



**SMA CENTCOM**  
**Panel Discussion**  
***Radicalization (Part II)***

*From the SMA Study in Support of USCENTCOM:*

*Assessment of Strategic Implications of Population Dynamics in the  
Central Region*

**17 March 2019**  
**1300-1430 ET**

# Tab B Question 2

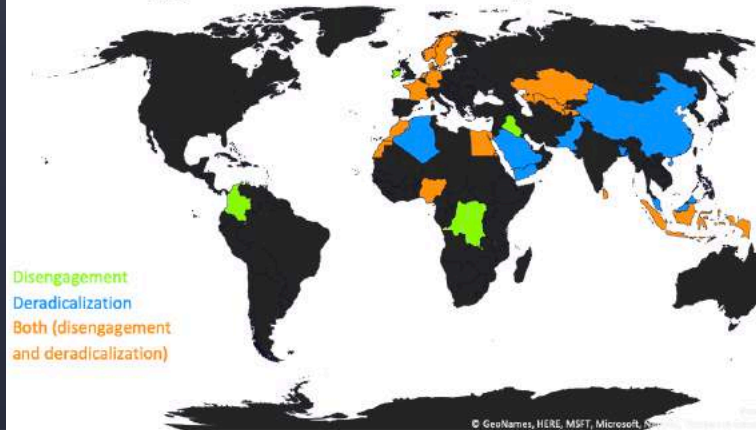
[B2] Are there examples of successful deradicalization in history that we can draw lessons from?

## Literature Review

Targeted literature review of both 1) historical disengagement and deradicalization programs and 2) assessments and evaluations of such programs

## Case Study Analysis

High-level case study analysis of 30 disengagement and deradicalization programs of the past and present



## SME Elicitation

6 expert interviews/elicitations:

Basma Alloush  
Dr. Mia Bloom  
Dr. Arie Kruglanski  
Dr. Sarah Marsden  
Dr. Fathali Moghaddam  
Dr. Siobhan O'Neil

[B2] Are there examples of successful deradicalization in history that we can draw lessons from?

## Important to look at both “disengagement” (changing behavior) and “deradicalization” (changing attitudes)

Disengagement stresses behavioral change where acts of violence and extremism are left behind; deradicalization stresses attitudinal and psychological change, where attempts are made to change the mindset, sympathies, and attitudes of an individual.

Our knowledge and understanding of disengagement processes may be more realistic and practical than that of deradicalization processes. Changing behavior is more realistic than changing attitudes. It is also the more immediate task for reducing conflict and violence.

## Measuring “successful” deradicalization is challenging

Accurately measuring attitudinal and psychological changes is difficult.

Disengagement and deradicalization programs rarely have established criteria for evaluating success of various initiatives. Even when they do, such criteria are often difficult to verify (due to insufficient data, secrecy surrounding the programs, etc.).

Low recidivism rates are sometimes cited as a measure of perceived success; however, issues with data availability and sufficiency make accurately measuring recidivism difficult. Perhaps more importantly, there is little consensus as to whether recidivism rates are even the most appropriate measure for evaluating the success of disengagement and deradicalization programs.



# Common Characteristics of “Successful” Deradicalization Programs of the Past

[B2] Are there examples of successful deradicalization in history that we can draw lessons from?

**There is no “one size fits all” approach to disengagement and deradicalization.  
Programs should be tailored to the specific environments and individuals/groups of interest.**

**However, there appear to be several common characteristics of programs that have demonstrated some levels of success:**

- **Creating a sense of hope and purpose.** Providing individuals with activities and opportunities that stimulate feelings of hope and purpose. In some cases, this can be accomplished through providing educational or training opportunities, economic or employment opportunities, mentorship, counseling, or other related initiatives.
- **Building a sense of community.** Creating a sense of community and providing support networks. In some cases, this can mean mobilizing parents and creating parental network groups, particularly in support of younger individuals. In others, it can mean providing alternative friendship networks, exposure to new communities, or mentorship opportunities.
- **Providing individual attention and regimented daily schedules.** Providing close, individual attention, facilitating one-on-one relationships, and ensuring that individuals are kept busy with regimented daily schedules
- **Ensuring sustainable, long-term commitments (i.e., after-care).** Providing after-care and support for individuals beyond the program. This can include a host of initiatives, including ensuring economic or employment opportunities, community engagement and outreach, mentorship, counseling, and other related activities focused on ensuring the sustained disengagement and deradicalization of an individual.



# NSI Reachback: Common Characteristics of “Successful” Deradicalization Programs of the Past

[B2] Are there examples of successful deradicalization in history that we can draw lessons from?

## **Research Team:**

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Sarah Canna

Jeff Day

## **For access to the full report:**

<https://nsiteam.com/common-characteristics-of-successful-deradicalization-programs-of-the-past/>

# **Deradicalization in history and psychology: A selective review of the literature**

**Peter Suedfeld, Lindsay Grunert and Bradford H. Morrison  
The University of British Columbia**





Literature review of psychological theory and research on deradicalization; 100+ sources considered.

### Lessons learned

1. The importance of defining disengagement and deradicalization.
2. Unbiased definition and empirical measurement of success.
3. The need to incorporate relevant **cultural** and **social** factors in analysis and planning.
4. The need to pay attention to the cognitive processes of radicalized individuals and of participants of deradicalization programs.





B2: Are there examples of successful de-radicalization in history that we can draw lessons from?

### Historical Cases

Kelman’s three processes of social influence (1961): compliance, identification, internalization

Using Incapacitation as a Venue for Re-education: **Northern Ireland**

From Disengagement to Reintegration: **Saudi Arabia**

Political Change through Identification: **Tunisia**

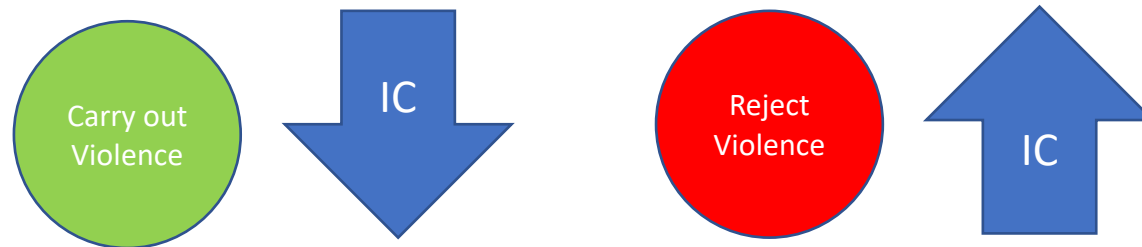
Internalization via Cognitive Change: **Cambridge**





## The Importance of Cognitive Complexity

Our own study of the orientations of activists, militants and terrorist groups showed that on average, lower integrative complexity and higher power motivation imagery were associated with a group's acceptance of, support for, and participation in, violent acts (Suedfeld et al., 2013)



- IC for assessment and prevention
- Programs that utilize IC already exist.
- Easier to change content, but the goal of the Cambridge team has been attempts to change from dogmatism to open-mindedness.

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*“While goal direction is enabled through the intellectual abilities, successful deradicalization is also based on the ability to take multiple conflicting perspectives into account, assessing factors that are common as well as those that are different, finding links and integrations between these differing views, without feeling threatened or sparked to react in violent or aggressive ways (eg. higher IC, integrative complexity).”*  
Peracha, Khan, and Savage (2016)  
*Sabaoon: Educational methods successfully countering and preventing violent extremism*

## B2. Are there examples of successful de-radicalization in history that we can draw lessons from, e.g. denazification\*?

### *Denazification in Germany Lessons for de-radicalization in the CENTCOM AOR?*



#### Principal Findings:

- Denazification was a **generational** process (25 – 30 years).
- Inter-allied differences prevented a common process.
- East-West ideological conflict affected denazification's success.
- Occupying powers required former party members' expertise.
- FRG and GDR required former party members' expertise.
- Domestic German "buy-in" was critical to any possible success.
- Robust civil institutions (e.g. legislatures, courts, schools) were also essential to any possible success.
- Western democracies "soft power" influence and European integration contributed to any success achieved over the long term.

#### Historical Context, Technical Approach, Principal Research Question:

- Extirpating National Socialism and establishing a functioning postwar political order constituted important dual objectives of the Allied Powers in the aftermath of the Second World War.
- Drawing upon available research, the analysis examines efforts at denazification in the four Allied Zones of Occupation between 1945 and 1955 and attempts to identify 1.) which policies worked; 2.) which did not; and 3.) why those policies succeeded or failed.
- Throughout, attention has been paid to larger international concerns that may have affected the Allies' respective efforts at denazification, as well as the degree to which emergent German political entities may have leveraged those concerns into the stated policy's amelioration.
- ***Are there applicable lessons for the CENTCOM AOR?***

#### **Wild Cards for Islamist influence in the CENTCOM AOR:**

- **(Neo-) Nazi/fascist ideology persists (AfD, etc.). Same for Islamist thought in the AOR in the long term?**
- **Is social media's countervailing influence capable of preventing an idea's extirpation in democratic societies?**
- **Is CENTCOM's AOR too culturally/religiously different for Western democracies' "soft power" to have the effects it eventually had in Germany?**

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# Tab B Question 3

# Tab B3. Where does ownership of this problem reside - internationally, interagency? What is the military's role? What would be the most effective voice to promote de-radicalization?

## Post-Brexit EU2 + 1 and UN vs a US-led Coalition of the Willing



### Principal Findings:

- Historically conditioned attitudes in the EU2 + 1 and GS-ECE complicate effective and rapid responses, whether national or collective, to Popular Radicalization and Mass Migration (PRMM).
- EU2 + 1 and GS-ECE will continue to stress the importance of an international rules-based, and preferably UN-led/NGO, effort to mitigate PRMM insofar as it threatens Europe directly.
- EU2 + 1 and GS-ECE participation in a US-led “coalition of the willing” to mitigate PRMM is unlikely. Based on events since 1991, however, exceptions may be found in the UK, France, and Poland.
- Beyond essentially token elements/SOF/ISR, large-scale German military participation outside the Sahel and South Sudan to mitigate PRMM is deemed unlikely for domestic German reasons.

### Methodology and Principal Research Question:

- The analysis undertook a comparative, open-source examination of civilian and, as far as possible, military postures assumed by the EU2 + 1 States (Germany, France, and the UK) regarding radicalization; the perceived domestic threat posed to the EU2 + 1 (and other European) States by conflict-induced mass migration; and Great Power geostrategic competition in MENA.
- The work’s geographical scope was determined by current competition of the Great Powers in MENA; Saudi vs. Iranian conflict; and EU2 + 1 concerns over the JCPOA’s future.
- **What factors facilitate, or militate against, EU2 + 1 (and GS-ECE) States’ active participation in CENTCOM de-radicalization efforts?**

### Implications for MENA in the CENTCOM AOR:

- **Barring major “black swan” events that would alter socio-political opinion in the EU2 + 1 and GS-ECE, the analysis suggests strongly that CENTCOM (therefore the United States) will have to shoulder the lion’s share of the international effort in this regard unless further strategic openings for Russia and China in MENA are judged to be acceptable outcomes.**

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13 March 2020



B3:

# Responsibility for Displaced Civilians and Effective Voices for Preventing Radicalization





## B3: Who is responsible?



### Ultimate responsibility. Key factors include:

- Administrative conditions (freedom of movement, right to work)
- Integration
- Shelter
- Camp security, avoiding incursion
- Economic conditions (jobs, markets, etc.)
- Programs for youth



- Registration
- Assist with infrastructure
- Assist with provision of services
- Assist with settlement, integration, or repatriation



- Protection/removal from conflict zones
- Assist with relocation
- *With authorization and funding:*
  - Assist with development of camp infrastructure, assist with security



# Local Responsibilities for Limiting Radicalization

- Provide shelter and basic services for displaced civilians
- Provide security and policing of camps and surrounding areas (including means of providing a voice in resolving grievances)
- Prevent incursion, as well as political and militant recruitment within camps
- Set fair and equitable administrative and legal policies relating to freedom of movement and the ability to work
- Optimize economic conditions, opportunities, and resilience (for the local population as well as displaced civilians)
- Manage conditions, plans, and opportunities for youth





## B3: Most Effective Voice in Preventing Radicalization



Voice must be seen as **credible, knowledgeable, and relatable**, and as much as possible, should be from **same ethnic and religious background**.



A key component is religious re-education/clarification. **Local clerics who have some knowledge of likely VEO narratives and sufficient training to debate with examples** can be very effective.



Focusing solely on religion will be insufficient. Credible voices must also be found to address **general education, vocational training, and psychological counseling**. In each case, local or similar background is better. **Minimal direct involvement from US forces** will help “voices” to be viewed as maintaining a positioning of neutrality.



For youth, the most effective voices are often **parents**. Providing parents with proper tools and training can provide a credible voice that can help on an ongoing and less formal basis.

# Considerations

- UNHCR funding shortfalls
- Strained local resources
- Resentment outside, psychological trauma inside
- Security
- Deradicalization sources viewed as having neutrality
  - Implies limited or background role for US forces
- Authorities
- Dignity, economic opportunity, and the superordinate group

