

What if we think prevention, instead of reaction?

In Australia, as we see the appointment of a specialist Federal Government official to ensure consistency and efficacy in counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism activities, once again the word “prevention” comes to the surface. Prevention is the cornerstone to Serenidad Consulting®’s trademarked products and services, as are Excellence, Great Leadership and Positive Personal Power.

We know terrorism thrives where fear abounds. We know that when terrorist groups feel they are losing their positional power, they resort to underhanded tactics that are usually based on the element of surprise and an intent for catastrophic consequences. As many would realize, risk managing acts of terror therefore becomes synonymous with the strategic question ‘what don’t we know?’ If we know the threat(s) and can assess associated risks, we are best placed to eliminate or, if not, at least mitigate those risks. In 2015 the world’s friendly nations know most of the threats and if not known, can at least surmise the likely risks associated with any potential act of terror. But, is that going to stop what is fast becoming a reactive, not proactive, approach? Is that going to stop children and adults from radicalizing and joining the terror effort?

The worst risk management scenario is when we ignore known threats in the hope that they will go away on their own. Over centuries, in fact millennia, we have (more and more) seen ‘violence’ become the agent of choice for communication and change. What Serenidad Consulting® is bringing to the attention of governments around the globe is that the root cause of violence lies deeper in society. It lies in the education systems that deflect or abjectly ignore their accountabilities to communicate and consult with, influence and help parents to focus the minds of the young on positive relationships, tolerance and understanding. It lies in parents blatantly ignoring their responsibility and accountability to raise their children as good citizens who build and nurture, not destroy, human-to-human relationships. It lies in the governments who refuse (or rather ignore) the necessity for preventative measures to become the foundation for sustainable change.

Many of you will know the health mantra “prevention is better than cure”. No differently, this mantra should be applied to the goal of eliminating terrorism. Instead of continuing to rely on Band-Aid, short-term and confrontation-based responses, and not seriously looking at the apparent lack of a return-on-investment that war creates, humanity can learn to be proactive in its approach. When communities can see terrorists for the bullies that they are; hold strong and says “no” in the face of threats; and embed laws and government-supported systems that aim to really strengthen and build unwavering resilience in communities, then we will start to see real, positive change.

As a terrorist or terror group starts to lose its positional power, what does it do? It seeks greater control. Bullies don’t like to be challenged. They like to have complete

control over their so-called ‘victims’. They gain power by shouting louder, escalating the violence each time, and being unpredictable. When we stand up to bullies, and facilitate their own self-destruction by being strategic in our responses, we disempower them completely and enduringly.

As a thought leader on peace and strong advocate for prevention-based strategies, Serenidad Consulting®’s Principal leaves this to ponder: “What if we think prevention, instead of reaction?”

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