THE CARTER CENTER

Overview of Daesh's Online Recruitment Propaganda Magazine, Dabiq

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Executive Summary

The successful recruitment strategies of the self-proclaimed Islamic State of Iraq and Syria[2] (Daesh) has become a serious challenge for the international community. Daesh employs a multifaceted online media strategy to recruit targeted demographics. The Carter Center (TCC) is y qtmkpi "vq"eqwpvgt"Fcguj øu"tgetwkvo gpv"r tqr ci cpf c"ghhqtvu"d{ "wpf gtvcmkpi "kp-depth analysis of yj ku'i tqwr øu'r tkpt and social media publications. This will be followed by a series of workshops in partnership with religious and local community leaders. TCC has developed a detailed coding o gyj qf qmqi { "cmqy kpi "hqt"uvtwevwtgf "uwf { "qh"gcej "kpf kxkf wcn"kuuwg"qh"Fcguj øu"qpnine magazine, *Dabiq*. All 15 issues of *Dabiq* have been examined, categorizing 31 separate variables broken

The Beginnings of *Dabiq*:

Since the establishment of the *Khilafah* on June 29th."4236."Fcguj øu'cn-Hayat Media Center has published an online magazine, entitled *Dabiq*. Producing an online magazine is not a novel approach to recruitment; Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) revolutionized English language messaging with its print media source. Daesh has learned from the media strategies of its predecessors and expanded upon them, more effectively using online social media - the retweets and postings of its supporters to spread its message.

Religious apocalyptic symbolism plays a prominent role in Daesh recruitment. *Dabiq* is the name of a village located in Northwest Syria, an intentional reference to Islamic religious symbolism. According to a *hadith*[3], an apocalyptic battle will take place in Dabiq between Muslims and their enemies before the ultimate defeat of the Romans at Constantinople. [4] As an important geographical site for Daesh, we can assume the group is goading the International Coalition toward this location for an apocalyptic battle.[5]

Ncvgt" vkwgu" j cxg" gxqnxgf " vq" hqewu" qp" Fcguj øu" i qcn" vq" ngi kvko k|g" cpf " lwutify its draconian interpretation of the law. This includes articles such as *Shari'ah Alone Will Rule Africa* and *From the Battle of Al-Ahzab to the War of Coalitions* (Issues 7 and 11).

At the 69th

countering the tweets of Daesh supporters with opposing hashtags (#JordanianPilot, #WeAreAllMoaz). This opposing Twitter campaign saw over 200,000 tweets prior to the execution of al-Kasasbeh. It is not clear if Daesh leadership initiated the Twitter campaign, or if the group ultimately chose an execution style based on follower suggestions. What is clear in the direct exchange of the rival social media campaigns is that a Middle Eastern prince responded to a terrorist organization indirectly giving it legitimacy.

Perhaps the most significant feature of *Dabiq* is the section *In the Words of the Enemy.* Since its first issue, this crowded column has served home to words from Presidents, Prime Ministers, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, and Directors of the CIA, among many other leaders. World leaders, the international media, and think tanks provide Daesh with ample material to re-appropriate for its cause. In *The Return of Khilafah,* Daesh quotes Douglas Ollivant and Brian

Looking at *Dabiq* u''gxqnwkqp''j tqwi j ''s wcpk tative analysis, Graph A provides a clear association between Daesh-created media events, international coalition efforts, media coverage, and the titles of the Dabiq magazine. Daesh effectively creates geographically varying events to provoke international condemnations as well as gain exposure, and then re-appropriates this coverage in its magazine as proof of its political and military ascension. Following each *Dabiq* release, major international media coverage increases between 1 ó 8 full-page articles per source. In addition, individual Google online searches increase between 1 ó 160 times per day. This requires the use of a percentage scale, to show the depth of both media and citizen attention. An applicable example is: 1) American Journalist James Foley Beheaded; 2) U.S. Airstrikes in Raqqa, Syria; and, 3) Daesh release of *The Failed Crusade* [Issue 4]. Another association is: 1) Jordanian pilot Muath al-Kasasbeh burned; 2) U.S. authorization of military force (AUMF); and, 3) Daesh release of *From Hypocrisy to Apostasy: The Extinction of the Gray Zone* [Issue 7]. A final association is: 1) 21 Christian Egyptians bgj gcf gf ='4+'Dqmq''J ctco øu''pledge of allegiance to ISIS; and, 3) Daesh release of *Shari'ah Alone Will Rule Africa* [Issue 8]. This chain of events has become a cyclical trend, confirming Daesh rapid media response capabilities, and providing insight to Daesh leadership about how to pique or elicit western interests.

Feeding into the Daesh Narrative

The unequal coverage of Muslim deaths in the international media plays directly kpvq"Fcguj øu" online recruitment strategies. In retaliation for the November 13th Paris attacks claimed by Daesh, French President Francois Holland approved airstrikes on the city of al-Raqqah, de-facto capital of Daesh. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported these airstrikes hit the National Hospital, al-Nour mosque, and resulted in civilian causalities. While the commencement of the French offensive was given ample air time, the deaths of Syrians as a result of these airstrikes was under reported. With the exception of NewsWeek in the U.S., few major international media outlets reported on the immense fires in a refugee camp located near Calais. The fire left over 300 homeless and resulted in 100 deaths. In the days following, French police fired tear gas at and arrested refugees who were demanding justice. This lack of news coverage or concern for the lives of Muslims and refugees feeds into the Daesh narrative that sets believers against infidels or Muslims against crusaders. Soon after, eleven U.S governors and all Republican U.S presidential candidates made public statements refusing to accept Syrian refuges. Some changed their statements to allow only Christian refugees. Reactionary violence and fear mongering statements provide fuel to Daesh and its õws vs. themö narrative.[10]

Following the November 13th Rctku"cwvcemu."pgy u"jgcf nkpgu"tgcf "cu"hqnqy u<"Kcnkcp"Nkdgtøu" *Bastardi Islamici* (Islamic Bastards)*,* EPP øu"*The Paris Attacks: Understanding Islam*, and FOX P gy uø"*We're not Islamophobic, Mr. Obama, we just don't want to get blown up.* Muslim imams*,* scholars, and citizens swiftly responded, stating the Paris attacks were an affront on Islam in efforts to contain violent anti-Muslim reactions. The Irish Council of *Imams* r wdnken{"chhkto gf "õO wtf gt" is strictly forbidden in Islam ó vj g"o wtf gt"qh"qpg"ku"cu"gxkn"cu"nknkpi "cm"r gqr ngö[1] Secretary I gpgtcn"qh"vj g"O wunko "Eqwpeknqh"Dtkvckp"F t0"Uj wla"Uj chk"uvcvgf ."õVj gtg"ku"pqvj kpi "Kunco ke"cdqwv" such people and their actions are exknc"cpf "qwwukf g"vj g"dqwpf ctkgu"ug"d{"qwt"hckj .ö[2] According to the Center for American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), after November 13,[th] 27 reported incidents violent attacks, threats, and assaults against Muslims occurred in the United States in a period of just ten days. Of those 27 incidents, ten armed attacks occurred at local mosques, four assaults were on students on university property, five assaults or violent threats were made towards women

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[10] Upon fo7.97 Tm143pq0.0000U5rt4F0041137.30912 0 612 792 renBT/F2 12 Tf1 0 0 1 426.31 295.61 Tm0 g0 G[(,0.0000U5rt4F0041

and children.[13] The Southern Poverty Law Reports an increase in the number of hate groups in the U.S. for the second year in a row; the most dramatic growth was in anti-Muslim hate groups, which grew from just 35 in 2015 to 101 in 2016.[14] This anti-Muslim fervor, like military and policy responses, has fed directly into Daesh propaganda. In the words of Abul-Harith Ath-Thaghri, õChvgt"rkxkpi "vpf gt"vj g"r gtugewkqp"qh"vj g"etuucf gtu."qpg"eqwnf "rkxg"cp"Kunco ke"rkhg"y kj "uchgv{"cpf " security]kp"F cguj "vgttkvqt{_"*kuuwg"34+0

Conclusion

The best strategy to address the Daesh threat cannot be limited to the military front alone, it must address root causes, as well as ideological and media sttcvgi kgu0"F cguj øu"o gf kc"uvtcvgi { and recruitment continue to spread to all corners of the world in conjunction with the rise of Islao qr j qdkc0D{ "vpf gtuvcpf kpi "F cdks øu"tqng"cpf "F cguj øu strategic use of local and western media to its advantage, getting a step ahead of this violent organization becomes