**MY Post**

In the past decade, the power of social media has changed the way in which we perceive information that is shared on various social networking sites. At the onset of social media, people were not aware of the impacts that they could have. Social media has been used to change the course of human events (Omand). A major event such as the Arab Spring would have failed without the presence of social media among the people. Social media is powerful since it allows people to easily share information thereby creating a platform through which people can discuss some of the things that affect them. One of the major impacts that has been observed in the recent past is how social media has affected the elections in the United States, and across the world.

Social media has changed the way in which people perceive politics and how different political courses and movements are undertaken. The election of President Obama in 2008 and his subsequent re-election in 2012 were highly dependent on social media. Social media was used to organize people and campaign for Obama. Social media is also a relatively cheaper platform for campaigning and has a wider reach. Users only need to have an internet connection to access some of the information that is needed for them to support their favorite candidate. Social media has also been widely used for the advocacy of rights of special groups such as women and the LGBT community. Such advocacy could not have been possible without the presence of social media.

Apart from the Arab Spring, there are several examples of benefits that are attributable to social network intelligence as seen in the modern world. An example being Cyber intelligence techniques which can be used to stop imminent terror attacks to many nations across the world. In the last decade, there have been many terror attacks that have been observed in major cities across the world such as Paris, Nice, Boston, and Manchester. In each of these terror attacks, many lives have been lost and property damaged. Cyber intelligence techniques can help track down some of the terrorists before an attack can be carried out (Ivan, Iov, Lutai, Raluca, & Grad). This is mainly through monitoring of certain accounts and profiles on social media that are perceived to support these terror attacks.

On many occasions, some terrorists post pictures of their plans and impeding attacks before they happen. However, law enforcement agencies are very slow to react. Through Cyber intelligence techniques, some of the posts can be flagged with ease and this means that law enforcement agencies can stop these attacks before they happen. These technologies do this by filtering information and using certain key words to flag content that is shared on these platforms. Once any content is perceived to contain words and phrases that support terror activities, law enforcement officers can be informed so that they can deal with those suspected to have terrorists ties on social networking sites.

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Ivan, Adrian, Claudia Iov, Raluca Lutai, Raluca, and Marius Grad. “Social Media Intelligence:

Opportunities and Limitations,” CES Working Papers 7, no. 2a (2015), 505-510.

Omand, David, “Introducing Social Media Intelligence (SOCMINT),” Intelligence and National

Security 27, No. 6, pp. 801? 823.

**Response to MY post**

Good evening Olubode:

You present a very insightful post on how SOCMINT can be used to thwart terrorist plots. After reading your initial post, I got curious about the most recent initiative being done with cyber to support counter-terrorism. One of the most notable initiatives that I found was an intent to lessen the spread of messages immediately following a terrorist attack. A common trend of terrorist and the main goal of their attacks is to instill fear and garner an extreme reaction from the public immediately following the attack. Professor Chermak made the following observations on how this information ripple effect is a fissure in our current security posture:

"Terrorist violence, as the report explained, is intended to elicit intense and vivid reactions. Thus, by neglecting how to manage post-event situations is a current weak point in many governmental counter-terrorism frameworks. The increasing volume of communication channels allows different groups to voice alternative interpretations of the same event, causing multiple narratives and accounts circulating in the post-event environment." (Chermak, 2018)

**Based on that premise, what do you think would be a good strategy to stem the flow of "multiple narratives" in the aftermath of a terrorist attack? Do you think the information on such attacks should be limited or censored from the internet and delayed to the public using cyber effects?**

A tough question but one that perhaps our societies should start asking themselves in situations such as terrorist broadcasting their shooting sprees live on Facebook. Thanks for your post, and I hope this class continues to be a great learning experience for you as it has been for me — cheers and best in the class.

References:

Chermak, Steven. 2018. "USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO WEAKEN WRATH OF TERRORIST ATTACKS" Accessed June 12, 2019. https://msutoday.msu.edu/news/2018/using-social-media-to-weaken-wrath-of-terrorist-attacks/