Terrorism can be defeated if we tackle its root causes – poverty and injustice as...

In today's world, the issue of terrorism has been prevalent. Due to the expanse and connectivity of the Internet, some believe that terrorism is now an entrepreneurial arena with the Internet as its global recruiting station. Poverty and injustice are some of the root causes of terrorism, but these are not the only factors that trigger terrorism. Hence, terrorism may be defeated or abated if we tackle other factors such as religious influence. A minority believes that tackling poverty cannot defeat terrorism. They believe that terrorist groups eschew from recruiting the poor.

A high level of educational attainment is seen as signal of one's commitment to a cause and determination, it also indicates his ability to prepare for an assignment and carry it off. Additionally, terrorist groups may offer more benefits than what one may get in reality; this may also attract more educated but unprincipled individuals into terrorism. For example, well-educated individuals may be eager to participate in terrorist groups if they think that they will assume leadership positions if they succeed. On the other hand, poverty stricken individuals may be targets for the spread of terrorism.

Some these individuals are desperate to even stake their lives on immoral acts just to provide financial sustenance for their family. As a result, these individuals become easy prey for terrorist groups. Terrorists groups preach their idea of providing salvation to these troubled people, effectively convincing them to do to their bidding. They promise to reward the victim's family with money to mitigate their situation of poverty. In most cases, the victim becomes a suicide bomber, a martyr bent on avenging his fate believing that his family will be rewarded for his act of bravery.

Many believe that by alleviating poverty, terrorism can be solved. Based on an observation by Gary Becker, a professor at the University of Chicago Business School. He saw that nations or regions that are experiencing rapid growth appear to have lower incidences of terrorism. This led Becker to believe that political activism and violent activity becomes less appealing to individuals when their economic opportunities expand. People are open to more options and are less likely to resort to desperate measures. Hence, terrorism may be reduced if poverty is lessened.

Some believe that getting rid of injustices cannot solve terrorism. Though the government may believe that their actions are fair and justified the public and especially extremist groups may not. These extremist groups live by their own ideology, which is seldom paralleled by the government's actions. Take for example, The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. They are a separatist organization formerly based in northern Sri Lanka They sought to create an independent Tamil State in the north and east of Sri Lanka.

This campaign spiraled into the Sri Lankan Civil War as the Sri Lankan government refused to agree to their demands. In this case, it is almost impossible to defeat terrorism by righting injustices. However, many argue that by righting injustices, terrorism can be reduced. In some cases, the origin of the intention of terrorism is when injustices take place. When a particular community feels that they are wrongly accused or that the law is unfair some of them take matters into their own hands. They believe that force is the only way to change biased laws.

I acknowledge that it is difficult to change the mindset of extremist groups, as they are extremely demanding. However, terrorism can be reduced if we treat everyone with equality. Take for example, when pictures of American soldiers abusing prisoners in Saddam's notorious prison were released. There was a global outcry against these animalistic acts. By reducing these crimes, it reduces the hatred that people might feels towards the Americans. It also lessens the chance of normal civilians becoming terrorists.

Hence, by tacking the injustices, fewer civilians would feel mistreated and terrorism can be reduced. I believe that the greatest player in terrorism is religious influence. These religious influences come in the form of extremist views on very sensitive issues. Some feel that religion is used to brainwash terrorists. An example can be seen from the case of Nidal Malik Hasan. He was an Army major and then turned into a mass murderer, fatally shooting twelve people on America's largest military base.

Many believed that Hasan's path began to take a twist when he attended the Dar Al-Hijrah mosque in Falls Church. Coincidentally, two of the 9/11 hijackers attended this mosque too. Although there was no evidence that the mosque had preached extremist views to Hasan, many argue that he was being brainwashed. It is difficult to stamp out religious influence of this kind as evidence is weak and interference with religious places can lead to conflict. With the large network of the Internet, religious views can be spread through these media networks.

There is a plethora of YouTube videos and sermons that can be downloaded from the Internet, leaving the viewer with visions of carnage dancing in their

heads. These terrorist groups garner attention via the Internet. This can be seen when Al-Qaeda posted footages of roadside bombings, the decapitation of American hostage Nick Berg, and the kidnapping of Egyptian and Algerian diplomats prior to their execution. The government can be vigilant by actively banning or censoring such websites. Video-sharing such as Youtube should act responsibly and remove these inappropriate videos.

By taking down such videos, the outreach of religious influence through the Internet can be tapered. Albeit terrorism is difficult to be defeated by attempting to stamp out the ramification of religious influence, acts of terrorism can be reduced through the Internet. To conclude, I believe that terrorism must be tackled not only from the aspect of injustice and poverty but also the religious aspect. Although terrorism cannot be totally defeated we can reduce the acts of terrorism by holistically solving problems such as injustice, poverty and the spread of extremist views through religious influences.