From: (b) (6)
To: (b) (6)
Subject: FW: Learning from the UK's CVE Program
Date: Friday, October 23, 2015 2:36:12 AM

From: MPAC DC News & Views
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 9:49:10 AM
To: (b) (6)
Subject: Learning from the UK's CVE Program

Learning from the UK's CVE Program

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David Cameron released this week his plan to counter violent extremism (CVE) in the UK. The plan calls for over $7 million to be given to communities to help combat extremism, which mirrors the UK's long-discredited Prevent program.The government would also have the ability to shut down mosques that are deemed "extreme," along with banning extremists from posting on to social media.

UK CVE programs should be a cautionary tale for the United States when engaging in countering violent extremism.

Any program that provides money to communities based on their government-

approved ideologies is problematic and unconstitutional. The Prevent program provided money to Muslim institutions that were deemed theologically worthy, which ended up fracturing the community. In the US, our separation of church and state doctrine prevents us from choosing which mosques have "good Muslims" and which ones have "bad Muslims".

Further, government CVE programs run the risk of intrusion in not only the mosque, but our homes. Cameron said that extremism must be tackled at the university level and at "the kitchen table." Of course, in the United States such programs that have the government involved in educating citizens on a particular strand of theology or ideology in the comforts of their home would be strictly unconstitutional.

Government-led CVE programs in practice end up with a focus on one group: Muslims. It may be stated that it applies to everyone, and officials may even emphatically state that Muslims are not the target, yet the actions are primarily or exclusively directed toward the Muslim community. For example, in San Francisco, it was shown that the FBI's outreach program to mosques was a guise for intelligence gathering.

Singling out a community because of a perceived notion that they are more susceptible for extremism alienates the very community you want to take the lead on extremism. This was even seen with the UK plan, with Cameron saying a case needed to be made for "British values." When a program is primarily focused on Muslims, to make the case for "British values" implies that Muslims have a problem with such values.

All of this points toward one conclusion: community-led CVE programs are the most effective and credible way to deal with extremism within communities. Imams, for example, are not hindered by government restrictions on being involved in theological arguments. Further, when it is community-led, there is credibility that the CVE programs are not fronts encouraging Muslims to spy on each other.

Here in the US, the American Muslim community acknowledges the huge impact that even one violent extremist has. The best way to counter it is not with a law-enforcement-centric CVE program, but with empowering local leaders to tackle these issues on their own.

[Contact: Saif Inam, Policy Analyst, (202) 547-7701, saif@mpac.org]

From: (b) (6)
To: (b)
Subject: FW: Learning from the UK's CVE Program
Date: Friday, October 23, 2015 6:50:19 AM

From: MPAC DC News & Views
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 9:49:10 AM
To: (b) (6)
Subject: Learning from the UK's CVE Program

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