Extremist Rehabilitation and Disengagement in Saudi Arabia

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Overview

• Background on the current security situation
• ‘Soft’ security measures
• PRAC Strategy
• Counseling Program: Rehabilitation and reintegration
‘Soft’ counter-terrorism measures

[Image: We all say NO TO TERRORISM]

Photo: Atlantic Monthly
Photo: Jane’s Information Group
Advisory Committee Structure

Ministry of Interior

HRH Prince
Nayef bin Abdul
Aziz

Advisory Committee

HRH Prince
Muhammad bin
Nayef

Dr Abdulrahman
al-Hadlaq

Religious
Subcommittee

Psychological and
Social
Subcommittee

Security
Subcommittee

Media
Subcommittee
Religious Subcommittee

Advisory Committee

Religious Subcommittee

~150 clerics and university professors

Not Ministry of Interior or police!

Two hour sessions

Long study sessions
Psychological and Social Subcommittee

Advisory Committee

Psychological and Social Subcommittee

~50 members

26 researchers and assistants

Evaluate subject social needs

Psychological testing

Conduct research

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Demography of Program Participants: 1st Group

- Young (20s)
- Large families (7-15 siblings)
- From major cities
- 1/3 (~200) engaged in jihadi abroad: Afghanistan, Somalia, Chechnya
- Mothers & Fathers have low education
- Fathers lower/middle class
- Economically from low & middle class
  - Income correlation with parents
- Few high & middle class
- Radicalized through books, tapes, video, web
  - Most popular: Abu Muhammed al-Maqdisi: *Clear Evidence of the Infidel Nature of Saudi State*
- Not religious education
- Most were students, some had jobs
- Very few in ‘high employment’
- Very few in religious jobs, *mutawwa* or imam
- Criminal background
  - 25% criminal records
  - 13% drug offenses

Source: Ministry of Interior, Advisory Committee interviews; author’s field research in Saudi Arabia, 2007-2008
Demography of Program Participants: 2\textsuperscript{nd} Group

- 20\%: orphans
- 13.2\%: driving offenses
- 7.5\%: fired from employment
  - Greater private sector employment
  - Average income, \( \sim 1\text{-}3,000 \text{ SAR/month} \) (~$266-$800)
- 35\%: family problems
- 26\%: polygamous fathers
- 50\%: father over 50 years old
- 10\%: non-practicing Muslim
  - No mosque, no praying
- Violent criminal records

Source: \textit{Ministry of Interior, Advisory Committee interviews; author's field research in Saudi Arabia, 2007-2008}
Inspiration

1st Group: Theorists

- bin Laden
- al-Uqla
- al-Khodeir
- al-Ulwan
- Azzam
- al-Hawali
- al-Fahd

2nd Group: Leaders

- bin Laden
- Miqrin
- al-Zawahiri
- al-Aufi
- al-Zarqawi
- al-Ayeri
Sources of Motivation

1st Group
- Sympathies
- Audio tapes
- Video tapes
- Jihadi awakening
- Friends

2nd Group
- Expel the US
- Revenge against the security services
- Revenge against the US/UK
- Iraq
- Gain training and experience
Radicalization Drivers

1. Tapes
2. Books
3. *Juma* prayers
4. Shaykhs
5. Friends
6. Lectures
7. Islamist magazines
8. Media
9. Islamic institutions
10. Internet
11. Brochures
12. Trends and currents within the Islamist movement
Recruitment Targets

- Confusion
- Low knowledge of Islam
- Recently repentant
- Thirst for spiritual knowledge
- Dedication to Islam
- Spiritual concern
- Desperation
- Naiveté
- Physical needs
Methods of recruitment

• Single narrative (28%)
• Trap and scare (22%)
• Deception, Jihad in Iraq (11%)
• Elimination of sins
• Access to heaven
• Not religious, other reasons
  ▪ money
Radicalization Process

Interest $\rightarrow$ Radicalization $\rightarrow$ Recruitment

Interest $\rightarrow$ Recruited $\rightarrow$ Radicalized

Non-practicing $\rightarrow$ Recruited $\rightarrow$ Radicalized
Security Subcommittee

Advisory Committee

Security Subcommittee

Ministry of Interior

Security evaluations

Recommendations

Post-release follow-ups

Post-release advice
Media Subcommittee

Advisory Committee

Media Subcommittee

New specialist in Islamist media

Collaboration with Sakinah Campaign

Production

Media work

Outreach

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For more information, see Saudi Arabia’s “Soft” Counterterrorism Policy: Prevention, Rehabilitation, and Aftercare, Carnegie Paper 97 (September 2008)