Delegate Research Information

Round Table

Tunnels of Terror: Securing the Southern Border

Facilitator: BPA Michael Bailey

This delegate research information is not intended to be a comprehensive assessment of your assigned round table topic but rather a starting point to help launch your own personal investigations into the various associated issues. It is encouraged, if not expected, that your policy proposals will be inclusive of aspects pertaining to your round table topic that are not covered in this research compilation. You, your facilitator, your round table host, and your fellow roundtable delegates are all responsible for crafting a policy proposal that takes this into consideration.
To: The Honorable Susan Rice  
Office Held: National Security Advisor  
From: Spencer Allen, Christopher Beveridge, John Breland, Karch Calkins, Johnny Childers, Rachel Clink, Zachariah Fares, Brian Fuentes, Adel Hussain, Sebastian King, Isaac Lee, Emily Otto, Joni Taylor  
Facilitator: COL Chris Albus  
Subject: Counteracting the Allure of Jihad  
Date: 20 February 2016  

Introduction  
The allure of Jihad is a growing national security problem. There is an increased ability of terrorist groups to inspire those living within the U.S. to commit acts of domestic terrorism. This complex problem requires the development of a counter-narrative policy, based on American values, to limit the allure of Jihad. This is done by partnering with the Muslim community and interest groups and initiating a proactive, timely, and relevant informational campaign.

Background  
Combating Jihad within the United States is a key tenet of the 2015 National Security Strategy (NSS). Key NSS components for combating the allure of Jihad include:  

● “… collective action with responsible partners, and increased efforts to prevent the growth of violent extremism and radicalization that drives increased threats.”  
● “… address the underlying conditions that can help foster violent extremism …”  
● “… supporting alternatives to extremist messaging.”¹

Together, these points offer a foundation to build a feasible, acceptable, and suitable strategy based on partnerships and a comprehensive informational campaign.

A 2007 New York Police Department investigation identified a four step process describing how a person progresses from an average citizen to a Jihadist (Figure 1).² The progression moves through pre-radicalization, self-identification, indoctrination, and finally into jihadization. Pre-radicalization occurs before the individual is exposed to radical Islam. In self-identification, the individual begins to relate more with the radical Islamic ideology than with an ideology of moderation and peace. Indoctrination occurs when the individual believes their anti-Western violent radical Islamic ideology is justified. Finally, jihadization occurs when the individual

begins to act on those beliefs.\textsuperscript{3}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{figure1.png}
\caption{Four-step process of Radicalization.\textsuperscript{4} Salafism is a form of radical Islam}
\end{figure}

**Supporting Argument Analysis**

The allure of Islamic inspired homegrown terrorism stems from an exploitation of the human need for personal significance and cognitive closure\textsuperscript{5}. Individuals seeking a sense of certainty and the desire to gain a “larger-than-life” significance are susceptible to an extremist ideology that provides a black and white view of the world. Extremist ideology purports the notion that it holds all the answers. The proponents of such an ideology advertise themselves as heroes and martyrs.

Dr. Kruglanski, a professor from the University of Maryland and a social psychologist, has conducted intensive research regarding the psychology behind terrorist recruitment. He concluded that combating terrorism requires replacing the glamour of Jihad with an alternative glamour. This involves enacting a policy that focuses on turning the psychological tables on Islamic-inspired extremism.\textsuperscript{6} This research indicates a psychological vulnerability that can be exploited. As such, this policy targets that vulnerability which is located in between the steps of pre-radicalization and self-identification. Through counter-narrative initiatives the U.S. can supplant Jihadist narratives.

**Recommendations**

The first step of providing a counter-narrative involves partnerships with Muslim community leaders and interest groups. Political leaders will engage in open dialogue with the Muslim community and build strong working relationships, creating a unified front addressing the issues. Muslim leaders will be invited to address governing bodies and have a role in the

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\textsuperscript{3} ibid.


implementation of counter-narratives strategies. In reaching out to Muslim community leaders, the United States will develop a counter-narrative that builds a stronger position for Muslims in the fabric of the American Story. This will lessen the possibility of those who would feel disenfranchised with society, making them more susceptible to the Jihadist message. Similarly, a partnership with American interest groups for educational outreach should be created to promote public education of the tenets of Islam to the rest of the American public. Doing so mitigates stereotypes and creates a more educated and accepting public that effectively integrates Muslims into American society.

The second step of this policy involves implementing a widespread and timely informational campaign to counter the Jihadist message of an inevitable clash between Islam and the West. Using cutting edge social media and other informational vehicles, the U.S. administers an informational campaign which disrupts the Jihadist decision-making process. By getting in front of the news media cycle or “beating them to the punch”, the U.S. will counter the extremist claim that a cultural and religious war is justified between Islam and the West.

In order to defeat the inflammatory rhetoric of extremist ideology, public leaders need to unite and develop a common stance. Socio-cultural differences can be distorted to feed extremist propaganda. This united stance must be communicated early and often at all levels, from federal to local. Furthermore, the United States should exert its influence in the proactive messaging of the American narrative. Extremists use the media to incite fear and project their message. The United States needs to counter these messages by communicating events that highlight success, rather than those that focus on purely negative subjects. Leaders must also reach out to media outlets and project these messages to the public at every possible occasion.

In conjunction with news media influence, the United States needs to implement a more prominent presence on social media. Such objectives are achieved through adapting counter-narratives to the specific messages from extremist accounts. By monitoring the public activity of the extremists, the United States ensures the Jihadists do not have an uncontested platform. Lastly, humor is a very powerful tool utilized to present extremist messages and ideology as ridiculous. This helps delegitimize their messages and undermines their ability to influence.

There is a degree of risk associated with these options. Table 1 presents several of these risks, prioritized from high to low. These should be taken into consideration by decision makers before implementation.
Table 1: Risk Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Risk Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective anti-Jihad campaign</td>
<td>An ethnocentric anti-jihad campaign may become counterproductive and lead to an attraction towards Jihad.</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixing Church and State</td>
<td>Developing programs that deal with educating the public or developing relations within a specific sect of Islam may be infringing on the separation of church and state.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative connotation of propaganda</td>
<td>An information campaign could be misconstrued as negative propaganda which may lower public opinion of those who are distrustful of government influence.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction of legitimacy of Muslim Leaders</td>
<td>Liberal Muslim leaders cooperating with US strategy may be seen as being overly-influenced or controlled by government</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Backlash</td>
<td>An emphasis of pro-Muslim programs may create an upset by some Americans which may lead to public unrest.</td>
<td>Low-Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate screening for leadership</td>
<td>Sponsoring an improper Muslim community leader may create a platform for him/her to exploit for personal gain.</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

With this strategy, the United States Government can begin to counteract the allure of Jihad, a rising issue in Western society. This policy is feasible because the required informational and relational platforms are already in place, acceptable due to the potential benefits outweighing the risks determined in Table 1, and suitable due to the interconnectedness of the target audience via social networks, community ties, and other mediums. Partnering with Muslim communities and interest groups, as well as initiating an information campaign, will build an effective counter-narrative policy based on American values to limit the allure of Jihad.
**Terms**

**Smuggling**- illegally transporting objects, substances, information or people. This can mean anything from drugs and weapons to terrorist and slaves.

**Point of entry (POE)**- where customs officials are stationed to oversee the entry and exit of people and merchandise. These are the recognized sites where an individual can lawfully enter a country under the supervision of Border Patrol.

**Stash House**- a place where weapons, supplies, or drugs are kept for distribution. The houses are commonly located in southern areas that allow for easy dispersal into the northern united states.

**Special Interest Aliens**- immigrants from primarily Muslim countries entering the US via third countries. These immigrants are labeled as special interest because they are underwatch for possible terrorist activity or affiliation.

**Undocumented/Illegal Immigrant**- migrants who enter a country in a way that is unlawful. This issue has been in the spotlight of U.S. politics over the past couple decades.

**Smuggling Tunnels**- secret underground passageways that can span for hundreds of feet that are used to smuggle goods and people back and forth. There have been over 200 tunnels discovered beneath the U.S.-Mexico border.

**Human Trafficking**- the trade of humans for forced labor, sexual slavery, or for organs or tissues. According to the ILO human trafficking makes upwards of 100 billion dollars yearly. The area between Dallas, Houston and San Antonio is considered a hotspot for human trafficking.
**Migrant Caravan**- a group of immigrants who travel as a part of a larger group in order to ensure safer travel. Caravans are commonly seen from groups that are migrating from South America to the United States. There have been several caravans over the last few years.

**Executive Order 13767**- this is an executive order given by President Donald Trump directing that a wall be built along the U.S.-Mexico border. This idea has been met with much pushback.

**Immigrant Visa**- a permit issued by the U.S. staying that an individual is allowed to travel to, enter, or stay in the country. A visa must be obtained to enter the country.

**Mule**- someone who either knowingly or unknowingly smuggles contraband across the border for an organization or cartel. They can do this by carrying the contraband on or in their person.

**Asylum**- concept by which a person who is being persecuted or faces imminent danger in their own country can be protected and given shelter in another country. Individuals have to apply and show credible fear in order to receive asylum.
Actors

**Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA)** - federal law enforcement agency tasked with combatting drug smuggling and distribution. They are also the lead agency charged with enforcing the Controlled Substances Act.

**Drug Cartels** - criminal organization with the intention of supplying drug trafficking operations. These can be smaller less organized operations or commercial enterprises that span all over the globe.

**Mexican Transnational Crime Organizations** - more technical government term for cartels, also applies to human traffic smugglers and weapons smugglers. This term is just mean to be more broad than drug cartels.

**Donald Trump** - the 45th president of the united states whose campaign and term has been riddled with controversial border and immigration policy. His most notable is a push for a mega wall along the U.S. southern border that Mexico will supposedly pay for.

**Border Patrol** - federal law agency who detects and prevents illegal aliens, terrorist and terrorist weapons from crossing the border. They are one of the largest uniformed law enforcement agencies in the U.S.

**Drug Users** - people in the US who break the law, unless using marijuana for medicinal purposes or in a state where it is legal, and use drugs. While is is not usually thought of in this manor these are the loyal customers that fund violent terroristic drug cartels.

**Department of Homeland Security** - a cabinet department of the U.S. government responsible for public security. They protect against terrorism and ensure border security immigration and customs.
**Mexican Government**- all Mexican government officials who need to be held accountable for controlling drugs and crime in their own country as well as protecting their southern border from central American terrorist that harm the US.

**Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)**- federal law enforcement agency that enforces immigration law and investigates criminal and terrorist activity of foreign nationals.

**US Customs and Border Protection (CBP)**- the largest federal law enforcement agency of Homeland Security and the countries primary border control. They regulate import duties, trade customs, and immigration.
What are they smuggling in?

- Marijuana
- Cocaine
- Heroine
- Methamphetamines
- People
- Ketamine
- Fentanyl
- Weapons

How are they’re bringing it in?

- Trucks
- Trains
- Tractor trailers
- Disguised in produce and goods
- Mail
- Catapult
- Boat
- Submarine
- Tunnels
- Drones
- Airplanes
America’s modern political culture has been captivated with the controversial issue of immigration and security along the U.S. southern border. This security in the past has meant protection from drug cartels and masses of migrants, but with the growing number of displaced people from countries with known terrorist ties attempting to enter the U.S., a new fear has been realized. The way that these things differ is that when drugs are found being smuggled there is no denying they are drugs. When an undocumented immigrant is found with no visa or an expired visa there is no denying it. When an individual enters the country from a known terrorist hotspot, it is almost impossible to distinguish between those who pose a threat and those who seek safety and stability. This overview will break down into two sections; one of which will be outlining drug cartels as the terrorist organizations they are and discussing some methods to deter them. The second section will be taking a look at immigrants from terrorist hotspots entering the U.S. through Mexico.

The important things to remember are that cartels are terrorist organizations no different from the ones encountered in the Middle East. Jihadists are driven by their religion and cartels are driven by profit and their profit has been ginormous. The business of smuggling drugs into the U.S. has grown into a multi billion dollar industry. There are a few reasons why drug trade has taken off the way it has. One reason is the continued willingness of U.S. citizens to buy and use drugs. From a business standpoint, it’s difficult to hurt drug trade because they have a thriving market base that is literally addicted to their product. In popular culture, drug use is
becoming as American and apple pie. Another reason that drug trade thrives is their ability to adapt. There is a seemingly endless number of ways that cartels are able to smuggle drugs into the country. For this reason, large-scale, expensive projects such as building a wall along the border are controversial. One end of the argument says that the cartels will eventually find a way to get around a wall and render it useless. The other end says that once a wall is in place it will allow Border Patrol to spend more time and manpower hunting down the more intricate ways that drugs are smuggled. No matter the opinion this is an important conversation to have for the safety of the country.

Addressing the issue regarding Muslim immigrants coming though the southern border, it is difficult to get a feel for how pressing of an issue this is due to the lack of hard data regarding numbers. There are more substantial statistics on the number of total illegal immigrants and a logical train of thought that would lead to the idea of rising numbers of immigrants from terrorist hot spots coming through Mexico. With the growing number of people seeking asylum in the U.S. and the lack of availability, there could be a natural trend towards
illegal ways to get here. When it comes to breaking the law and entering the U.S. or returning to a violent homeland where they could die, the choice is easy. With how notably porus the southern border is it is perfectly logical to perceive that this could be a possible entry point. As terrorist organizations continue to pop up in South America, continued monitoring for terrorist activity will become a staple for the brave men and women who look after our safety.
The New York Times- “By Land, Sea or Catapult: How Smugglers Get Drugs Across the Border”
In this article the New York Times focuses on all the ways that drug cartels are getting drugs into the country. While are as elaborate as air drops others are as simple as throwing a bag over the fence.

Fact Check.org, The Wire- “Will Trump’s Wall Stop Drug Smuggling?”
https://www.factcheck.org/2017/08/will-trumps-wall-stop-drug-smuggling/
The pros and cons, mostly cons, of the resurrection of “Trump’s wall” are weighed in this article. The different types of drug smuggling that would be impacted or not impacted at all by a wall are outlined.

The Texas Tribune- “Texas smugglers say Trump's border wall wouldn't stop immigrants, drugs from pouring across the border”
The Texas Tribune talks to border patrol agents and former smugglers to learn whether or not “Trump’s wall” would have much impact, if any at all, on smuggling into or out of the United States.

Center For Immigration Studies- “Terrorist Travel to the United States Southern Border”
https://cis.org/Bensman/Terrorist-Travel-United-States-Southern-Border
In this article we take a look at how terrorist are smuggled across the border. So much of the talk about border security is saturated with drugs that terrorist organizations are sometimes able to slip members through undetected.

https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/yearbook/2017
This is your one stop shop for any kind of immigration statistic. Flip through the labeled tables for different types of statistics, and also check out the border security tab on the left.
Country Reports on Terrorism 2017 Published by the State Department
https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/283100.pdf

Center For Security Policy- “The Terror Threat on the Southern Border”
https://www.centerforsecuritypolicy.org/2019/01/07/the-terror-threat-on-the-southern-border/

This article discusses some of the threats of terrorism we face along the southern border.