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Introduction

Terrorism poses a major problem for homeland security. Therefore, the Department of Homeland Security has instituted a number of measures in an effort to try to keep Americans safe from the dangers of terrorist attacks. There are a number of Muslim extremist groups whose name you may have heard on the news in the years following 9/11 and even today. These include Hamas, Hezbollah and more. These extreme Islamic terrorist groups are often responsible for a number of terrorist style attacks one the United States and its allies. Throughout this paper I will do a comparative study of some of the most well known extreme Islamic terrorist groups, including the nature of the groups, the threat they pose to homeland security, and recommendations to homeland security to try to mitigate the danger of these types of extremist terrorist groups.

The Strategies of Terrorism

The article “ The Strategies of Terrorism” discusses some of the tactics that terrorist organizations use and the reasons behind some of these tactics. The article states that the reason that groups such as al-Qaida, Hamas, and Tamil Tigers engage in acts of terrorism is that these acts actually do tend to produce the results that they desire. The article states that in 1983 terrorism was used against U. S. Marine troops in Beirut for the purpose of getting the United States to pull its troops out of the country of Lebanon. As a result of the terrorist attack that occurred, the United States withdrew its troops from the country. Additionally, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 encouraged the United States to remove troops from the country of Saudi

Arabia, a country where U. S. troops had been stationed for a number of years. In addition, the article states that the kidnapping of a Filipino truck driver prompted the Philippines to remove its troops from the country of Iraq. In fact, the article states that terrorist attacks have proven to be very effective. “ Hijacking planes, blowing up buses, and kidnapping individuals may seem irrational and incoherent to outside observers, but these tactics can be surprisingly effective in achieving a terrorist group’s political aims” (Kydd, 2006).

The article goes on to compare radical Islamic terrorist groups to other groups such as the Irish Republican Army, the Ku Klux Klan, and anti-abortionists. The article states that because these actors are considered to be weak in the face of their opposition, they are forced to demonstrate, often through very violent acts, exactly how far they are willing to go. The Irish Republican Army bombed pubs, bars, shopping districts, and other establishments around the city of London with the goal of encouraging the United Kingdom to give up Northern Ireland. The Ku Klux Klan committed very violent acts against African Americans in order to promote the continued oppression of African Americans after the Civil War. And anti-abortion groups have bombed abortion clinics and killed doctors who perform abortions in order to prompt a change in abortion laws and practices. All of these organizations bear some similarity to the extreme Islamic terrorist organizations that are present in the world today and a threat to U. S. homeland security.

The Development of Extreme Islamic Terrorist Groups

The growth of radical Islamic terrorists groups may have first come to the attention of the United States and the world at in the 1980s. One of the first major events to draw attention to these groups was the assassination of the president of Egypt by the Muslim Brotherhood. “ The assassination by members of the Muslim Brotherhood of President Anwar Sadat in Cairo in October 1981 brought to the world’s attention the extent of developing militant Islamic radicalism” (Barros). It may be important to note, however, that although many in the United States associate terrorism with the radical Islamic groups, the vast majority of terrorist events are not committed by Islamic groups. The article “ Mixed Logit Estimation of Radical Islamic Terrorism in Europe and North America: A Comparative Study” points out that although there were approximately 2799 total terrorist events that took place from October 1979 to December of 2002, only 386 of these attacks were committed by Islamic groups. Therefore, “ radical islamic terrorist attacks constituted 13. 8% of all terrorist events” (Barros). The terror methods that radical islamic groups tend to employ are bombing, assassinations, and armed attacks. It is important to note that although radical Islamic groups are responsible for only 13. 8% of the terrorist attacks during the period examined in the article, these radical islamic groups are responsible for the majority of those killed in terrorist attacks due to the high death toll of 9/11.

The article “ Radicalisation Processes Leading to Acts of Terrorism” discusses the process by which people who are members of terror sects becoming indoctrinated into the belief system that causes them to commit these

violent acts against others. “ Jihadism or other varieties of political violence are embraced through an intellectual process where the need to take action gradually becomes a political or religious duty. These individuals are often resourceful, educated, well integrated and are sometimes even considered as role models in their communities” (European Commission, 2008). The article goes on to state that these groups often recruit members who are young in age. The experience of belonging to a group may be held in high importance to these young members of these groups. The young members of these groups are indoctrinated with an ideology that promotes the use of violence to achieve an end that is held to be of high importance. In addition, propaganda is also a significant part of the radicalization process for these members.

One of the goals of these types of radical islamic organizations is to gain some legitimacy for their viewpoints. And a number of organizations that are associated with terrorism have gained some success in this regard. The organization Hezbollah, through its national unity government, has 11 of the 30 cabinet seats in the country of Lebanon. In addition, it has a satellite television station and programs for social development.

Al-Qaida

The article “ How al-Qaida Ends: The Decline and Demise of Terrorist Groups” states that al-Qaida has been able to transform from merely a physical organisation to a virtual organization, taking advantage of the internet and the information super-highway in its attempts to further its mission of terrorism. The ability to make use of the internet and other forms

of information transmission to further terrorism distinguishes al-Qaida from many of the extreme Islamic terrorist organizations that came before it. "Although the al-Qaida network is in many ways distinct from its predecessors, especially in its protean ability to transform itself from a physical to a virtual organization, it is not completely without precedent. Al-Qaida shares elements of continuity and discontinuity with other terrorist groups, and lessons to be learned from the successes and failures of past and present counterterrorist responses may be applicable to this case." (Cronin, 2006).

The article goes on to point out that one of the lessons from al-Qaida is that the planning that took place to compose an organization of its capability should give us all pause. The author asserts that the threat to the United States from radical Islamic terrorist groups will affect this country for many years to come. One reason is because al-Qaida is distinct from other organizations in the past that have committed localized terrorist attacks of a sporadic nature. Al-Qaida showed coordinated growth, meticulous planning, has been the cause of mass casualties, and has a global reach. Because of these factors, the U. S. Department of Homeland Security has actively sought to eliminate al-Qaida as a terrorist organization and a threat to the safety of United States citizens. The elimination of al-Qaida, however, has proved to be a very difficult task for homeland security. This is because al-Qaida has a changing structure and a number of forms that the organization can take on. Therefore, the U. S. Department of Homeland Security has instituted a number of measures that has the goal of diminishing the effect of al-Qaida. These measures include: going after the organization's top

lieutenants, and cutting off the organization's ability to fund itself, as well as denying the organization territory in which it can organize and regroup.

The article "DHS Secretly Allowed suspects with Terror Ties Into Country" appearing in The Washington Free Beacon in May of 2014 states that a number of people ties to terrorist organizations have been admitted into the country, including Hani Nour Eldin who is a member of the Egyptian Islamic Group, a group that is classified by the U. S. Department of Homeland Security as a terrorist group. Hani Nour Eldin was let into the United States to meet with the Obama administration. One can assume that this meeting was to further understand the position of organizations such as the Egyptian Islamic Group that Eldin is a part of and to understand what can be done to lessen the possibility of these types of organizations committing attacks against the United States and its allies. Furthermore, the article goes on to state that the former head of the Department of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano, told members of the United States Congress that they can expect more people with ties to terror organizations to be let into the United States for meetings with government officials. Although there are many who are opposed to letting these people into the country, meeting with those who have a connection to these terror organizations to gain an understanding of how these organizations work and what can be done about them before another terrorist attack occurs can only serve to benefit Americans.

Works Cited

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