearly delineating the dimensions of and pathways to radicalisation is more promising. Understanding the different processes may make it possible to identify preventive interventions, disrupt violent radicalisation and facilitate disengagement.

Researchers posit that there are perhaps seven core components in the path to radicalisation:

- Motivations and grievances (where perceptions matter more than actual grievances);
- Socially facilitated entry (top-down and bottom-up);
- Splintering/progression (where people drift across affiliations and groups and often become more extreme as they move);
- Intensification within groups;
- Ideology (often a key motivational factor);
- Threat (the perception of an always imminent threat to these groups from the outside that can lead to a collective defensive action); and
- Belonging and identity.

As well, different terrorist groups may consist of members who go through different paths to radicalisation. Therefore, instead of developing one strategy it is better to develop several specific measures that may fit the different "types" or dimensions. Some of these types may be susceptible to socio-economic measures while others may be susceptible to psycho-social or ideological/political issues. As such, preventive steps need to be tailored to the specific drivers behind each activist, as well as to the specifics of the various types of groups.

These different dimensions may suggest different points of intervention in order to break off the processes of radicalisation or break up a militant group. For example, ideological activists, who are motivated by idealism, have a strong sense of justice and respond to the suffering of others, typically play a lead role in terrorist cells. These individuals tend to be well-integrated and educated and are considered to be role models within their communities. One particular variety of this type could be the experienced jihadi veterans from theatres of war (Chechnya, Bosnia, Afghanistan) who possess a heroic image and serve as a link with the "global jihad."

The individuals who score high on ideological and political motivation may become disillusioned when their expectations of the movement are not met. They may also become troubled by the potential for violence. The paradox of fighting for their fellow Muslims yet, at the same time, the fact that some of their

potential victims may be Muslim may be problematic for them.

As well, those individuals who score high on leadership are vulnerable to a loss of status within their group. When this happens, they may become more open to disengagement. The disengagement of these influential members may act as a deterrent for younger people to joining a group. What makes them important speakers for radicalisation may also make them influential in disengagement.

Drifters—individuals who typically hold no particular political views and are instead motivated by a need for solidarity—may be more willing to carry out acts of violence as a way of proving themselves. While these individuals may seem to be among the most extreme members of their group, they can also become disillusioned more easily.

Different participants require different prevention strategies to encourage disengagement. With the types in mind, measures should be aimed at entire populations (e.g. entire minority groups)—not small communities—to ensure integration (a primary intervention). Other types of interventions may be targeted at specific risk groups (e.g. Muslims from deprived areas). As well, young people who are involved in extremist groups should be helped to find training for jobs and should be provided with positive role models.

In addition, more research is needed into why some individuals abandon their groups. A better attempt to aggregate data could help determine patterns and traits that could then, in turn, be used to map the terrorism drivers. A database that tracks what governments have done and plan to do in terms of their counter-terrorism strategies and, perhaps more importantly, what extremists do in response to these state interventions, would be very beneficial.

Gaps also exist in the examination of "tipping points," specifically, the conditions that have to be in place for "so-called" radical groups to move to true radicalisation.

Discussion

Responding to a question about the existence of "ideal" preventive programs, the panel mentioned both the Columbian disengagement program and the Saudi Arabian de-radicalisation program (which uses theological dialogue and ideology and draws upon psychologists, social workers and, most importantly, families). Another interesting model was a community program in the UK that mobilised local mosques and community centres and the associated young, influential role models. The panellists warned that while it is not possible to transfer a successful program from one country to another, one should study the approach behind a program.

A question about the possibility of over-estimating terrorists led the panellists to reflect on the fact that the creation of special terrorism laws can exacerbate the problem and lead to a galvanisation of the rhetoric.

Turning their attention to what can be done to move forward, the panellists mentioned the need to be careful of the words that are used in the discussion (e.g. insurgency and terrorism). There is also the need for any action to be context-driven. Another panellist mentioned the need to de-mystify and de-glorify the terrorists.

Western Somali Communities in Crisis

Framing the discussion around the Western Somali communities is the nexus amongst three important factors: a failed state; an extremist military organisation; and the challenges of living within a diaspora.

The issues in Somali society can also be brought together under the confluence of three major crises:

> *The destruction of their way of living in the world*
> The collective sense of belonging has been broken in Somalia and there has been a movement from moderate to more extreme religious beliefs.
>
> *A crisis of national institutions*
> The national state has been slowly disappearing, and al-Shabaab is struggling to determine what the state means and how to construct it.
>
> *A crisis of leadership*
> The Somali people (both inside and outside Somalia) feel that the current president of Somalia, Sheikh Sharif Ahmed, has no idea how to build a state, despite the fact that he has the support of both the US and the UK.

The confluence of these three crises led to the collapse of the Somali community, which, in turn, led to vulnerability within the population to manipulation.

Religion plays an important role in the lives of many Somalis living in diaspora communities in the west. Faced with new laws and ways of doing things, some Somalis turn to religion as a constant. However, sometimes a lack of education means that the religious teachings are misinterpreted.

American intervention in Somalia—most notably US support for the Ethiopian invasion of Somalia in 2007 where at least 20,000 Somalis were killed and one million were displaced—has caused many challenges. Many Somalis feel that the international community in only concerned with whether or not there are terrorists in Somalia or pirates off its coast. These are not the issues that most Somalis worry about on a day-to-day basis.

There is a long history of foreign fighters, mainly amongst the Somali diaspora, going to Somalia to fight. The first documented cases are from the early 1990s, and the numbers of foreign fighters began to increase in the late 1990s when the Somalis began working with al-Qaida in East Africa. Harakat al-Shabaab Mujahideen's (al-Shabaab's) use of video testimonies and literature, together with its self-proclaimed

association with al-Qaida, confirmed that it was moving towards a global jihad. Since the late 1990s there was also an increase in the "talibanisation" of, and social control in, Somali society.

Propaganda is the main method used by al-Shabaab to recruit globally. The use of propaganda has developed since 2007 from unsophisticated and rudimentary to wide-ranging, taking full advantage of technology such as on-line video sites. The propaganda is aimed specifically at the Somali diaspora (particularly youth living in the US, UK, Sweden and Kenya), using easy-to-understand language. Al-Shabaab-powered websites are constantly being updated and they are responsible for helping the Somali diaspora remain aware of what is happening in Somalia. As well, on-line "facilitators" now exist to help people access the literature and even arrange travel to Somalia.

Sophisticated training camps await these foreign fighters when they arrive in Somalia. It is suspected that these camps are receiving technical and ideological support from al-Qaida in Yemen.

"Little Mogadishu" in the US

The Somali community in the US mainly resides in Minneapolis, Minnesota, with a focus on what is referred to as "generation 1.5". This population was born in Somalia but was almost immediately relocated to the US via refugee camps. Once in the US, this population was predominantly raised in single-parent families living in impoverished communities.

Most Somali-Americans have been subject to both push and pull factors. The push factors include war exposure, living in a refugee camp and living in poverty. In terms of the third factor, 60% of Somali-Americans live in poverty; this figure is 4% for American Muslims. The pull factors include cultural affinity with Somalia; the Somali warrior tradition; the Ethiopian invasion of Somalia in 2007; internet exposure to violence in Somalia and other extremist ideas; and mosques and student organisations.

Recruiters from al-Shabaab and their supporters on the ground in Minneapolis skilfully put all of these factors together when they approach Somali youth. The recruiters are Somali men who were former fighters who now live in Minneapolis. They have logistical support from al-Shabaab and links with mosques and youth groups in the city.

Recruiters use the following process to recruit Somali youth living in Minneapolis:

1. Many Somali youth are exposed to Wahhabi teachings in their mosques and in after-school programs;

2. Recruiters from al-Shabaab reach out to the youth through telephone calls, social networking sites and face-to-face meetings; and

3. Recruiters influence a subset of individuals to prepare the youth for mobilisation.

The recruiters' messages run the gamut from "Go to Somalia, fight for your war and your country," "Fight the enemy," "Create an Islamic state," "Become a martyr" to "Somalia, not the US, is your country." These messages play on the immigrants' emotions, Somali nationalism, Wahhabi ideology and the pre-existing sense of alienation that many Somali-Americans have with western culture. Of great concern is the fact that these recruiters know how to speak to young Somali-Americans in a way that is more convincing than their parents, teachers, Imams and friends.

Recruits from Minneapolis recently moved to Somalia in two waves. The first, comprised of seven individuals, left in 2007; the second, comprised of eight individuals, left in 2008. The first wave was a little older, while the second was younger and more academically inclined. These men were indistinguishable from those within the larger community. It is widely believed that this phenomenon continues today; aside from these two waves, many more Somali youth have been radicalised and are likely prepared for mobilisation.

Prevention Strategies

While the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has had some success in preventing more Somali youth from mobilising, several key concerns remain. Namely, there are others who are perhaps not on the radar of the federal agencies in the US who have been radicalised and recruited but not mobilised and there are "lone wolves" in the community—essentially want-to-be martyrs—who could emerge. In addition, some families and communities feel that they are being victimised by tough counter-terrorism tactics and discriminatory media reporting. These factors could further alienate youth, thereby providing recruiters with more ammunition. There is also a distinct disconnect in the counter-terrorism strategies employed at the federal level and by local law enforcement. Any new approach must seek to work with communities and families.

Parents in the Somali community can act as the first point of contact for preventive measures. In fact, many Somali mothers feel extremely betrayed by their mosques, which they did not think would radicalise their sons. In some cases, parents in Minneapolis have told authorities about their children's suspect behaviour. Authorities fail to adequately approach families to gain a deeper understanding into the workings of recruitment.

For strategies to be effective there must be collaboration between at-risk communities and local law enforcement and social service providers. This collaboration will help ensure that the strategies better address the community-level push factors and will result in the provision of better services and resources.

Many in the Somali community in Minneapolis are not receiving the services and supports that they require. This is due, in part, to the presence of "secondary migration." This means that refugees first

came and settled in another part of the US before moving to Minneapolis (in fact, only 20% of Somalis living in Minneapolis came there directly from Somalia). Jobs do not necessarily follow this migration and, when these individuals arrive in Minneapolis, there are few programs in place to help them. However, even if sophisticated systems of support were developed, it is difficult to execute these programs effectively because the Somali community is extremely fragmented. Many Somali organisations (non-governmental organisations, charities, and political and religious groups) work independently, making it difficult for someone from the "outside" (law enforcement, health service providers) to lend assistance.

Any work done in the communities will also help to generate the empirical data and psychosocial insights that are necessary to develop effective strategies. This information will come through discussions with, among others, parents and the Imam councils. Those individuals developing counter-terrorism strategies could benefit from the lessons learned in areas such as HIV education and addiction prevention, where increasing the knowledge base and educating families proved effective.

Michael Downing, Chief of the Los Angeles Police Department, has advanced the idea of using community policing, which has been effective against gangs, as part of a counter-terrorism strategy.

There is also a need for increased understanding of the lessons from Somalia's past. This understanding could help in the rebuilding of Somali society in Somalia and in the west. As well, foreign policy regarding Somalia can play a role. At the moment, said the speaker, that policy is grounded in many erroneous propositions and a reliance on corrupt state actors. This hurts the image of the west in the Somali community, which might steer even the unwilling towards more radical groups and ideas.

The Somali Community in Denmark

There is a hardcore group of approximately 400 Somalis in Denmark who support al-Shabaab. These individuals exert the same social control over Somalis living in Denmark as al-Shabaab does on the ground in Somalia. This leads to two problems: the rise in disappearances (i.e. unreported cases of youth moving to Somalia) and fear amongst families to report these disappearances or any other mistreatment to the police.

Discussion

The discussion began with the important observation that Somalia is not one homogeneous place but rather a region of places where some areas, namely Somaliland, have more regulated governance than even many neighbouring African states.

Responding to a question about how best to engage Somalis living in the West, one panellist focused on the importance of engaging families and communities in the

formation of any preventive strategies. He warned, however, that there is fragmentation within many Somali communities, which makes it difficult to find effective community partners.

Many in the Somali community want the focus to shift from terrorism to the issues that their families and friends living in Somalia are facing on a day-to-day basis. This was highlighted when Sharif Ahmed came to the US and spoke to approximately 3,000 Somalis living in Minneapolis. His speech focussed on the fact that terrorism is bred in mosques. This incensed many in the audience who wanted to hear about the things that affect the people in Somalia (eg, food security).

Responding to a question about the relationship between al-Shabaab and al-Qaida, one panellist said that while there is sympathy between the two groups, there are no signs that the two have merged.

Closing this part of the discussion, one panellist advised that greater attention should be placed on the "risky spaces" rather than risky people. He said that the space of Muslim diaspora youth, with the prevalence of the internet, youth groups and literature, warrants specific preventive measures.

Communities at Risk in Europe and North America

Debate exists over whether there is a larger threat from home-grown youth (those with no links to al-Qaida) or those who go abroad, train and come back. Since 9/11 there has been an increase in radical Islamism, particularly in diaspora communities.

There has been a growth in the number of home-grown terrorists who act autonomously from groups like al-Qaida. Groups of home-grown terrorists come together and separate themselves from mainstream society and the majority of Muslims. These groups often also "out-bid" each other in terms of the extent of their radicalism.

In fact, a 2004–08 study conducted by Marc Sageman found that 78% of terror plots in the west were entirely from home-grown roots with no contact with global jihadist groups. The study also found that in 43% of cases there was direction from overseas. The majority of people in these cases (52%) go to Pakistan, while 5% go to Yemen. These findings show that although radicalisation can and does occur in the west, the serious transition of the radicalisation into terrorist plotting occurs overseas. For example, the devices used in terror plots may be procured in the home country, but the knowledge about how to use them properly comes from training from abroad.

Pakistan plays an important role in the global jihad. Intelligence communities have found that al-Qaida is able to decentralise quickly, mobilise, re-mobilise and continue to develop sophisticated bombing material, particularly in areas such as North Waziristan, Pakistan. Moreover, according to counter-terrorism experts, traffic from the

west increasingly moves towards Pakistan. Clearly, Pakistan offers a call to militancy unlike any other country and provides the setting for ideal training both ideologically and operationally.

Radicals in the UK

The 2003 Iraq War incensed many people living in the UK, including some in the Muslim community. This gave al-Qaida a greater foothold for recruitment. After 2003, more people began attending to al-Qaida-related meetings in Britain.

Britain is facing a problem, with approximately 2,000 persons of interest being watched by security services, in large part because of radical preachers who can operate with relative impunity. These preachers have the ability to convey their messages to large audiences in an inspirational way. Their main audiences are second and third generation British Muslims. This "generation of rebels" finds itself turning against the traditional Islam of their parents and the ideas of mainstream society. This leads to an increased sense of confusion. As well, many of these individuals are "born-again" Muslims who do not understand their religion very well, which makes them vulnerable to recruiters.

The first, and most crucial, step towards radicalisation (reading books, surfing the internet and entering into discussions in on-line chat rooms) is rarely influenced from within the home or by foreign militant networks. Individuals start the journey alone or with a small group of friends. As a result, it is almost impossible to develop a robust profile of the kind of individual who will become a terrorist. However, there has been a shift in religious identity and values among younger Muslims living in the UK and a growing interest in religious ideas.

The appeal of radical Islam is more than an angry response to western foreign policy or the consequence of a wider shift towards Islam by young Muslims. The appeal reflects a more fundamental shift in cultural and social attitudes. In the era of multiculturalism, diversity policies at local and national levels have encouraged different ethnic and religious groups to organise politically and to try to advance their own identity.

In light of these shifts, it is important to consider government policy and the impact it has had on the feelings and attitudes of Muslims living in the UK. For the past decade, and particularly after the London bombings, government policy towards Muslims has been to engage with them as a distinct community whose "special needs" qualify them for particular policies and privileges. In 2005, the government assembled a group of Muslim representatives and leaders, entitled the "Preventing Extremism Together" or "Prevent" taskforce, which recommended increased funding of religious groups and projects in order to meet the Muslim community's needs. However, despite good intentions, this approach has often seemed inadequate and muddled. Trying to conduct "community engagement" with Muslims has proven difficult because they are not really a

coherent and unified community. The Muslim population is ethnically, linguistically and culturally diverse, and while some younger Muslims are growing more religious than their parents, many others are becoming more secular. Therefore, an effective community strategy would have to fit all of the diverse needs and expectations of this diverse group.

In addition, while there is a lot of talk about the importance of engaging with local communities, sometimes the leadership being "engaged" has little knowledge of the Muslim community as a whole. It would be more effective to have a number of simultaneous strategies within each community with the collective aim of pushing for the betterment of social factors (employment, health, education) that plague many minority communities.

Radicals in the US

Recently two trends have emerged in the US:

> *Radicalism caused by radicalisers*
> This is due to a growing self-confidence amongst preachers. One pro-al-Qaida group, called "Revolution Muslim," is very visible. The US First Amendment protects the radicalisers more than they are protected under the laws in Europe.
>
> *Influence of the internet*
> Social media and on-line video sites have provided new fora for people to talk, network and connect. For example, two young men from Virginia who travelled to Pakistan to train in 2009 connected on the internet, and the infamous "jihad Jane" used YouTube to recruit. These sites allow al-Qaida and similar groups to transmit their ideology much more quickly to a much larger audience. More radical spiritual leaders are also using the internet to reach out to potential followers.

In terms of the kinds of beliefs driving violence or sympathy for violence, similarities can be drawn between the traditional "white" radical right and radical Islamists. While the former traditionally yearns for a sacred law of the land, the latter wants the establishment of Shari'a in western democracies. There is also a sense of paranoia in both groups that the government is out to get them.

There are four common drivers that fuel the values of the radical right in the US:

- Social – a desire to connect with others and have a sense of belonging;
- Oath takers – those who vehemently defend the US Constitution and, therefore, find inexcusable the actions of any party or leader that violates or does not adhere to its principles;
- Revolutionary outlook; and

- Strongly aggrieved

The same themes can be translated to radical Islamists, as follows:

- Social – wanting to belong, individuals are led by what people in their mosque or study group believe;
- Oath takers – these more pious Muslims think that jihad is a legitimate concept but, perhaps, lack the rationality to realise that the incorrect interpretation of this concept can lead to chaotic or disruptive consequences;
- Revolutionary outlook – these individuals want to change the world and they call for a world-wide caliphate; and
- Strongly aggrieved – for these individuals, perceived global injustices are a powerful motivator

Within the wider groups of white separatists, racist Odinists and Christian militants, 43.9% have been involved in criminal activity. Their actions are driven primarily by personal grievances. For these groups, the path to radicalisation normally takes time and the individual passes through many affiliations within the group before they commit a violent act. Conversely, group dynamics are often more important for Islamist militants. However, within both groups, internal solidarity is strengthened by the sense that there is a constant threat from the outside (be this from the state or rival groups).

Discussion

Responding to a question about the "Prevent" program in the UK, one panellist said that much good work is being done under the umbrella of this program and that it is proving successful in some parts of London. Another panellist said that while the intent of the "Prevent" program is good and that it is needed in the UK, there has been criticism about the types of leaders (local leaders and Imam councils that were far removed from the communities) that the program allied itself with.

One panellist pointed to community policing as a good way to track movements on the ground while, at the same time, engaging with members of a particular community.

Speaking about the impact of "outside" influences, one panellist used the example of Pakistani elders who come into a community and present a romanticised ideal of the traditions and political structures in their home country.

In conclusion, another panellist commented on the rise of both radical Islam and the political right in the UK. In northern cities there have been some collisions between members of the British National Party (BNP) and radical Islamists.

Future Directions: Now What?

Community Policing

Community policing is important because it puts the concerns of alienated or isolated communities at the front of the policing agenda. Community policing can only be a positive mechanism if it is, in and of itself, used as a counter-radicalisation tool, aside from any intelligence gathering it may enable.

Current policy thinking places local government and police agencies at the centre of counter-radicalisation strategy. On the other hand, some argue that government policy should work only towards creating a place for communities to work independently. Indeed, getting involved in ideological debates between citizens is certainly an issue that must be entered into carefully by government.

The police and government agencies have increasingly become involved in counter-radicalisation efforts where community policing, in particular, takes on a lead role. For example, the UK government's recent counter-terrorism strategy, "Contest 2," says that the role of police in counter-radicalisation is as crucial as other strands of law enforcement. In the US, both federal and local police agencies have proposed counter-radicalisation legislation. Most notably, Los Angeles Police Department Chief of Police, Michael Downing, highlighted that local law enforcement, over other agencies, has the capacity to identify and drive out violent extremism. However, the danger continues to remain the potential for further marginalisation of many communities who see community policing as merely a surveillance device that intrudes upon their freedoms. Attempts at community policing have, in fact, led to cries of racial profiling from communities in both the UK and the US.

Policing strategy is an important factor to counter-terrorism and radicalisation. However, in order to do so correctly, and to not make matter worse, agencies must first seek to build trust with the communities. Building trust has yielded positive results in the past. For example, last year in the US, the relationship between the FBI and Council on American Muslims (CAIR) was a catalyst to the arrest of five young Muslim men from Virginia who had made their way to Pakistan to allegedly join a militant training camp.

It should be noted that in May 2009 the FBI wrote US lawmakers to inform them that it had severed its formal relationship with CAIR because there was some evidence that 10 years previously its founders were part of a network that supported Hamas. Questions remain as to whether or not police agencies should shun groups because of these types of associations if the relationship could lead to the knowledge needed to engage with the diaspora.

There is, of course, past evidence that the wrong approach to policing can exacerbate community isolation and effectively push radicalisation further. One example of this is the policies pursued by UK authorities

towards Catholics in Northern Ireland in the 1960s. For many years authorities were unable or unwilling to address the concerns of the Catholic community directly. Instead, non-jury trials, detention without charge and the use of coercive interrogation techniques made the community more susceptible to recruitment, notably by the Provisional IRA. Recruiters were able to feed the narrative of Catholic oppression, radicalise detainees and speak out against the illegitimate actions of the police.

The unnecessary use of police powers can play a role in increasing radicalisation and can undermine community-based policing. For example, in the UK in the 1980s many locals in some less economically strong communities were suspicious and afraid of special police units, such as the Special Patrol Groups, who were perceived as harassing the locals.

Counter-insurgency and Policing

There are important parallels to be drawn between counterinsurgency (COIN) and community policing. First, both strategies understand that the conflict in which they are engaged is being waged "block by block" and is crucially dependent on local knowledge. Most importantly, the philosophy of "out-governing and not out-gunning" their opponents drive the two approaches. Both COIN and community policing efforts must show that they can provide an alternative to the harsh, tyrannical, coercive governance and/or social control.

Lessons from the Past

Three lessons can be drawn from the past:

Detention and coercive interrogation
Internment can have two significant effects: the impact on families and its broader symbolic effect. In terms of the latter, harsh interrogation techniques have served as a recruitment tool for terrorists.

Special policing powers
For example, "stop and search" powers in the UK have been controversial. There is even evidence to suggest that these so-called special powers have been used unfairly and predominantly against "non-whites".

Community policing
To be effective, community policing strategies have to ensure that they pick the right partners and build trust within the community.