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## INTERPRETATION OF DERADICALIZATION POLEMIC IN INDONESIA

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# JOURNAL OF TERRORISM STUDIES

## INTERPRETATION OF DERADICALIZATION POLEMIC IN INDONESIA

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### **Abstract**

The development of terrorism acts in parts of the world, creating geopolitical dynamics globally. The act of terrorism is clearly a threat that cannot be denied by various countries in the world. In addressing this, countries around the world are vying for an answer to solve the problem, including in Indonesia. One of the programs that is felt to be necessary is the deradicalization program against terrorism convicts. But it turns out that in the dynamics of its implementation reaps many pros and cons. This paper presents a systematic and logical argument in understanding the polemics that occur regarding the implementation of deradicalization in Indonesia. Thus, creating recommendations that can be an alternative, in order to deal with terrorism convicts in Indonesia.

**Keywords: Deradicalization, Terrorism**

### **TRODUCTION**

The rapid development of terrorism in parts of the world, causing changes in global geopolitical dynamics, thus undergoing a partial shift (Qodir, 2014). Throughout

history, terrorism has occurred in all religions in the world. Many questions then arise in society: how can a person be able to viciously kill others without feeling guilty and how a perpetrator of terrorism can consider himself an army

of God (Purwawidada, 2014). With so many acts of terrorism taking place, Professor Jayantanuj Bandyopadhyay explains that international terrorism is such a form of asymmetric warfare that the boundaries of terrorism become irrelevant to identify and target terrorists, where many large terrorist groups can obtain chemical and biological weapons (Shreyasi, 2014).

In the context of terrorism, the global environment is evolving towards extremism of thought from various circles, namely the west, Jews/ Israelis and groups of Muslims. This group of Muslims who gave rise to the perpetrators of global terror is an entity that claims to be oriented towards purification of tawhid (Monotheism) (Hendropriyono, 2009).

Acts of terrorism have expanded their networks to different parts of the world, inevitably, that the main component of the definition of terrorism boils down to the fact that terrorism is an instrument of the 'Political Project' or religion where perpetrators continue to seek support by committing a series of demonstrative acts of public violence, followed by various threats in order to suppress,

intimidate and/or force violence on targets or targets(J. Jahroni, 2016).

Terrorism continues to be a major threat to international peace and security thus undermining the values of peace. Preventing this threat from developing is much more difficult given the complex and evolving nature of terrorist activity where motivation, financing, attack methods and target choices are constantly changing, terrorist acts often violate state boundaries; an act of terrorism may involve activities and actors from different countries (UNODC, 2020).

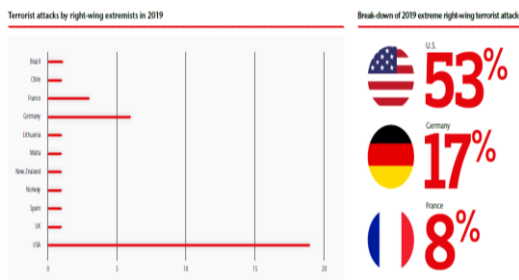
But the rise of terrorism movements in the world is inseparable from the geopolitical fight of major countries in the Middle East in the fight for power over resources in middle eastern countries. The rise of the ISIS organization in the middle east is also a polemic. According to Payani (2016) many experts say that ISIS is neither the result nor part of the old jihadi organization nor the evolution of the jihadi movement. But it is the spread of ISIS that has led to pro-ISIS groups in other countries supporting and pledging allegiance to ISIS.

Further explained by Mark Juergensmeyer, in the current climate of Muslim political violence, Americans and Europeans consider that Islam is part of the problem. The implication from this point of view is a presumption that all Muslims have supported terrorism. Islamic attachment in the phrase "Islamic terrorism" is inevitable, where the other side echoes the term jihad as if by all Muslims agree with the use of the military term of the unofficial extremist group (Juergensmeyer, 2017). But further explained by Juergensmeyer, that the assumption of his position on "Islam as a problem" in relation to politics is not true. Most traditional societies have a close bond between political leadership and religious authority, and religion often plays a role in underpinning the moral authority of public life (Juergensmeyer, 2017).

But the act of terrorism that occurred is not entirely in the name of Islam as echoed by America and Europe. As with the case of social terrorism in Nepal carried out by Marxist rebels, it has nothing to do with religion, religious ideology plays no significant role in such events, even as cases of conflict in poor countries such as in Somalia often have no trace of religious affiliations involved in the conflict. In contrast to the Balkan conflict, this conflict is indeed the political and religious aspects that play a role. Variables as diverse as social, economic, ethnic, religious, or political aspects overlap, intertwined and integrated (Damphouse, 2012).

If you look at G-20 countries such as Indonesia. The movement of terrorism groups in Indonesia today that moves massively and slowly by spreading its ideology through small cells makes this terrorist group difficult to detect, the emergence of small cells is more motivated by connective action because of the similarity of ideas (Affan, 2016). The most eye-catching act of terrorism was the attack by Al-Jemaah Al-Islamiyah, an Al-Qaeda

Pict. 1 Global Right-Wing Terrorist Attack in 2019



Source: AON Risk Maps 2020 (AON, 2020)

affiliated terror group operating in Southeast Asia that rocked Indonesia's tourism paradise in Bali on October 12, 2002, killing 202 people, the majority of whom were foreign nationals, many of whom claimed that the 2002 Bali bombings were 9/11 in Southeast Asia. (Kurniawati, 2012). The biggest impact of the bombings in 2000-2016 was the Bali Bombing I, and Bali is a tourist destination for the whole world, this is evidenced by the decrease in the number of foreign tourists to Indonesia in 2003 which was originally 1 million more to 900 thousand down by 22%. This is due to a travel warning issued by European countries due to the large number of foreign tourists who were victims of the Bali bombings in 2002(Widajatun & Ichسانی, 2019).

Then many more acts of terrorism masterminded by other terrorism groups such as the actions of bombs that occur in Indonesia such as at the Atrium Senen Jakarta Store, bomb blasting at the Jakarta Stock Exchange Building, detonation of fast food restaurant Mc Donald Makassar, bomb blasting at JW Marriot Hotel Jakarta, bomb blasting at the Philippine Embassy and near the Australian

Embassy, as well as several bomb blasts in conflict areas such as Poso, Aceh and Maluku (Junaid, 2013) and many more. As a result of the acts of terrorism that occurred in Indonesia, according to the Global Terrorism Index 2020 in the review of acts of terrorism and victims led Indonesia to rank 4th in the Asia-Pacific and ranked 37th out of the entire world accumulated from 2002 to 2019 (IEP, 2020).

According to Andi Widjajanto, the wave of violence in Indonesia occurred because Indonesia has a weak state structure. In a weak country, political policies are conditioned by political instability, a crisis of legitimacy, a weakness of national identity, malfunction of socio-political institutions, economic poverty and very vulnerable to external pressures (Wisesa, 2021).

But it should be noted that the roots of radicalism that are the source of terrorism have penetrated in various lines of society. Perpetrators of acts of terrorism were not only carried out by certain circles, even has penetrated to young people and academics, The arrest by the Special Detachment

(Densus-88 AT) of the Police Headquarters against five educated students from seventeen members of the Pepi Fernando terrorism group, three of whom were graduates of the State Islamic University (UIN) Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, showed that there has been a change in the cultural paradigm where scholars on Muslim campuses should be an example of being able to be non-fundamentalist but in fact instead recruit radical networks among scholars itself (Saifuddin, 2011).

The development of culture and community life today also shows quite alarming things. According to wahid foundation report in 2016, the members of Islamic Spiritual Organization (Rohis) of State High School in Indonesia showed that 60% of respondents are willing to carry out jihadi missions to countries ravaged by religious conflict (Nurish, 2019). The findings show how young people are becoming vulnerable groups who are victims of violent indoctrination in the name of religion. Surely this is a serious enough concern to be anticipated. Violent tendencies and intolerance have also pervaded our education

world. Research conducted by the Institute for Islamic Studies and Peace (LaKIP) released by Indonesian media (27/02/2011) showed specifically, that their research found that among junior high school religious teachers (21.1%) and high school religious teachers (25.8%) consider that Pancasila ideology in Indonesia is no longer suitable as the ideology of the state (Baedowi, 2013). This figure is very concerning and therefore our education authority must take serious steps in re-realizing the meaning of Pancasila as the basis of national and state life which in fact is very compound.

Of course, this polemic of radicalization is a challenge for government officials to overcome, One of the ways that the government does to apply counterterrorism to the growing problem of radicalization is to implement deradicalization programs. It should be understood that deradicalization programs are a challenge to find the best program as a model, applied by different methods from country to country in tackling growing radicalism. Where, basically deradicalization requires many approaches according to its

characteristics in understanding the process of radicalization that occurs and is experienced by certain individuals or groups (Walanda, 2020). So by understanding the polemic interpretation of deradicalization that occurred, can see that the deradicalization process that occurred today has not been able to run optimally. Therefore, an objective understanding is required in interpreting the deradicalization process that occurs, so that the deradicalization program can run effectively and efficiently.

## **METHODS OF RESEARCH**

This paper uses qualitative approach, According to Moleong (2017) in his book entitled *Qualitative Research Method*, that qualitative research is research that uses naturalistic approach to find and find understanding or understanding of phenomena in a background with special context.

The data processing techniques used come from the observation of secondary data sources taken from books, journals and internet websites

which are then drawn a conclusion and recommendations.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION Deradicalization Polemics in Indonesia**

Fundamentally, the understanding of deradicalization is a moderation of the thoughts or ideologies of terror perpetrators and individuals who have been radicalized, in other languages returning their radical thinking to a moderate ideology (Musyarrofah, 2018). The implementation of deradicalization in Indonesia is regulated by National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT). BNPT (2021), explained that the deradicalization program implemented was divided into two types, namely outside and inside the penitentiary.

Furthermore Fitriana (2016) explained. First, deradicalization programs outside the penitentiary for former terrorist inmates and families. This program is focused on the economic independence of the families of terrorist convicts carried out by the process of resiliation or reintegration, where the prevention aspect is expected so that former terrorist convicts do not

return to commit acts of terrorism. Second, deradicalization programs within correctional institutions. This program is focused on changes in the radical ideology of prisoners that are carried out through four stages, namely the stages of identification, rehabilitation, reeducation, and resocialization.

Furthermore, to be able to deradicalize in correctional institutions, the stage of re-education and rehabilitation becomes an important tool. Explained by Usman (2014), re-education carried out to terrorism convicts is done by providing enlightenment related to deviant doctrines that teach violence, so that terrorism convicts realize that suicide bombings are not jihad in religious views. Meanwhile, rehabilitation is done by doing 2 (two) activities, namely independence coaching and personality coaching. Self-reliance coaching is a coaching activity that is carried out independently to terrorism convicts by preparing skills and skills that are expected to be provision after leaving the penitentiary, while personality coaching is done by approaching in dialogue so that their

understanding can be straightened out to be able to accept various parties who are different from their understanding.(Usman, 2014).

It should be understood that there is a critical study of the deradicalization program offered by the Indonesian government reviewed from research conducted by RAND. RAND mentioned that Indonesia basically until 2010 did not have a deradicalization program in the sense that it is centralized, structured, coordinated with various state tools including not having good capacity, as it has in Malaysia and Singapore. So-called deradicalization programs are in fact only ad-hoc, only done by the police, and not programs conducted cross-sectoral. In fact, the funding of its activities is recognized by police officers in the counterterror police team is funds obtained from private sources or donors who in fact police relations from among businessmen. The so-called "deradicalization program" in Indonesia is limited to a cultural approach in terms of interactions between police and terrorist prisoners(Febriane & Mariamah, 2013). Mareta explained that this



causes deradicalization programs to become stagnant and gradually refuse to hold deradicalization programs (Widya, 2020)

In general, this program is widely criticized for being ineffective in changing the mindset of inmates to no longer commit terrorism crimes. Many cases of inmates who have been freed, re-repeat their actions by joining radical groups, or even become lone wolves (individual terror perpetrators). For example, Rofik Asharudin who during the fasting month (3/6/2019) then detonated a bomb near the Police Post in Kartasura Monument, Sukoharjo, Central Java (Indrawan & Aji, 2019). Another more obvious example, according to Zuhri (2017), in the Results of Social Network Analysis conducted by Adhe Bhakti mentioned that the perpetrators of the Thamrin and Samarinda Bombing in 2016, namely Sunakim and Juhanda, are examples of deradicalization failures in prison. Both became more radicalized and committed acts of terrorism again after being released from prison.

Next, the form of coaching of terrorism inmates is not much different from other inmates, this happens in

Kedung Pane Prison Semarang. But what distinguishes only the treatment of terrorism inmates, namely the placement of special blocks separated and restrictions on the movement space of terrorism inmates within the Correctional Institution (Febriyansah et al., 2017).

Some of the material presented in the deradicalization program that has been conducted only through seminars on Pancasila, family visits to persuade inmates, and also capital so that inmates can make efforts after his release. According to Sofyan Tsauri, a former terrorist convict who has undergone a deradicalization program since being caught in 2010, although he is grateful to have followed the program so well that he no longer becomes radicalized, but the implementation of deradicalization still needs to be criticized and improved. (Indrawan & Aji, 2019). Those things can happen, because so far the deradicalization program initiated has not been designed to be able to work integratively, comprehensively and systemically so that the deradicalization program is still difficult to measure. (Widya, 2020).

However, deradicalization programs are not fully criticized. The research conducted by the University of Indonesia Team gave amazing results. In 2011-2015 under the leadership of Prof Sarlito Sarwono Wirawan at the Center for Police Science Research (PRIK-UI), organized Da'wah and Economics in the empowerment program of former terrorism and its Network. The *Islah* or Restorative Justice method becomes a solution in Deradicalization. Overall *Islah* activities carried out between terrorism and victims have been successfully carried out. Based on observations during the implementation of *Islah* activities all former terrorists and victims seemed enthusiastic and listened seriously, no one moved to sit down. At the event, after the victims of terrorism finished speaking some participants expressed apologies and admitted their mistakes and were willing to help if needed. Furthermore, the perpetrators of terror came to the victims to shake hands and hug the victims. At the end of the discussion, the former terrorists and victims spoke informally. Laugh together and take pictures together. This shows that

former terrorists and victims have created an emotional connection (Priyanto et al., 2020).

Next, according to the Director of Prevention of the National Counterterrorism Agency, Brig. Gen. Pol Ahmad Nurwahid at the Terrorism Threat Webinar held by the University of Indonesia on Friday, January 15, 2020 at 13.00-15.00, explained that the handling of terrorism in Indonesia has not been handled properly because the handling of terrorism in Indonesia including Deradicalization, can not only be handled by BNPT and Densus 88 only, because its complexity requires the help of all elements of society.

The obstacles that arise in deradicalization programs in Indonesia are not only from the inmates terror as the subject of the program itself, but from external factors, such as lack of budget, inadequate prison facilities, including public perception of deradicalization programs that tend to still present resistance to the return of former terrorism convicts to the community after serving sentences in correctional institutions. Beyond the need for improvement in terms of

deradicalization material given to inmates, these external factors are sufficient to impede the effectiveness of deradicalization programs (Indrawan & Aji, 2019).

Academics and terrorism theorists have argued that deradicalization as an unrealistic act considering the substance to be changed is an ideology associated with religion. John Horgan, a U.S. researcher and terrorism expert, said that “... *that deradicalization may not be a realistic objective and the goal of terrorist rehabilitation programs should be of disengagement*” (Isnanto, 2018). Further explained by Isnanto (2018) stated that after interviewing several dozen former terrorists, none of them were completely deradicalized. They simply disconnect from his group and abandon his violent or disengaged acts.

Fundamentally, most candidates who will participate in deradicalization programs never think about change, but those think about disengagement, because they don't know how to do it despite fears of the consequences. (Boghani, 2016).

According to Parker (2013), It is important to understand that there is a fundamental difference between the concept of deradicalization and the concept of disengagement. For analytical purposes, deradicalization can be defined as a cognitive process of rejecting and discrediting ideological rationalization that supports the concepts of violent extremism and terrorism. Therefore, deradicalization is eded in as cognitive changes that occur due to modifications to an individual's belief system. In other words, once a terrorist is deradicalized, he or she should no longer believe in ideologies or justifications that use violence in promoting their political agenda or religious understanding. While the concept of disengagement is the process by which a person is separated either voluntarily or indirectly, either directly or indirectly. As Bjorgo and Horgan stated in 2009, the disengagement of individual involvement from terrorism should not imply deradicalization.

Furthermore, the concept of deradicalization program itself aims to change and renew terrorists or individuals who with extremist beliefs

are detained due to various underlying factors. The most successful approach to deradicalization is to repeat the process of individualized approaches that vary tailored to each terrorism convict, repetition in question is repetition of cultural religious education, and history, psychological counseling, mentoring, and treatment after release. Where, the purpose of the program tends to differ situationally. It is important to understand that the phrases 'deradicalization' and 'disengagement' are often used statusily, whereas in the intended purpose and context they differ fundamentally. Deradicalization contains the process of moderating one's beliefs, especially extremist ideologies. Deradicalization refers to the process of changing one's behavior, namely by refraining from violence and withdrawing from extremist organizations, without having to change their beliefs (Soto, 2020). So, these two things are different fundamentally.

David Webber, a psychologist at Virginia Commonwealth University and Arie Kruglanski, of the University of Maryland, argue that

deradicalization efforts may be able to successfully address "weaknesses" that occur significantly in a person. But it takes effort to be able to analyze the needs, narratives, and networks of the terror group, so as to direct the desire of the person to a more positive goal such as a job that has meaning or role in the community by means of therapy, education, and networking. If done well, this kind of approach can view former extremists as complex and have many fundamental views (Souris & Singh, 2018).

### **CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO DERADICALIZATION FAILURE**

Deradicalization program is a program that is considered to fail in dealing with terrorism crimes can be seen deradicalization program does not touch ideology on the object. Deradicalization programs undertaken by the government can only change radical behavior and cannot eliminate radical ideology. Deradicalization program judged to have failed with surabaya bomb attack and other terror acts that raise questions about the effectiveness of deradicalization program (Hartanto, 2019). Even

according to terrorism observer from the University of Indonesia Ali Abdullah Wibisono stated that only 30 percent of terrorist inmates who change after undergoing deradicalization program (Detik, 2019).

In 2017 there were 400 former members of terrorism groups in Indonesia who had not been touched by deradicalization programs. Former members of the terrorism group refused to participate in the deradicalization program because in the terrorism law is not regulated on the obligation of terrorism in participating in deradicalization programs (Afwan, 2017). Even in the rules of Indonesian Law No. 5 of 2018 on Combating Terrorism Crimes does not explicitly give an obligation to terrorist inmates to follow the deradicalization program, it is written only in article 43D paragraph 2, that deradicalization programs are carried out against suspects, defendants, convicts, inmates, ex-convicts of Terrorism, people or groups of people who have been exposed to radical terrorism (Indonesia Law No 5 of 2018, 2018). In the absence of coercion following the deradicalization program for inmates, this program

becomes a polemic for the public in general related to the success of deradicalization programs conducted.

According to the University of Indonesia's terrorism and social conflict study researcher, Solahudin, said that it is difficult to determine whether the deradicalization program is successful or failed. Because the program that was pioneered since 2002 does not have a database to base and has weaknesses in the target of the program (Wirawan, 2018). Furthermore, the counterterrorism strategy in Indonesia in the context of deradicalization is still blind in understanding gender relations, where there are gaps in the draft counterterrorism policy that have not included the gender dimension (Hanifah, 2016). So the program has the potential to fail to protect women as a group that is currently the target of recruitment and radicalization of terrorism groups (Lavinia, 2018).

## **TERRORISM-CAUSING FACTORS LINKED TO DERADICALIZATION**

More specifically, the factors that drive individuals or groups of people to become fanatical towards

religion include doctrines, interpretations or interpretations of scripture that are only understood in pieces, the influence of the sociocultural system of society driven by holders of religious authority, manipulative religious symbols, the politics of power in the name of religious ideals and the problem of sectarianism (Nurish, 2019). Other factors that can cause terrorism to continue to develop and become a unique phenomenon, such as the influence of state sponsors of terrorist groups, the strong influence of modern media, the development of sophisticated communication, domestic and international transportation, cooperation in groups, the development of suicide missions and sponsoring countries that carry out their actions for money (Nasution, 2017). But there is no denying that international conflicts, such as those in Afghanistan and Syria in political conflicts, give extremists the opportunity to transform their identity (Syauquillah, 2019).

Refers to the theory of the cause of terrorism put forward by the Club de Madrid (Naharong, 2014), then it can be said that the main or precondition of

religious terrorism is certain religious teachings embraced by the perpetrators of terror. These religious teachings are factors that prepare the arena for terrorism over a long period of time. While the cause of trigger (trigger causes or precipitants) religious terrorism are special events that occurred before the emergence of acts of terrorism. Even if it is explained more deeply that the root of the problem, Terrorism that arises in a country is caused by political dissatisfaction over groups that feel harmed. Therefore, terrorism is one way to fight such political dissatisfaction. In fact, in the form of some cases, a form of terrorism in a country in the form of separatism that wants an independent state (J. Jahroni, 2016). The purpose of terrorism depends on the motive whether it is based on ideology or politics or both, besides also economically motivated such as fighting for natural resources, fighting markets, defending colonialization or trade hegemony (Hendropriyono, 2009).

Thus, deradicalization program in Indonesia that targets groups that are considered "radical groups" only, does

not solve the problem of terrorism in Indonesia, even the issue of radicalism is now used for political purposes. As reported in Kompas media, according to former Head of Strategic Intelligence Agency (BAIS) TNI Laksamana Madya (Purn) Soleman Ponto said, there are only three issues that are played to gain power in Indonesia, namely nationalists, religions, and communists. He believes the issue is only to embrace radical groups in Indonesia to bring down political opponents. These radical groups are only used by the political elite to increase their power (Kuwardo, 2017).

Because, the use of the term radicalism is often criticized as inappropriate. The positive and progressive meaning of the term radical becomes deformed and even threatened to disappear (Perwitasari, 2019). According to the Large Dictionary of Indonesian Language (KBBI) Edition V issued by the Language Development and Development Body of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia in 2016, the word 'radical' means 'fundamentally (to the point of principle)'. Number two, radical is a political term meaning 'very

hard to demand change (law, government)'. Furthermore, radicals also mean 'advancing in thinking or acting' (Damarjati, 2019). Etymologically, radicals are derived from the Latin word radix/radici, meaning "root". In politics, the term "radical" refers to individuals, movements or parties that fight for fundamental or overall social or political change. Radical is not a negative term (Alamsyah, 2019).

Thus, it is necessary to review how exactly the factors that cause a person to become a terrorist, are associated with the application of deradicalization in Indonesia, so that the "Deradicalization" tool is not used to anathemate a person or group for political interests, but is used as a proper guidance tool in conducting Deradicalization programs.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**

By understanding the perspective of deradicalization in various glasses that occur in Indonesia, we can see the complexity of the dynamics of deradicalization reality that occurs. Thus, an objective view of

deradicalization understanding is created not only one-way, so that it is utilized by persons who are interested in undermining the unity and unity of the Indonesian nation.

Regarding the advice on the handling of terrorism in Indonesia, According to Yunanto et al., (2017) in deradicalization programs need to be created a counter-propaganda forum that explains the development of the situation, national and international laws governing the involvement of a civilian in international conflicts, in relation to the development of ideology and thought in prison, then the terrorist prisoners need to be given reading materials related to the dangers and losses inflicted by a citizen involved in armed conflicts abroad and the fatwas of scholars in can enlighten the proper implementation of jihad in the context of conflict. In addition, coordination measures and efforts between ministries and government agencies that have duties and functions in counterterrorism that are already running now need to be improved both in terms of prevention and crackdown.

Despite all these things, it is necessary to understand the global

nature to be able to interpret every problem related to the act of terrorism that occurred, so that it is not created deradicalization as if only as a tool that the ruler uses as a political tool. A coherent understanding will give us a deep understanding in looking at a problem that occurs in Indonesia. It is necessary for us to understand that the problem in Indonesia is the act of terrorism itself is not understood, because if a person only has an understanding and does not commit acts of terrorism then it cannot be categorized as a terrorist. So, to be able to solve the problem of radicalism or who is radicalized, the best solution is to build an education with national character in every element of society. Those education program will unconsciously build the character of the nation in accordance with the mandate of the 1945 constitution to all components of the nation, not used as a tool of political interests.

In addition, it is important to be able to understand that in some cases as described by the above experts, the polemic that occurs against these former terrorism inmates that what actually happens in changing the



concept of statehood of the perpetrators of terrorism is by disengagement or termination process. So the recommendation of the author is that in addition to a coherent deradicalization program conducted in general to terrorism inmates, there is also a need for a Disengagement program or termination of the former terrorism inmates. where these processes and programs of disengagement or disconnection can be classified and assessment and supervised by State Intelligence Agencies such as BIN and BAIS. So that the process of returning former terrorist convict to a national society can occur optimally and supervised by the State.

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