

January 2016

NEWSLETTER **TERRORISM**

E-Journal for CBRNE & CT First Responders

CBRNE



Sex Terrorism



Europe's Shame

Failing to Protect its Female Citizens



**PART
C**

'I started the Arab Spring. Now death is everywhere, and extremism blooming'

Source: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/tunisia/12054657/I-started-the-Arab-Spring.-Now-death-is-everywhere-and-extremism-blooming.html>



Tunisian municipal officer Faida Hamdy Photo: AFP

Dec 17 – It is hardly surprising that when Faida Hamdy wonders whether she is responsible for everything that happened after her moment of fame she is overwhelmed. Mrs Hamdy was the council inspector who, five years ago today confiscated the vegetable stall of a street vendor in her dusty town in central Tunisia. In despair, that young man set himself on fire in a protest outside the council offices. Within weeks, he was dead, dozens of young Arab men had copied him, riots had overthrown his president, and the Arab Spring was under way.



Demonstrators face Egyptian police forces in the streets leading to Tahrir Square. Photo: Julian Simmonds/ The Telegraph



As the world marks the anniversary, Syria and Iraq are in flames, Libya has broken down, and the twin evils of militant terror and repression stalk the region.

“Sometimes I wish I’d never done it,” Mrs Hamdy told The Telegraph, in her only interview to mark the occasion.

Hers is a voice that has been rarely heard: the family of the young man, Mohammed Bouazizi, became unwilling celebrities in the weeks after his lingering death, but a nervous regime arrested Mrs Hamdy when the protests began.

By the time she was acquitted of all charges and released, President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali had fallen, and media attention was focused on Egypt, Libya and Syria.

“I feel responsible for everything,” she went on. Her voice was shaky as she spoke of the traumatic consequences, five years that have transformed the Middle East but seemingly changed very little in poor, provincial towns like Sidi Bouzeid.

“Sometimes, I blame myself and say it is all because of me. I made history since I was the one who was there and my action contributed to it but look at us now. Meanwhile, Tunisians are suffering as always.”

Mohammed Bouazizi’s death triggered some deep nerve in the Arab world. Many myths were told about his own story and that of Mrs Hamdy, as there were about the nature of subsequent uprisings and downfalls, but there remains a basic truth underlying his experience and that of many others.



Demonstrators turn over a burned out car after reclaiming the side streets near Tahrir Square Photo: Julian Simmonds/The Telegraph

Corruption, stifling bureaucracy, and repressive police states were holding back a largely youthful population across the region, and their victims had little way to make their frustrations felt other than extreme actions.

Subsequent studies found that self-immolation had already become a common act in Tunisia, accounting already for 15 per cent of all burns cases in Tunis hospitals. Within six months, more than 100 Tunisians had followed suit, and scores more around the Arab world, from Morocco to Saudi Arabia and Iraq, had also set themselves on fire.

Still, not many observers could have imagined the chaos that would ensue, even when Mr Ben Ali gave way to weeks of protest and boarded a plane for Saudi Arabia with his wife and a large chunk of the country’s gold reserves.



Next Hosni Mubarak of Egypt went, after 18 days of telegenic demonstrations in Cairo's Tahrir Square. Then Col Muammar Gaddafi was forced out, after protests turned into civil war and then international war, with the West's air forces joining in.

By the time he was bayoneted and shot in October 2011, Syria was in flames, and the West was starting to vacillate about its role, with effects that can still be seen today. Libya, Syria and much of Iraq remain failed states. Egypt is on the brink.

In the process a social uprising had turned into a conflict between Islamism, part peaceful, part violent, and secular governments and politicians; and then between religious sects, as Sunni and Shia turned on each other.

Despite Mrs Hamdy's despair at the poverty that remains in Tunisia, the country is still seen as the sole success. It has had two general elections in the years since, with a moderate Islamist party, Ennahda, winning the first, before stepping into opposition in the face of an alliance between secular parties that included members of the former regime last year.

"When I look at the region and my country, I regret it all. Death everywhere and extremism blooming, and killing beautiful souls"

Much of that is down to a deal negotiated by Rached Ghannouchi, Ennahda's head, who agreed to give up power despite the party's electoral strength.

He told The Telegraph this week that he and his colleagues had decided to compromise after considering fundamental issues of what democracy meant.

"Majoritarian rule, 50 per cent of the vote, is not sufficient," he said. He said he had always known, from the start of Tunisia's political "transition", that he would have to seek alliances, and in the first government Ennahda ruled alongside a centre-left secular party.

"We thought having a government with a majority would be enough," he said. "Then we realised we needed more: we needed consensus."

The difference between Tunisia and Egypt here is stark. While, as he points out, Egypt, Syria and Iraq are all more complex and difficult countries than Tunisia, the fact remains that Ennahda downplayed Islamist demands when the country drew up a constitution, the resulting document winning 94 per cent of the votes in the country's constitutional assembly.

In Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood, which won the presidency by 52 per cent to 48 per cent, tried to force through an Islamist constitution by

decree. It was toppled by a coup seven months later.

Syria and Libya, meanwhile, appear not to know the meaning of the word consensus.

Mr Ghannouchi, perhaps oddly, is still optimistic about the future of democracy in the Arab world. "The year 2011 was a leap from tyranny in the Arab world," he said. "History shows that the transition to democracy is not always linear – the transitions that took place in France and Britain took over 100 years."

"My brother is a lover of life and he would have rejected both the stupid politicians and death-loving extremists"

Whether the Arab world can last that long is another question. Mr Bouazizi's family, whose initial fame turned to hostility in their community, could not: his mother and one sister moved to Canada, while another, Samia, now works in Tunis. She is the first to say that her brother's death has been hijacked by politics and ideology.

"His death is destiny and I accept it," she said at a café in the city. "But if he were here he would be the first in the street to ask for more dignity.

"My brother created something that greedy people are trying to destroy in the region. My brother is a lover of life and he would have rejected both the stupid politicians and death-loving extremists. My brother died for dignity not for wealth or an ideology."

At the end of all the wars, few may end up remembering either him or Mrs Hamdy. The two began at opposite sides, but both now seem telescoped out of proportion by a history that became perverse beyond all recognition.

"Mohammed Bouazizi and I are both victims," Mrs Hamdy said. "He lost his life and my life is not the same any more.

"When I look at the region and my country, I regret it all. Death everywhere and extremism blooming, and killing beautiful souls."



No rise in anti-Muslim sentiment in U.K. in wake of Paris attacks: Poll

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20151221-no-rise-in-antimuslim-sentiment-in-u-k-in-wake-of-paris-attacks-poll>

Dec 21 – Last month's terrorist attacks in Paris appear not to have led to a rise in anti-Muslim sentiment in Britain, a new study has shown.

The new research, conducted by Rob Ford and Maria Sobolewska of the University of Manchester, comes amid concerns that



Western public opinion may grow more hostile toward Muslims, as evidenced by the success of the Front National in the first round of France's regional elections three weeks ago, and the apparent popularity of Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, who has called for a ban on Muslim immigration to the United States.

International Business Times reports that the academics asked the same questions both before and after the Paris attacks on 13 November. **Before Paris, 33 percent of respondents agreed that "Muslims have a lot to offer British culture," compared to 35 percent who disagreed. After Paris the proportion who disagreed remained the same, but an additional 2 percent agreed with the statement.**

The researchers note that a similar modest increase in the proportion of tolerant respondents was shown in the responses to the statement "Muslims in Britain have respect for the way of life of others." Before the Paris attacks, 23 percent of respondents agreed with that statement, compared to a far larger 53 percent who disagreed. After the Paris attacks,

the positive proportion increased to 27 percent, whereas the proportion disagreeing declined to 51 percent.

The most noticeable change in respondents' attitudes was apparent when respondents were asked whether they felt London was better or worse off due to its ethnic and religious diversity. Pre-Paris attacks, 40 percent felt the capital was better off or much better off for its diversity, whereas 32 percent thought it was worse off or much worse off.

[Muslim demonstrator in London](#) // Source: commons.wikimedia.org

After Paris, the proportion with a positive attitude swelled to 43 percent, but the proportion who felt London was worse off for its diversity fell by a quarter to 24 percent. *IBT* notes that the respondents

were drawn from the whole of Great Britain, not just London, and thus the responses may reflect a tendency among Brits to rally round London and defend it as a symbol of diversity.

Rob Ford commented that the study, saying it "suggests that ISIS failed in their stated objective of sowing division between Muslims and non-Muslims in Britain. Far from raising anxiety about diversity and Islam, the Paris attacks strengthened liberal and multicultural views."

Maria Sobolewska added: "While tolerance is clearly not a universal value in Britain, it is a resilient one for those who hold it. The Paris attacks did not deepen divisions among our respondents, as pessimists feared. Instead they encouraged a stronger expression of the inclusive tolerance the terrorists threaten and reject."

1,707 people were surveyed in the first round of the study between 10 and 12 November, and 1,621 were surveyed in the second round on 17 and 18 November. Both surveys were conducted online using the YouGov panel.



Understanding Jihadi ideology and propaganda

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20151221-understanding-jihadi-ideology-and-propaganda>

Dec 21 – The Center on Religion & Geopolitics says that there is increasing recognition from politicians and policy makers, including by both President Barack Obama and Prime Minister David Cameron at the UN General Assembly in September 2015 that the ideology of jihadi movements must be countered to undermine the threat. The jihadi movement's combination of theology and political objectives needs to be uprooted through rigorous scrutiny and sustained intellectual confrontation.

A new report from the Center on Religion & Geopolitics notes that after the 9/11 attacks, Osama Bin Laden's al-Qaeda had approximately 300 militants. ISIS alone now has, at a low estimate, 31,000 fighters across Syria and Iraq. Understanding how ideology has driven this phenomenon is essential to containing and defeating violent extremism.

But violent ideologies do not operate in a vacuum, the report says. A fire requires oxygen to grow. A broader political culture overlaps significantly with some of the assumptions of the jihadi ideology, without necessarily being extreme or agreeing with its violence.

The jihadi ideology preys upon those who are sympathetic to some of its aims. Unless we understand how the ideology relates to wider beliefs, we cannot uproot it.

The Center on Religion & Geopolitics has analyzed a cross-section of 114 propaganda sources ranging from April 2013 to summer 2015 from three Salafi-jihadi groups: ISIS, Jabhat al-Nusra, and al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).

The aim of the analysis was to identify precisely what ideology is shared by the three

groups, as revealed in their propaganda, in order to inform effective counter-narratives from mainstream Muslims, governments, and civil society.

This report provides an evidence base for what is already assumed by many, that the ideology of Salafi-jihadism is a vital motivating force for extremist violence, and therefore must be countered in order to curb the threat.

Professor Bruce Hoffman, director of the Center for Security Studies at Georgetown University, has described the report – **Inside the Jihadi Mind: Understanding Ideology and Propaganda** — as “a needed and incisive analysis of one of the core issues behind the current jihadi threat, the manipulation and exploitation of scripture to provide a religious justification for their violence.”

Hoffman said, “This is the single best work I have read on the ideological foundations and theoretical underpinnings of the ongoing wave of jihadi violence. Accordingly, it makes a valuable contribution both to the literature on terrorism and radicalization and to the measures and efforts needed to most effectively counter the appeal of the jihadi message.”

Dr. Omar Ashour, Senior Lecturer in Middle East Politics and Security Studies at the University of Exeter, said, “The authors have done an excellent job in analyzing the narratives and ideologies of the ISIS, Jabhat al-Nusra and al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, as well as the supportive sub-cultures. This is the first study that does so quantitatively and qualitatively.”

The key findings of the report:

- There is a distinct difference between the ideology of Salafi-jihadism and the Islam practiced by the majority of the world's Muslims. The Salafi-jihadi ideology is built upon Islamic religious principles, which it distorts to produce a single-minded focus on violent jihad.
- The three groups share fundamentally similar ideologies, challenging the concept that “ISIS is more extreme than al-Qaeda.”
- Ideological values, which form the moral basis of the groups' actions, are present in 80 percent of all the propaganda sources; these include Islamic creedal values in 62



- percent, the values of honor and solidarity with the Muslim community in 68 percent, and explicit references to the end of days in 42 percent.
- The importance of *tawhid* (monotheism) is revealed in a number of themes throughout the propaganda, in different strands of the ideology: one God, one state, and one *ummah* (the global Islamic community). These themes appear in over 74 percent of the propaganda.
 - An emphasis on the nobility of jihad runs throughout the propaganda, often presenting it in chivalric terms, with pictures of fighters on horseback, or references to Saladin. Altogether, such references appear in 71 percent of the propaganda.
 - The importance of honor, and the solidarity of the *ummah* is also central, appearing in 68 percent of the propaganda. The virtue of martyrdom — common to many religions, but here applied deliberately to death in battle — forms a significant part of the value of honor, appearing explicitly in 32 percent of the propaganda, and implicitly in 68 percent.
 - Altogether, justifications from the Quran, Hadith or from scholarship appear in 87 percent of the propaganda. One ISIS statement contained 24 references to the Quran, making up 26 percent of the entire statement. Of these 24 references, 13 different *surahs* (chapters) were referenced.
 - While Quranic justifications are usually presented without context, reinforcing the accusation that the groups ‘cherry pick’ passages that support their case, the ideology makes extensive use of scripture: half of the propaganda references the Quran, with 63 out of the 114 *surahs* referenced.
 - Hadith justifications are used much less than Quranic justifications, appearing in only 22 percent of the sample. The accusation that Salafi- jihadi groups pick Hadith that suit their vision may be bolstered by the ways in which they use them: authoritative Hadith are cited with the full details of their origins; the referencing of those of more doubtful provenance is much vaguer.
 - When the groups are criticized for their actions by rival Salafi-jihadi groups or others, the Quran and the Hadith are the first reference points that are used for the rebuttal. Hadith in particular are used in bulk when groups are attacked by other followers of the ideology.
 - Nevertheless, the vaunted Salafi rejection of much Islamic scholarship as “innovation” (ISIS refers to established scholars as “donkeys of knowledge”) is belied by references throughout the propaganda to forty-five different scholars from all the major schools of jurisprudence apart from the Hanafi School.

The ideological themes presented above appear throughout the propaganda, with a clear internal logic, although its application is often inconsistent. The themes — whether found explicitly or by implication — form a hierarchy, with the ideological values providing a basis for groups’ objectives and ideal conduct, and thus their group identity. The themes come together to form a coherent ideology, representative of Salafi- jihadism. The report says that it is this ideology that drives the groups’ behavior. When they attack

one another, it is not ideological differences that drives the conflict, but differing narratives: the ways in which they apply their ideology to reality. The Salafi-jihadi movement will not be defeated by focusing on these narratives: it will only be defeated if we understand and engage the ideology. This report works to provide that understanding through detailed qualitative and quantitative analysis. The report’s authors note all percentages are of total sources (these themes overlap and should not add up to 100 percent).

— *Read more in Emman El-Badawy et al., [Inside the Jihadi Mind: Understanding Ideology and Propaganda](#) (Center on Religion & Geopolitics, December 2015)*

Since 2001, U.S. has revoked 9,500 visas over terrorism threat

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20151221-since-2001-u-s-has-revoked-9-500-visas-over-terrorism-threat>

Dec 21 – **Since 2001, the U.S. government has revoked more than 122,000 visas – of which some 9,500 were revoked because of the threat of terrorism.** CBS News reports that the information was revealed by Michele Thoren Bond, assistant secretary for



the Bureau of Consular Affairs at the Department of State.

Fox News reported that when Bond was asked about the whereabouts of the thousands of foreigners whose visa had been revoked, she admitted she did not know. She stressed, though that security reviews of those who receive visas do not stop when a visa is issued, and that U.S. security agencies continuously compare information about new threats against the records of visa recipients and, if necessary, revoke visas.

Bond testified last Thursday before the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, which was discussing way to prevent extremists from exploiting the U.S. visa system.

Fox News notes that DHS and the State Department are currently reviewing the vetting process for visa applicants. One subject under scrutiny is whether the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) can review applicants' social media posts – including private posts — as part of the evaluation of applications for visas.

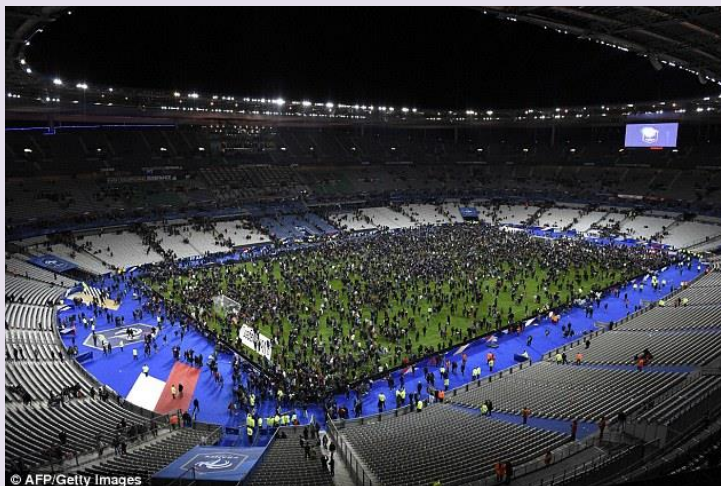
Tashfeen Malik, one of the San Bernardino shooters, had been interviewed at the U.S. Embassy in Pakistan and reportedly vetted by five different government agencies. FBI Director James Comey has said that Malik and her husband, Syed Farook, had communicated privately online about jihad and martyrdom before their marriage. These postings, however, could not be reviewed and taken into consideration in the vetting process because, following the leaks by Edward Snowden about the NSA's phone metadata collection program, DHS and State Department officers involved in the vetting process were barred from reviewing applicants' social media postings. Privacy advocates, among them some members of Congress, viewed reviews of social media postings as Big Brother snooping.

On Thursday, members of the House panel questioned officials on why public social media postings should not be routinely examined as part of the vetting process for those attempting to enter the United States.

"If half the employers are doing it in the United States of America, if colleges are doing it for students, why wouldn't Homeland Security do it?" asked Representative Stephen Lynch (D-Massachusetts). "We don't even look at their public stuff, that's what kills me."

SAS 'to guard home nations at European football championship' after France invokes previously unused clause in EU treaty calling for extra security

Source: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3368484/SAS-guard-home-nations-European-football-championship-France-invokes-previously-unused-clause-EU-treaty-calling-extra-security.html>



Dec 21 – The SAS are to be called in to guard home nations and provide extra security at next year's European football championship after France invoked a previously unused clause in an EU treaty.

Three bombers targeted the Stade de France stadium and nearby restaurants in the deadly night of attacks

Under the Lisbon Treaty French politicians have asked British

Special Forces to provide extra security at team hotels and during training sessions following last month's horrific terror attacks in Paris.

Last month ISIS gunmen launched attacks at several venues across the French capital, including the Stade de France during a friendly match between Germany and France.





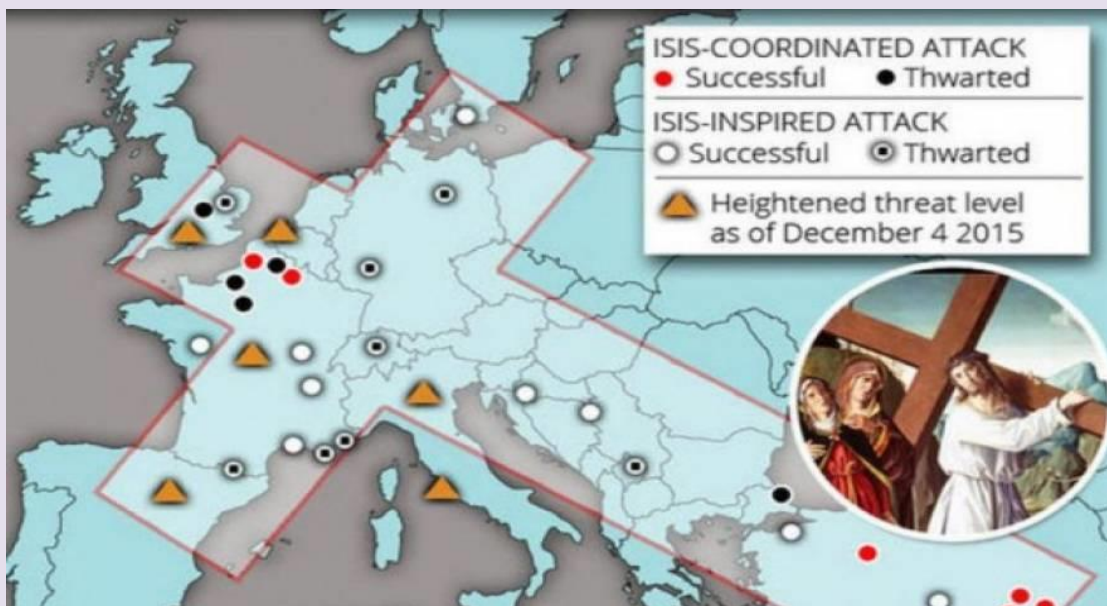
Under the EU's Lisbon Treaty French politicians have asked British Special Forces to provide extra security at team hotels and during training sessions following last month's terror attacks in Paris.

In total 130 people died on November 13, when the Bataclan music venue, the stadium and busy restaurants and bars in the capital were targeted.

The Mirror reports the FA is also expected to increase the number of security staff on duty during Euro 2016 and will probably cancel team walkabouts.

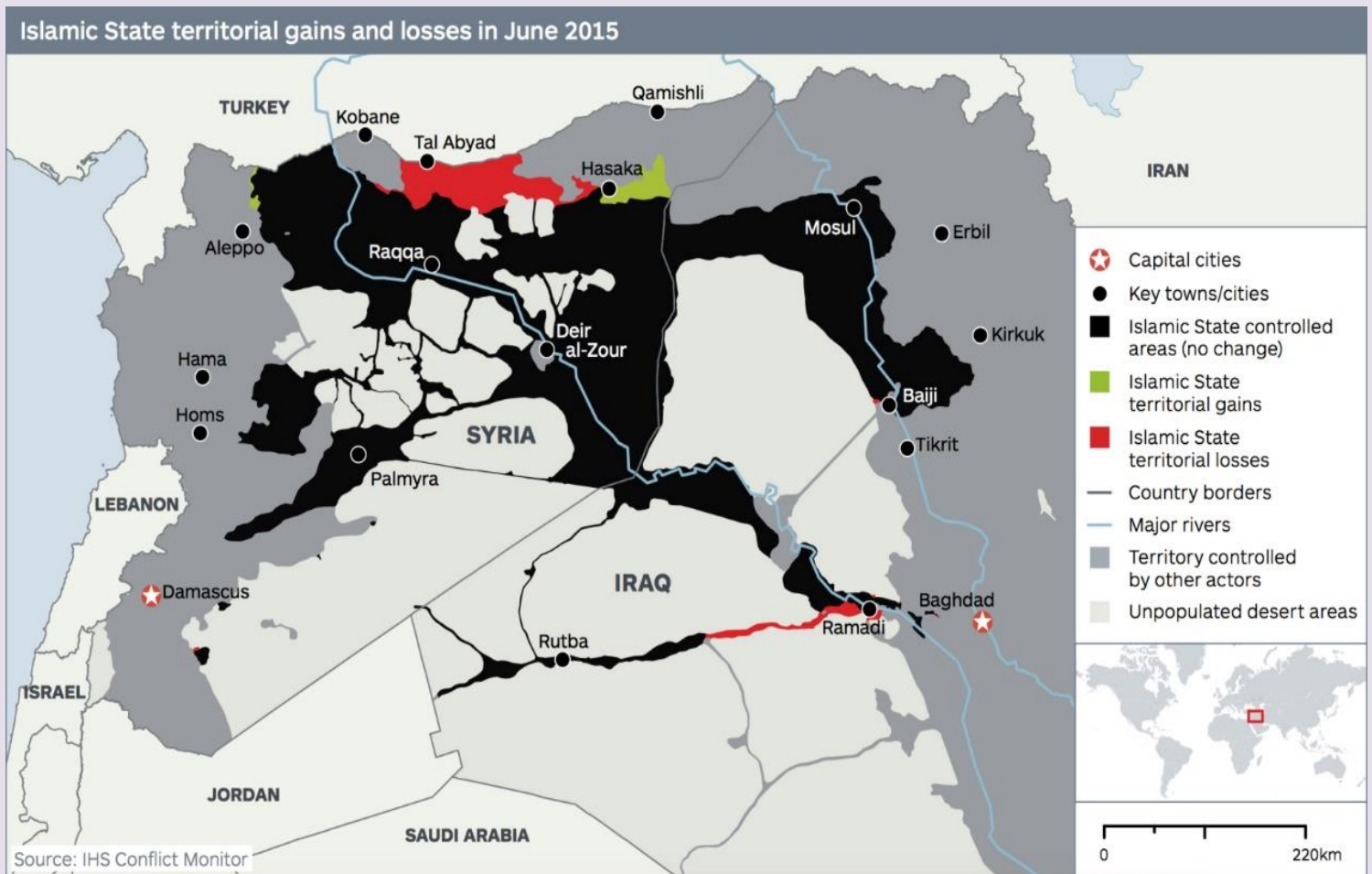
EDITOR'S COMMENT: Some will say: "Good idea!"; others will say: "It is a disgrace for French military!". Some will note: "Great – (football) business will go on!" The truth? Somewhere in the middle. But the reality is that after "Military Olympic Games" now we will have "Military Football Cup" as well! And do not comment that we will not surrender to terrorism. Just think that we are talking about athletics and ideals promoted by keeping both body and mind healthy!

Conspiracy theories or Reality



Islamic State's Territorial Losses and the Beginning of a United Kurdistan

Source: <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/07/07/mapped-the-islamic-states-territorial-losses-and-the-beginning-of-a-united-kurdistan/>



Why Mauritius must wake up to the Islamic State threat fast

Source: <http://www.firstpost.com/world/why-mauritius-must-wake-up-to-the-islamic-state-threat-fast-2555616.html>

Dec 22 – Mauritius, the serene Indian Ocean island once notorious as the dumping ground of labourers of Indian origin, has started showing a disturbing trend. The

Islamic State could be trying to establish a foothold here; in fact it may have made some progress on it already.





The warning signal comes from recent revelation on the presence of some Mauritians in the IS and unconfirmed reports that over the last one year some locals have traveled to



Syria to join the organisation. The most disturbing development, however, is a propaganda video of the IS showing a young Mauritian, a Hindu converted to Islam a decade ago, speaking Creole (the lingua franca of Mauritius) and exhorting all Muslim brothers and sisters to come and join the promised land and to 'free Mauritius'. The propaganda speech makes a blatant appeal to people to ignore calls by current and erstwhile prime ministers of Mauritius, US President Obama and UK's Prime Minister David Cameron for communal harmony and adhere to the preaching of the prophet, who the video presenter claims, had advised the Muslims to fight with their bodies and swords. Such a development is unprecedented in the history of Mauritius. This outburst, disseminated through a video, appears to be negating the efforts of the

moderate Muslims who have been counseling the younger lot not to fall prey to the IS' radicalisation tirade promising paradise through jihad.

Muslims in Mauritius, mostly of Indian origin, have been largely non-communal and peaceful. Yet some may fall prey to the IS's propaganda offensive. Maldives, with a population of less than four lakh, has seen a large number of inductions in IS. This should be a wake-up call for Mauritius.

What should be worrisome for India is that Pakistan too has been active, diplomatically and otherwise, in this region. The last three Pakistan High Commissioners here have been retired military officers of the rank of major general. Such assignments may be a well-crafted strategy to keep an eye on the Indian influence in the geo-strategically critical country.

In November 2012, Pakistan navy sent its warship 'Tipu Sultan' to the island. Despite protests by moderates, Dr Zakir Naik, an Islamic activist, was allowed to visit Mauritius in 2012. As usual, his rhetoric did have an impact on a section of the youth. In sum, Pakistan's interest in the island and recent reports of some Mauritians joining the IS cadres cannot be seen in isolation and merit a close watch.

While Mauritius figures in Pakistan's strategic agenda, India's effort has been less than urgent. It has been generally posting career diplomats, mostly on the verge of retirement. The present incumbent too retires from here early, though his initiatives to keep aloft security issues have been focused and on course.

On its part, Mauritius has been lackadaisical in its approach to the emerging threats. The



intelligence apparatus in the island at present is perceived to be devoting most of its time and energy to pursuing political intelligence rather than countering terror. The nascent Counter Terrorism Unit has not added teeth and fangs to its body so far. A definite roadmap to tackle terror is amiss. The officers and men at their command carry the promise to deliver, but they lack effective leadership to goad them into action.

As I write this piece, the present government marks the completion of one year in office. Its biggest task now includes pre-empting a section of misled Mauritian Muslims, albeit minuscule in number, from joining the IS. The government has spent one year of its rule in investigating political opponents. This has taken a toll on the intelligence establishment, which has lost focus on priority areas. Western intelligence agencies have been urging Mauritius to abandon its ostrich-like attitude and tackle growing radicalisation in a serious manner but to no avail.

Prime Minister Anerood Jugnauth, believed to be a staunch Hindu, was so tough against the

Libyan Ambassador in 1992 that he ensured the latter's expulsion and closure of the embassy within 24 hours following allegations that the Libyan Ambassador was openly distributing money to those converting to Islam. Such a tough approach is no more visible.

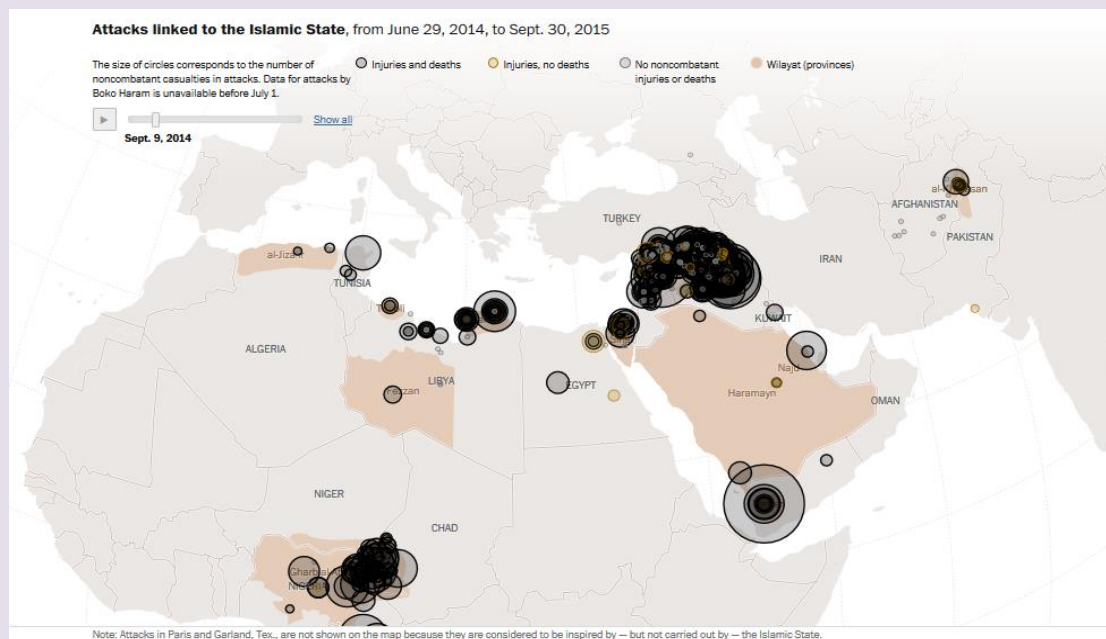
Indian counter terror experts have been sincere in helping out Mauritius with sharing of intelligence and reorienting their Counter Terrorism Unit. It is expected that Mauritius would keep India on board in restructuring its apparatus to deal with threats in a meaningful way.

India can play a crucial role by augmenting intelligence sharing and imparting advance training to the Mauritian security set up. Traditionally, Mauritius has been recruiting an Indian National Security Advisor since 1983. In the light of the growing threat of terror, it would appear practical to post a serving Indian police officer (or freshly retired) with adequate background of intelligence and counter terror for Mauritius instead of assigning such an important task to individuals devoid of any active knowledge with policing.

What a year of Islamic State terror looks like

Source: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/world/islamic-state-attacks/>

The Islamic State has grown beyond its original home in Syria and Iraq, extending its operations into other parts of the Middle East and North Africa by establishing alliances and absorbing other terrorist groups. Data from IHS Jane's Terrorism and Insurgency Center reveals how the group has claimed



responsibility for carrying out attacks across the region. The map below reflects a year of

Islamic State attacks following the capture of Mosul, one of Iraq's most important cities. Since then, the militant group has carried out many attacks including a suicide bombing Abha, Saudi Arabia, a beheading in Egypt, and most recently, the attacks in Paris that killed more than 130 people.

NOTE: The map in the text is interactive – watch it progressing at source's URL.

Leftist Media Ignore Islamic Terrorist Groups

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh

Source: <http://www.frontpagemag.com/fpm/261192/leftist-media-ignore-islamic-terrorist-groups-dr-majid-rafizadeh>



Dec 22 – It is intriguing that mainstream media has focused on violent terrorist acts of the Islamic State (IS or ISIS), a radical Sunni Islamist group, while they are deliberately avoiding raising awareness about other Islamist terrorist groups that are as brutal as ISIS, if not worse.

The other groups that I am referring to are primarily the Iranian-backed radical Islamist militias.

Brutal terrorist groups such as Kataib al-Imam Ali (KIA) are not any less violent than ISIS when it comes to the aggressive and horrific tactics they use against civilians. In fact, they are known for showing videos of cut-off heads and bodies burned over open fires. This particular group, which is backed by Iran, originated from the Muqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army. Shebl al-Zaidi is the secretary-general of Kataib al-Imam Ali and he is known for his sectarian and vicious tactics.

Another militia group that is known locally for its violent attacks is Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq. It reportedly receives approximately \$2 million a month from the Islamic Republic.

There exist more than 100 of these Islamist terrorist groups and they are increasing on a daily basis as they branch out.

One reason behind the liberal media outlets' failure to shed light on non-ISIS terrorist groups is that they do not want to criticize Iran. These outlets are heavily influenced by the Obama administration's leniency toward the Islamic Republic. If President Obama views Iran as a constructive state actor, then the media put aside standards of professional journalism and follow in the footsteps of the President.

One of the crucial tenets of Journalism in Western democracies is that it should not be influenced, intimidated or guided by ruling politicians. Being independent and raising public awareness by presenting different ideas and facts is what makes a media outlet an informative outlet and a platform for advancing democracy.

If a Western media outlet is following what the White House likes or despises, then what is the difference between these outlets and Iran's



state media outlets, which are the mouthpieces of the ruling clerics?

In addition, media outlets and journalists seem to prefer simplicity to complexity. It is much easier for those journalists to talk about the Islamic State and their horrific acts rather than engaging in rigorous research on other stealth terrorist and radical militia groups. Unfortunately, a lot of reporters are not knowledgeable in this field and they prefer to do the easier task. It is easier for them to write about ISIS in the length of space and time they are given than to research all other Islamist terrorist groups.

The ultimate goal of these groups is to enter the political establishment of the state and inform decision-making from the top. Hezbollah succeeded at this in Lebanon and other Iran-backed Iraqi Shiite militia groups did the same on Iraq.

Furthermore, leftist media outlets appear to view these radical Islamist groups as "legitimate" groups because they are funded by a nation-state (in this case, Iran). Many of these groups report directly to General Soleimani or Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. As a result, if a similar violent act

is committed by one of these Iranian-backed groups, the mainstream media outlets are less likely to criticize them harshly.

Finally, in order to survive as news organizations, these outlets are more driven by the need to make a profit, than the need to raise awareness. As a result, they focus on increasing their ratings and attracting high numbers of readers and advertisers, rather than providing credible information to the public.

In spite of the fact that there are many Islamist terrorist groups around the world committing atrocities against civilians, only ISIS has received the attention of the liberal media. There seems to be a symbiotic relationship between these outlets and ISIS.

On the one hand, ISIS receives the publicity it needs from liberal media outlets. On the other hand, these networks increase their ratings, viewers, readers, advertisement revenues, and therefore their profit. It is incumbent on media outlets to bring to the world the stories of non-ISIS Islamist terrorist groups as well, and put a spotlight on the sufferings of the multitudes of forgotten people, who are affected by these terrorist groups.

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh, an Iranian-American political scientist and scholar, is president of the International American Council and serves on the board of the Harvard International Review at Harvard University. Rafizadeh is also a former senior fellow at the Nonviolence International Organization based in Washington, DC and is a member of the Gulf Project at Columbia University.

Does ISIS Kill More Muslims than Non-Muslims?

By Raymond Ibrahim

Source: <http://www.meforum.org/5727/does-isis-kill-more-muslims>

With the rise of the Islamic State (ISIS, ISIL, or IS), an old apologia meant to exonerate Islam of violence has become prominent, again. Because ISIS is killing other Muslims, so the argument goes, obviously, its violence cannot be based on Islam, which bans Muslims from killing fellow Muslims in its name.

This point is always stressed whenever Islamic jihadis commit massacres in the West. Speaking soon after the San Bernardino terror attack that left 14 dead, U.S. president Obama, who earlier insisted that the Islamic State "is not Islamic," elaborated:

ISIL does not speak for Islam. They are thugs and killers, part of a cult of death...

Moreover, the vast majority of terrorist victims around the world are Muslim (emphasis added).

Similarly, after last November's Paris terrorist attack, which left 129 people dead, the UK's *Independent* published an article titled, "Paris attacks: Isis responsible for more Muslim deaths than western victims." And the *Daily Beast* argued that, "Before the Paris horror, ISIS was killing Muslims on a daily basis. We Muslims despise these crazy people more than anyone else does.... But the number one victim of this barbaric terror group is Muslims. That's undisputed."



Along with distancing Islam from violence—real Muslims are not supposed to kill other Muslims in the name of jihad—this argument further clouds the issue of who is the true victim of Islamic terrorism: Why talk about the Muslim slaughter of non-Muslims—whether Western people in Paris or California, or Christian minorities under Islam—when it is Muslims who are the primary victims most deserving of sympathy?



Yet this argument is flawed on several levels. First, the Islamic State does not view its victims as Muslims. Indeed, mainstream Sunni Islam—the world's dominant strand of Islam which ISIS adheres to—views all non-Sunnis as false Muslims; at best, they are heretics who need to submit to the "true Islam."

This is largely how Sunnis view Shias, and vice versa—hence their perennial war. While Western talking heads tend to lump them together as "Muslims"—thus reaching the erroneous conclusion that ISIS is un-Islamic because it kills "fellow Muslims"—each group views the other as enemies. (It's only in recent times, as both groups plot against the West and Israel, that they occasionally cooperate.)

Overall, then, when Sunni jihadis slaughter Shias—or Sufis, Druze, and Baha'i, lesser groups affiliated with Islam to varying degrees—they do so under the same exact logic as when they slaughter Christian minorities, or European, American, and Israeli citizens: all are *infidels* who must either embrace the true faith, be subjugated, or die.

In fact, that ISIS kills other "Muslims" only further validates the supremacist and intolerant aspects of Sunnism, which is hardly limited to ISIS. Just look to our good "friend and ally," Saudi Arabia, the official religion of which is

Sunni Islam, and witness the subhuman treatment Shia minorities experience.

But what about those Sunnis killed during the Islamic State's jihad? These are rationalized away as "martyrs"—collateral damage—destined to enter Islam's paradise. Indeed, the topic of fellow Sunnis being killed during the jihad has been widely addressed throughout the centuries. It received a thorough analysis by Al-Qaeda leader Ayman Al-

Zawahiri in his essay, "Jihad, Martyrdom, and the Killing of Innocents" (*The Al Qaeda Reader*, pgs. 137-171). After delineating how three of the four schools of Sunni jurisprudence—Hanafi, Shafi'i, and Hanbali—do not forbid the accidental or inevitable killing of Muslims during the jihad, Zawahiri concluded:

The only thing mujahidin [jihadis] are specifically required to do, should they knowingly kill a Muslim [who is intermixed with the targeted

infidels], is make atonement. Blood money, however, is a way out of the dispute altogether. Payment should be made only when there is a surplus of monies, which are no longer needed to fund the jihad. Again, this is only if their [Muslims] intermingling with the infidels is for a legitimate reason, such as business. And we assume that those who are killed are martyrs, and believe that what the Sheikh of Islam [Ibn Taymiyya] said about them applies: "[T]hose Muslims who are accidentally killed are martyrs; and the obligatory jihad should never be abandoned because it creates martyrs."

But what of those Sunnis whom ISIS intentionally kills? Here the jihadis rely on *takfir*, the act of one Sunni group denouncing another Sunni group of being *kafir*—that is, non-Muslims, *infidels*, whose blood can be shed with impunity. *Takfir* has existed alongside Islam almost from its inception, beginning with the *khawarij* (Kharijites)—who ritually slaughtered Muslims for not following the letter of law—and was/is the primary rationale used to justify jihad between different Sunni nations and empires.



In short, to Sunni jihadis—not just ISIS, but al-Qaeda, Boko Haram, Hamas, et al—all non-Sunni peoples are infidels and thus free game. As for fellow Sunnis, if they die accidentally, they are martyrs ("and the obligatory *jihad* should never be abandoned because it creates martyrs"); and if fellow Sunnis intentionally get in the way, they are denounced as infidels and killed accordingly.

The argument that ISIS and other jihadi organizations kill fellow Muslims proves nothing. Muslims have been slaughtering Muslims on the accusation that they are "not Islamic enough" from the start: So what can the obvious non-Muslim—such as the Western infidel—expect?

In the end, it's just jihad and more jihad, for all and sundry.

Raymond Ibrahim is a Judith Friedman Rosen fellow at the Middle East Forum and a Shillman fellow at the David Horowitz Freedom Center.

The six faces of the Islamic State

By Daniel L. Byman

Source: <http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/markaz/posts/2015/12/21-six-faces-of-isis-byman>



Dec 21 – In the rhetoric of American leaders, the Islamic State is a terrorist group. The terrorism label, while accurate, is also misleading, obscuring more than it enlightens. One of the top scholars of terrorism, Audrey Kurth Cronin, sharply criticizes the label "terrorist" to describe the Islamic State, arguing that doing so confuses us as to the true nature of the group and how best to fight it. But if the terrorism label doesn't work, the alternatives are imperfect. It is best to think of the Islamic State as an amalgam, bringing together the characteristics of many different types of actors—some legitimate, some downright evil—but with no single label doing the job. Definitional issues have always hindered our understanding of terrorism, as no one, agreed-upon definition exists. However, our lack of a proper vocabulary stymies our public discourse and our policy response: if we can't articulate *what* we are fighting, it's hard to articulate *how* to fight it. A failure to recognize and counter all of the faces the Islamic State presents to the world will severely limit our ability to defeat it.

Let's start with the label terrorist. As the Paris, Sinai, and San Bernardino attacks make clear, the Islamic State uses international terrorism—political violence against non-combatants outside its immediate theater of operations—to achieve a psychological effect. The Islamic State uses such violence to intimidate its enemies and attract recruits. Alas,

it is succeeding in generating fear, as polls show Americans are more concerned about terrorism now than at any time since 9/11. Indeed, if anything, the international terrorism label seems more applicable to the group today than it did a year ago. Then, the Islamic State was focused on its immediate theater and attacks on non-combatants were linked to its local struggle. Attacks in the West seemed, at least to the outside world, not to be a priority.

This brings us to the second label: insurgent. The Islamic State is skilled at moving up and down the Maoist spectrum of operations, and it regularly conducts guerrilla war and tries to mobilize political support, classic traits of an insurgency. At the same time, almost every insurgent group also uses terrorism, broadly defined. The Islamic State, for example, uses suicide bombers to attack enemy police and military forces, assassinates Iraqi and Syrian opponents (including leaders of rival jihadist groups), and otherwise uses what are usually considered terrorist tactics as part of its insurgent struggle.

[O]ur lack of a proper vocabulary stymies our public discourse and our policy response: if we can't articulate what we are fighting, it's hard to articulate how to fight it.

Yet all the above makes the Islamic State seem normal—too normal. **The group is also a bizarre cult,** a modern Scourge of God. It embraces sexual slavery and rape and many of its recruits are more motivated by a quest for adventure, a desire to kill and



wreak havoc, and a sense of belonging and group dynamics than by religious attachment. The group's rhetoric is often messianic and apocalyptic: indeed, its English-language propaganda magazine, *Dabiq*, is named after a town in Syria where one of the last battles with the Crusader forces is prophesized to occur. Almost a decade ago in Iraq, one of Baghdadi's predecessors ordered his men to build pulpits for the Mahdi, a messianic savior who will rule during the end times and bring justice to the world.

Although many of the Islamic State's foot soldiers are often zealous fools—one recruit blew up himself and his classroom where he was learning to be a suicide bomber, killing 21 of his fellow students—its leaders today are crafty, and increasingly its ideology is bent to *raison d'état*. The Islamic State's motto is "enduring and expanding." It seeks to defend its territory and conquer new lands, usually in an opportunistic way. When ideological tenets conflict with state necessity, the needs of the state usually win. Indeed, it claims the highest duty of Muslims is to defend this state.

Here, we get to its most impressive, and scariest, accomplishment: **it is a de facto state**, with its own army. Terrorist groups have a long history of overreaching in their rhetoric, but the Islamic State's claim to statehood is not far-fetched. It rules over vast swaths of territory—at its peak roughly the size of Great Britain—and controls the fate of around six million people. Militarily, the Islamic State has an army, complete with tanks and other heavy weaponry, and its style of fighting is often highly conventional—just like most states. Indeed, part of the reason the terrorism label doesn't work is that traditional scholarship usually applies the term to non-state groups: states can do awful things, but when a state slaughters innocents, it is considered a war crime, not terrorism. Legally, statehood depends, in part, on recognition, but most social scientists follow the lead of Max Weber, who defined a state as having a monopoly on legitimate violence. The Islamic State has disarmed or suppressed rival groups in the areas it rules, achieving a monopoly on violence. Many would contest whether this violence is legitimate or not, but it has at least some local followers, and its provision of law and order in a land exhausted by chaos gives it additional legitimacy.

The Islamic State's claim to statehood earns additional legitimacy too, because **it is a social service provider**. It offers medical services, enforces price controls, creates courts and police, pushes local municipal employees to return to work, provides traffic cops, and even created a consumer protection bureau. The quality of these services and governance is often poor, but even limited services are valuable in war zones. Indeed, scholar Mara Revkin finds that locals often view the Islamic State favorably because it provides order and services better than its rivals. If everyone around you is horrible at service provision, you can win over the people simply by being less bad. In addition, the Islamic State drives out other service providers, including international NGOs, because they threaten its monopoly on service provision. However, coalition efforts to destroy the Islamic State's oil trade—and the falling price of oil—have hindered its finances, and they can only extort or pillage so much. The Islamic State's services appear to be declining, driving the prices of goods and services up, and its popularity may be falling as a result.

A failure to recognize and counter all of the faces the Islamic State presents to the world will severely limit our ability to defeat it.

The Islamic State, however, is highly revolutionary: it is not content to focus on its immediate area of operations and otherwise act like a normal state or even an aspirational one. As such, it is more like a **revolutionary state sponsor of terror**, akin to how Iran, Sudan, and Libya acted in their revolutionary heydays. The Islamic State has established or worked with so-called "provinces" around the Muslim world to overthrow their governments and spread the Islamic State's model while encouraging individuals to rise up and commit acts of terror in the West. Although the exact relationship with many of its provinces or affiliates is not known, its role is often coordinating, facilitating, bankrolling, and otherwise bolstering capabilities and giving strategic direction, while the local groups figure out the operational details on their own.

Our desire to label the Islamic State as a terrorist organization may be because terrorism is what scares us so much. But treating the Islamic State as solely a terrorism problem will not



defeat it. All its faces must be recognized in order to best fight the Islamic State. In some cases, this will mean bombing its tanks, as we would another state enemy. Elsewhere, it might mean helping allied governments or local forces provide social services to out-compete Islamic State-affiliated organizations. In still others, it might mean severing the links between the core organization in Iraq and Syria

from its far-flung provinces and cells. Because every label is correct, yet incomplete, no single label to describe our policy defeat the group – “counterterrorism,” “counterinsurgency,” and so on – suffices. However, the Islamic State is not simply going to go away, and other hybrid groups are likely to arise in the future. Our rhetoric and our policies need to recognize these many dimensions.

Daniel L. Byman is Research Director, Center for Middle East Policy and Senior Fellow, Foreign Policy, Center for Middle East Policy.

Free Syrian Army: We Have Proof of Turkey's Oil Deals with Daesh

Source: <http://sputniknews.com/middleeast/20151202/1031110615/turkey-oil-daesh-proof.html>



Damaged trucks are pictured after what activists said were air strikes carried out by the Russian air force, on a parking garage for cargo trucks in al-Dana town, near the Syrian-Turkish border in Idlib Governorate November 28, 2015

Dec 02 – Major-General Hosam Al-Awak has confirmed to Sputnik Arabic that the Free Syrian Army (FSA) has photos of the oil deals and contracts signed by a Turkish party to buy oil from Daesh (also known as ISIL/ISIS) terror organization, which controls large areas in Syria and Iraq.

“Since the very start of the Syrian crisis in 2011, Turkey has been supporting the Islamists (extremists) and terrorists in Syria in every possible way against moderate groups,” he added.

“We have photos of the contracts of oil deals signed between the Turkish party and Daesh... We also have photos of [buying] vehicles – Toyota cars bought by Qatar, which have the name of “al-ghanem” – [which] entered Syria along with armored vehicles used by militants of Daesh for their leaders’ transportation.”



“We noticed that extremist Islamic factions gain support from Turkey before the emergence of “Daesh”.... This support reached them through Qorsayah Mountain, near to Bawabet as-Salam on the Turkish-Syrian borders.”

The Major-General also explained that the Turkish intelligence service used these deals (signed with the extremist parties) for other purposes – it obtained facilities from those parties, so that they “could steal factories and laboratories in Aleppo for the benefit of the Turkish companies.”

Hosam Al-Awak noted that the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria was supervising these organizations and coordinating with them, in order to put an end to the Free Syrian Army and other moderate groups.

The Major-General stressed that his groups held the Head of the Turkish Intelligence Hakan Baydan accountable [for the deals] and added that they showed the evidence to their friends in the region and in the

world, however, President Erdogan of Turkey insists on supporting extremism, Islamist parties and terror organizations in the region.

“We believe that Russia is the rational party in the world. In terms of the Syrian cause, Russians could cooperate better with all moderate parties and factions, including the Free Syrian Army.”



Russian Defense Ministry officials reveal to hundreds of journalists what they said were satellite and aerial images of thousands of oil trucks streaming from the IS-controlled deposits in Syria and Iraq into Turkish sea ports and refineries. *Photo: AP*

The officer said that he believes that the Russian intervention into Syria could achieve better results and promised to “maintain Russian interests in Syria in the future.”

This is only the latest evidence to come to light of Ankara’s oil contacts with the jihadist group, which have been vehemently denied by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Erdogan even vowed to leave office if any proof is provided that Turkey has been buying oil from the terrorist group.



His comments, in turn, came in response to President Putin's remarks that Moscow has evidence that the Su-24 was shot down by Turkey to protect Daesh oil deliveries, and that oil from the fields it controls is being exported to Turkey on an industrial scale.

Leader of powerful Syrian rebel group killed in airstrike

Source: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/25/zahran-alloush-leader-syria-rebel-group-killed-airstrike>



Dec 25 – The leader of one of the most powerful rebel groups in Syria appears to have been killed in an airstrike near the capital. A well-placed rebel source told the Guardian that **Zahran Alloush, the leader of Jaysh al-Islam, one of the largest opposition groups that commands thousands of fighters on the ground near Damascus, was killed in an airstrike on Friday.**



If true, the death of Alloush, who is reportedly backed by Saudi Arabia and Turkey, will be a major blow to the opposition.

The fact that the airstrikes targeted a meeting of the group's leadership represents an intelligence coup for the Syrian government and its foreign backer, Russia, which has led the reconnaissance and surveillance efforts since it intervened on behalf of Bashar al-Assad's regime back in October. "The news has reached us, that is God's will and we pray that God has mercy on him," said a source in Jaysh al-Fateh, one of the strongest rebel coalitions in Syria, which includes fighters from Jabhat al-Nusra, the al-Qaida affiliate in the country.



One of the most controversial figures in the insurgency, Alloush rose to prominence as the leader of Jaysh al-Islam, which has maintained control over areas in the suburbs of Damascus despite years of siege by the Assad regime and relentless aerial campaigns on opposition-held areas. Eastern Ghouta was even subjected to chemical attacks when the government launched missiles laced with sarin in the area, killing over a thousand people – including many children.

Alloush's early propaganda videos were overtly sectarian, urging the expulsion of Shias and Alawites from Damascus. Assad belongs to the Alawite minority, which is nominally part of Shia Islam, and who are considered heretics by Sunni extremists. He was also opposed to the Islamic State terror group, and lost many fighters in battles against the militants.

Since then, Alloush sought to temper his views to appear more palatable to potential western backers, retracting the demands for the expulsion of Alawites in a recent interview with McClatchy, calling them "part of the Syrian people".

It was initially unclear whether Alloush was killed in a Russian or Syrian airstrike, but rebel sources indicated that the attack was Russian in origin. The Russian air force has launched over 5,000 raids since its intervention began.

The rebel sources said that Russian planes fired at least 10 missiles at a secret headquarters of the group, which is the largest rebel faction in the area and has about 15,000 to 20,000 fighters. One of the rebels said the group had chosen one of its top military commanders, Abu Hammam al Buwaidani, as its new head.

"Alloush's martyrdom should be a turning point in the history of the revolution and rebel groups should realise they are facing a war of extermination and uprooting by Putin's regime," said Labib al Nahhas, a senior figure in the main Ahrar al-Sham group.

The Assad regime is seeking to expand its sphere of control in the vicinity of the capital, and has apparently reached an agreement with

Isis militants in the Yarmouk refugee camp in southern Damascus, through which fighters will withdraw from the area they occupied earlier this year.

Once home to hundreds of thousands of Syrians and Palestinians, Yarmouk has been besieged for three years by the Assad government, causing a major influx of refugees into neighbouring Lebanon in 2012. Isis took advantage of a power vacuum earlier this year, collaborating with Jabhat al-Nusra militants to take over most of the camp.

Al-Manar, the TV station of Hezbollah, the Lebanese military and political organisation that is fighting alongside the Assad government, said preparations had begun yesterday for the militants' withdrawal. It said they would leave on buses to Raqqa, the capital of Isis's self-proclaimed caliphate, and the Aleppo countryside – both locations where the opposition is fighting Isis and has seized large swathes of territory from them.

The timing of the withdrawal, coming as the opposition places Isis under increasing pressure in northern Syria, raises questions about the government's broader strategy of weakening rebel groups – even those fighting Isis – in an effort to present itself as the only palatable alternative on the Syrian battlefield.

The SOHR said the government had agreed to the plan, brokered by the UN, which would see families of militants, wounded militants and civilians leave before Isis fighters depart the long-embattled neighbourhood.

It was the latest in a series of attempts to broker local ceasefires in an effort to bring about a nationwide halt to the fighting. Earlier this month, fighters in al-Waer, a district in Homs that was held by the opposition, evacuated the area in a ceasefire agreement that brought much needed humanitarian aid.

In a separate development, Russia and Qatar's foreign ministers said they would work to encourage talks between the opposition and the government. Negotiations are set to be held in Vienna in January in the latest effort to bring an end to the war, which has killed over a quarter of a million people.

ISIS sanctions organ harvesting from living 'apostates'... even if it kills them

Source: <https://www.rt.com/news/327078-isis-captives-organs-harvesting/>



Dec 25 – Islamic State's human organ harvesting is sanctioned by a fatwa issued last January, when the group's Islamic scholars explained that internals of 'apostates' could be extracted from their bodies for the needs of Muslims, even if the 'donors' die.



A document obtained by Reuters reveals that

permissible," the document says, specifying that removal of organs that *"end the captive's life"* is also not prohibited.

The Fatwa #68 was reportedly found in a trove of other Islamic State's documents obtained by the US Special Forces as a result of raid into eastern Syria in May. Reuters could not independently confirm the authenticity of the document.

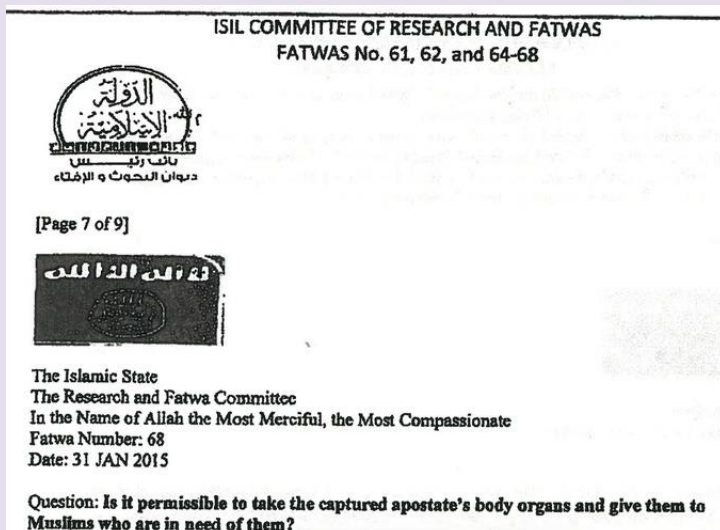
The data retrieved in May has been compiled into 'Lessons Learned from the Abu Sayyaf Raid' package exposing IS of justifying practices punishable elsewhere in the world, the human organs trafficking being just one of them.

The raid in May that resulted in killing Abu Sayyaf, IS's top financial official, brought the US seven terabytes of data from terrorist's computer hard drives, thumb drives, CDs, DVDs and papers, Reuters cited Brett McGurk, the US president's special envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL.

In February this year, Iraq's ambassador to the United Nations, Mohamed Alhakim, called on the 15-member UN Security Council to look at allegations of organ removal by the IS, urging the UNSC to investigate the issue.

He informed that bodies with surgical incisions and missing kidneys had been discovered in shallow mass graves on Iraqi territory.

"We have bodies. Come and examine them," Alhakim said. *"It is clear they are missing certain parts."*



organs harvesting is charitable deed by codes of Islamic State (IS, former ISIS/ISIL), maintains IS' Research and Fatwa Committee. *"The apostate's life and organs don't have to be respected and may be taken with impunity,"*

b- Organs that end the captive's life if removed: The removal of that type is also not prohibited, even if it is fatal for the captive. A group of Islamic scholars have permitted, if necessary, one to kill the apostate in order to eat his flesh which is part of benefiting from his body. This encompasses everything that is needed to be taken from the apostate's body.

says Fatwa (religious ruling) #68 issued January 31, 2015. *"The notion that transplanting healthy organs into a Muslim person's body in order to save the latter's life or replace a damaged organ with it is*

He also said several doctors had been executed in Mosul for refusing to participate in organ harvesting.



In August the Washington-based Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) reported of French-speaking IS militants openly discussing harvesting human organs from sex slaves on social media back in September 2014.

The fatwa obtained by Reuters does not define who could be attributed as ‘Kafir’ (disbeliever in Islam), but enslaving of minorities practicing other religions on the territories controlled by IS is a well-established fact. Thousands of Iraqi women have already been forced into sex slavery, with as many as 3,000 women and girls having been taken captive only from the Yazidi tribe in Iraq during IS offensives across the region.

IS has issued a number of fatwas, providing legal justification to a range of criminal and openly barbaric practices.

For example Fatwa #64 issued on January 29, 2015, presents regulations for rape, explaining in detail when and how Islamic State militants should have sexual intercourse with female slaves.

IS even has a fatwa justifying cannibalism in extreme circumstances.

“A group of Islamic scholars have permitted, if necessary, one to kill the apostate in order to eat his flesh, which is part of benefiting from his body,” the regulation says.

Terrorists with Assault Weapons Rewrite the Script

By Noah Feldman

Source: <http://www.bloombergview.com/articles/2015-12-27/terrorists-with-assault-weapons-rewrite-the-script>

Dec 27 – Over the last 15 years, Americans have become accustomed to distinguishing domestic mass shootings from Islamic terrorism -- the difference

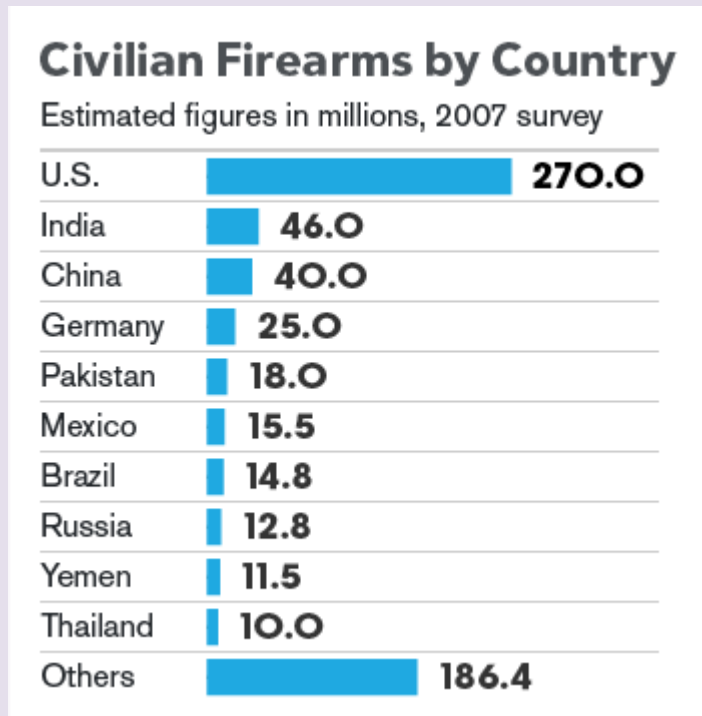
attacks, if you will. In 2015, that conceptual division broke down with the massacre in San Bernardino, California. It wasn't the first domestic act of terrorism inspired by

Islam -- Army Major Nidal Hasan's attack on Fort Hood and the Boston Marathon bombing both featured American Muslim terrorists. But San Bernardino was the first time the two paradigms were literally indistinguishable. It's as if the terrorists finally said, "Who needs airplanes when assault weapons are readily available?"

Why does the 2015 breakdown of the Columbine-9/11 distinction matter? The answer has everything to do with whether Americans ultimately decide to accept or reject the contemporary realities of terrorism.

Until now, the responses to the two kinds of attacks have

diverged radically.



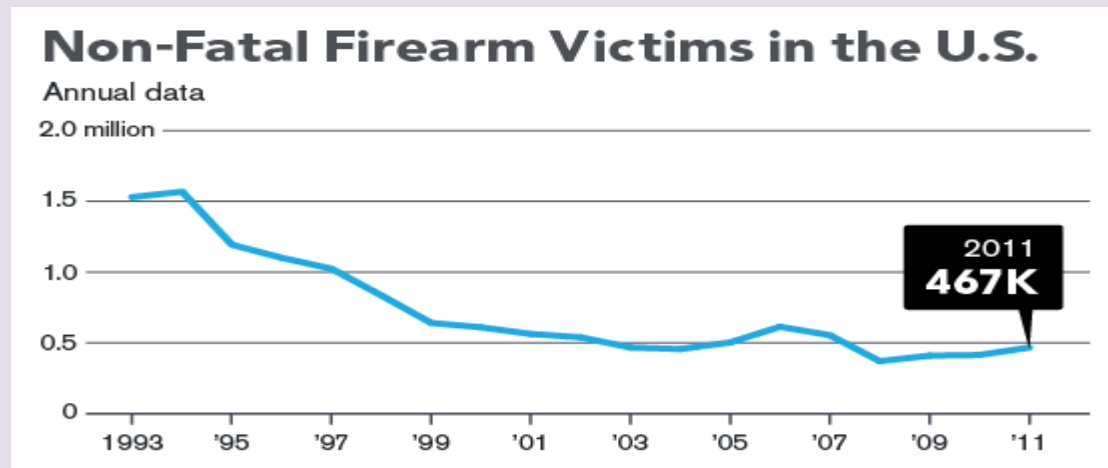
diverged radically.



The national reaction to Columbine-style shooting attacks has become highly stylized and predictable: We cry, liberals call for tougher gun laws and nothing

regulating gun sales to try to avoid repetition.

And that regulation would logically target all purchasers, not just those on the spotty



happens. The shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, is the perfect exemplar, as gun critics insisted that the death of so many young children would surely drive change, and gun-rights supporters said that if anything, the tragedy showed the need for more guns. President Barack Obama has gone from showing genuine outrage about congressional inaction in the aftermath of Newtown to something that looks much more like saddened resignation in the wake of San Bernardino.

In contrast, Americans' typical response to Islamic terrorism is to call for action -- and the government typically responds. The Sept. 11 attacks brought a host of air-safety reforms, not to mention the Afghanistan war. The U.S. has doubled down on bombing Islamic State when attacks are traceable to that organization. Intelligence agencies scrutinize Muslim Americans, with a focus that may be misplaced but reflects an unwillingness to treat Islamic terrorism as a new normal.

The San Bernardino attack may mark the inflection point where the Columbine response and the 9/11 response go head to head. Terrorists are, it turns out, just as able to buy and use assault weapons as other shooters. If Americans were to follow the 9/11 paradigm, this would mean

and incomplete no-fly list. The involvement of Enrique Marquez, the friend and neighbor of Syed Rizwan Farook who police say helped plan and prepare the San Bernardino attack, shows that it wouldn't be effective to scrutinize Muslims' gun purchases, even if it were constitutional, which it isn't.

But the National Rifle Association shows no inclination to soften its stance on assault weapons, notwithstanding the 9/11 paradigm. And given the political economy of the gun-rights movement, it seems unlikely that San Bernardino would give gun reformers leverage that they failed to achieve even after Newtown.

That leaves the other alternative: applying the Columbine paradigm to domestic Islamic terror. What, after all, can be done to discourage assault-weapon attacks by domestic Muslim terrorists if nothing can be done to prevent them from acquiring the weapons? The answer is the same as the Columbine answer: nothing can be done, so Americans accept the attacks as normal.

Until 2015, most Americans -- and I include myself -- didn't realize that gun attacks occur on average once per day. That statistic is striking not because it means



we're in constant fear, but precisely because we aren't. Columbine attacks are our new normal -- why shouldn't Islamic terror attacks be part of the same normality?

Before you say that this notion is intolerable, pause to consider that other Western countries have managed to normalize terrorism. Britain suffered IRA attacks for years, and the normalization robbed them to an extent of their leverage. Israel has institutionalized its own responses to terrorism, for better or worse. Israelis can't tolerate huge attacks regularly, but they mostly accept some baseline level of terror as part of the price of remaining in the West Bank.

There's nothing appealing about these examples -- but they exist, and there's no

reason the U.S. should be exempt from them. Perhaps we will simply begin to fear Islamic terrorism less, at the level at which we fear random mass shootings. If so, 2015 will have marked the turning point. We'll be a little less safe, but also perhaps a little less likely to invade or bomb others in response to events at home.

According to some reports, the San Bernardino attackers were inspired by an al-Qaeda propagandist, the American Anwar al-Awlaki. But you know what? The U.S. already killed Awlaki in a drone strike in 2011. What are we going to do, kill him again? Welcome to the new normal, where mass shootings and terrorist attacks aren't so different after all.

Noah Feldman, a Bloomberg View columnist, is a professor of constitutional and international law at Harvard University and the author of six books, most recently "Cool War: The Future of Global Competition." Feldman has a bachelor's degree from Harvard, a law degree from Yale University and a doctorate in Islamic thought from the University of Oxford, where he was a Rhodes scholar. He clerked for Justice David Souter on the U.S. Supreme Court. As an adviser to the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq, he contributed to the creation of the country's new constitution. His other books include "Divided by God: America's Church-State Problem -- and What We Should Do About It" and "After Jihad: America and the Struggle for Islamic Democracy." He lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and is a senior fellow of the Society of Fellows at Harvard.

Almost 300 suspected terrorists, criminals and illegal migrants are trying to cross the UK border EVERY DAY

Source: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3374999/Almost-300-suspected-terrorists-criminals-illegal-migrants-trying-cross-UK-border-DAY.html>

Dec 27 – Almost 300 suspected terrorists, criminals and illegal immigrants are attempting to cross UK borders every day, figures from a top-secret monitoring centre suggest.

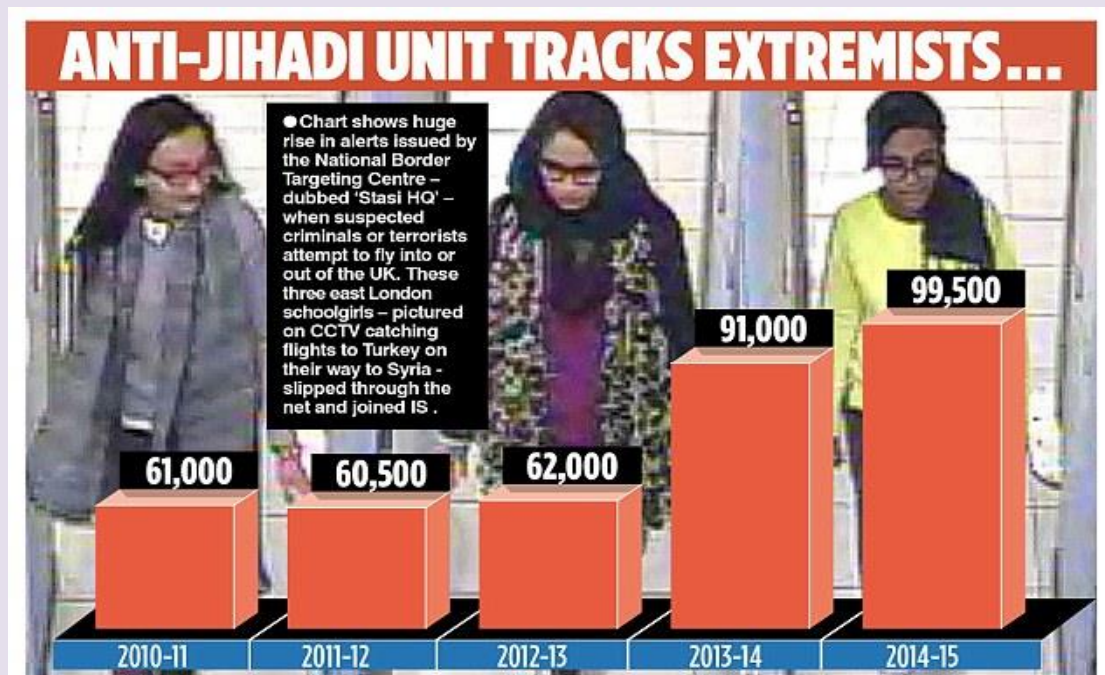
The Mail on Sunday can reveal that the number of potentially dangerous passengers being flagged up by a massive high-tech database has soared by 60 per cent in the past two years.

An investigation by this newspaper has found:

- **A record 99,500 alerts were issued last year by the National Border Targeting Centre (NBTC), the base once dubbed 'Stasi HQ' because it remotely screens all passengers entering or leaving the country by checking their previous journeys, criminal records and other habits.**



- 46 alleged extremists were blocked from travelling to Syria to fight for Islamic State in the past six months – close to two a week.
- Elsewhere, hundreds more have been sent on deradicalisation courses after police discovered they wanted to become jihadis.
- The number of people referred to police as potential extremists under the Government's Prevent scheme has rocketed to 3,288 in six months after teachers, lecturers and doctors were forced by law to report their concerns.
- Social workers are taking children away from their terror suspect parents, with seven taken into care in the East London borough Tower Hamlets alone in the past year.



The revelations come amid concerns that innocent travellers are being unfairly singled out as dangerous before they travel.

Growing numbers of Muslim families say they have been prevented from boarding flights to the US at the last minute, and as the MoS revealed last week, the US Department for Homeland Security wants to extend checks by stationing armed agents with the power to search holidaymakers at Heathrow and Manchester airports.

The number of people referred to police as potential extremists under the Government's Prevent scheme has rocketed to 3,288 in six months

Last night, Lord Carlile of Berriew QC, the former terror law watchdog, said the increased number of border alerts was a result of the heightened threat from jihadis.

'Given what has happened in the past year and the fragility of the European border system, the authorities would be acting irresponsibly if there were not more alerts,' he said.

'The border agencies are doing the best they can in a situation in which the threat level is severe and they do act on an intelligence-led basis. That means they sometimes get it wrong, but I would rather they get it wrong on a small percentage of cases than there was a bomb in Oxford Street.'

Figures obtained by this newspaper under the Freedom of Information Act show for the first time a huge increase in border alerts in the past two years, coinciding with the rise of Islamic State and the heightened terror threat in Britain.



The Home Office-run NBTC, which is based in Manchester and costs more than £7 million a year to run, receives details

from airlines of all passengers flying to or from Britain, including their names, dates of birth, nationality and passport numbers.

TSA may now deny travelers' requests for pat-downs instead of body scanners

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20151224-tsa-may-now-deny-travelers-requests-for-patdowns-instead-of-body-scanners>



Dec 24 – **The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) on Wednesday announced changes to traveler security screening at airports, allowing TSA personnel to require travelers to go through body scanners even if the passenger prefers a full-body pat-down instead.**

Technologies, or AIT, scanners. The announced procedure would not allow some travelers to opt for a pat-down instead of a body scan.

TSA says the new policy was created to safeguard airline security during heightened terrorism concerns.



“Given the implementation of Automatic Target Recognition (ATR, the process of identifying the location of an object) and the mitigation of privacy issues associated with the individual image generated by previous versions of the AIT not using ATR, and the need to respond to potential security treats, TSA will nonetheless mandate AIT screening for some passengers as warranted by security considerations,” the agency said.

In a follow-up Twitter posting, TSA said that the use of body-scanning technology “improves threat detection capabilities for both metallic and nonmetallic threat objects.”

The TSA said that the new system would be “warranted by security considerations in order to safeguard transportation security.”

CNN reports that currently, passengers may choose full-body pat-downs by TSA agents instead of going through Advanced Imaging

CNN notes that the TSA reminded passengers on Wednesday that AIT scanners do not store images or any personally identifiable information.



There is no one reason to explain what drives a person to terrorism, says ex-CSIS analyst's book

Source: <http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/internet-isnt-single-path-to-radicalization-its-not-even-a-game-changer-says-ex-csis-analysts-book>

Trying to decipher what drives a person to



terrorism is a misguided strategy as is much else about our understanding of violent religious extremism, according to a new book

by a veteran Ottawa security intelligence analyst.

The **Threat From Within** by Phil Gurski, a former analyst who spent 30 years at Canada's two primary intelligence agencies, instead reveals 12 behavioural characteristics or "indicators" common to Canada's biggest post-9/11 domestic terrorism cases, including the Oct. 22, 2014, attack on Parliament Hill.

"There are definitely things (that) are bad signs and if they are not addressed they may, or may not, end up with somebody dying," Gurski said in an interview. "Sometimes you can find a simple explanation for it. But, as we've seen in tons of cases, people didn't ask those questions or dismissed it and three months later people are dead."

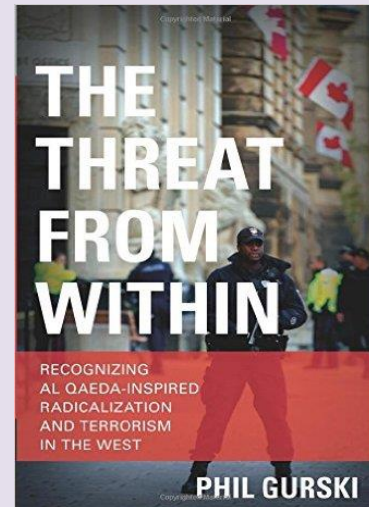
The 12 indicators (and number of times each was present in the 17 cases):

- Sudden increase in intolerant religiosity/change in behaviour (7)
- Intolerance for certain Muslim beliefs (1)
- Intolerance for non-Muslims (3)
- Rejection of Western ways (5)
- Rejection of Western policies (7)
- Change in social circles (5)
- Obsessive Internet use of violent sites (3)
- Obsession with foreign conflicts (4)
- Belief in the common narrative (6)
- Obsession with violent jihad (5)
- Obsession with martyrdom (6)
- Obsession with end-times (1)

Gurski, now retired, developed the list five years ago while working at the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS). The book is careful not to divulge classified material and was vetted by CSIS prior to publication this month. Gurski said the spy agency "didn't change a comma."

The book also attempts to dispel what Gurski said are three misperceptions about violent radicalization commonly repeated by authorities, news media and politicians.

For starters, the Internet is not the game-changer behind the rise of terrorism, he said. Terrorism existed long before microchips.



While the Internet does serve as a "space" for the incubation of extremist thoughts, it's more of a force multiplier than an essential, irreplaceable generator.

There also is virtually no such thing as "self-radicalized" or "lone wolf" terrorists, he said. A crucial element in violent radicalization is association with like-minded others, especially charismatic or spiritual mentors or leaders.

"Radicalization to violence is an inherently social process," writes Gurski, who also worked for 17 years as an intelligence analyst with the Communications Security



Establishment, the nation's foreign signals intelligence agency. "It is very rare for someone to act completely alone with no support or input — materiel or ideological — from the outside."

For years, counter-terrorism efforts and academic research have tried to identify "root causes," such as poverty, education, social status, employment, and gender and age, into a predictive template. The aim is to spot otherwise "normal" people potentially susceptible to the pull of what Gurski calls the al-Qaida-inspired narrative, that Islam is under attack by the West and mandates a chosen few to respond. The current ISIL narrative is much the same.

But the problem with trying to understand the root causes of why people are driven to terrorism is that there is no common path. There are too many "whys," too wide a range of

backgrounds and circumstances, to fit into a concise, simple categorization, he says.

"We have to get away from models that (try to) explain each and every case. If we misanalyze what's driving it, our policies are wrong ... and it leads to bad decisions," he said.

Instead, Gurski searched for common beliefs and behaviours in 17 homegrown terrorism cases, from that of Ottawa bomb-maker Momin Khawaja and the Toronto 18 to Hill shooter Michael Zehaf-Bibeau. All 17 cases shared as many as seven identifiable traits. He and his CSIS colleagues combined that with knowledge from hundreds of previous cases.

"I was able to help people in the service understand what they were collecting and what it meant. The book is basically an unclassified version of what we found."

Islamoterror is the Problem, not 'Islamophobia'

By Tarek Fatah

Source: <http://www.meforum.org/5730/islamoterror-not-islamophobia>



One would have hoped that after the latest Islamic terror attack in America by the husband-wife team of Syed Rizwan Farook and Tashfeen Malik, U.S.

Islamic organizations would recognize it was time to condemn "jihad" itself and to stop playing the victim card. However, that was too much to ask.

Last year, in the face of growing ISIS-inspired jihadi terrorism, the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA) along with other American Islamic organizations such as the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), formed the U.S. Council of Muslim Organizations (USCMO), which hosted a National Muslim Leadership Summit on Sunday in Washington, D.C.

ICNA is a conservative Islamic group formed in 1968 by Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi followers of the Jamaat-e-Islami in North America. Its stated goal is "to seek the pleasure of Allah» (for the) establishment of the Islamic system of life as spelled out in the

Qur'an and the Sunnah (sayings) of Muhammad."

ICNA states in its 2010 members' handbook, "Wherever the Islamic movement succeeds to establish true Islamic society, they will form coalition and alliances. This will lead to the unity of the Ummah (Muslim nation) and towards the establishment of the Khilafah (the Caliphate)."

Predictably, ICNA and CAIR did not invite secular or liberal Muslim American groups who are critical of the doctrine of armed jihad and Islamic Shariah as a source of public law.

Reacting to the formation of the USCMO, Dr. Zuhdi Jasser, an ex-U.S. Navy officer who founded and heads the American Islamic Forum for Democracy, told Fox News:

CAIR may condemn the acts and means of radical violent Islamists, but no one should be fooled for a moment that CAIR's singular fixation (is) on stoking the flames and raising funds off the exaggerated narrative that Muslims are under siege by 'bigoted Americans' ". They are feeding the global movement against America.

(CAIR says its "formula on terrorism is simple and comprehensive: CAIR condemns terrorism whenever it happens,



whoever commits it" and is a "natural enemy of violent extremists.")

After the two-day USCMO session, the coalition promised "to combat all forms of violent extremism in the homeland," noting Muslims are the major victims of terrorist groups like ISIS and frequent victims of Islamophobia. But it did not renounce the doctrine of armed jihad that feeds Islamic terrorism nor call for taking politics out of American mosques.

Instead, USCMO flexed its electoral muscle, deciding to conduct "a drive to register one million voters prior to the 2016 presidential election."

There was no call to cleanse the American Muslim house of all jihadi literature.

The problem is the Islamist victimhood agenda works well among guilt-ridden liberal

Americans who are quick to buy into the propaganda of Islamophobia.

Indeed, two Muslim women recently took to the *Washington Post* to protest the bizarre infatuation U.S. liberals have developed towards the symbols of Islamism. As Asra Nomani and Hala Arafa wrote,

Americans are getting duped by the agenda of Muslims who argue that a woman's honour lies in her 'chastity' and unwittingly pushing a platform to put a hijab on every woman. Please do this instead: Do not wear a headscarf in 'solidarity' with the ideology that most silences us, equating our bodies with 'honour.. Stand with us instead ... against the ideology of Islamism that demands we cover our hair.

But is anyone listening to the voices of reason among North American Muslims?

Tarek Fatah, a founder of the Muslim Canadian Congress and columnist at the Toronto Sun, is a Robert J. and Abby B. Levine Fellow at the Middle East Forum.



Eyewitness Accounts from Recent Defectors from Islamic State: Why They Joined, What They Saw, Why They Quit

By Anne Speckhard, Ahmet S. Yayla

Source: <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/475/html>

This research note reports on preliminary results of the Islamic State Interviews Project, based here on a sample of thirteen Syrian IS defectors who spoke on life inside the "Islamic State" (IS). . A fuller and more systematic account will be published in early 2016 in book form. According to what we learned, all IS cadres undergo Shariah training in which they are imbued with a Takfiri ideology that allows them to deem all others, including Muslims, who disagree with IS' extreme ideology, as apostates who should be killed. Despite this indoctrination, all of our informants (all are Syrians) experienced their Shariah trainers as a positive influence since they allowed them to deepen their own religious understanding. In this sense, these disengaged defectors remained radicalized "true believers". They also had been given military training—learning to handle weapons, explosives, and undergoing exercise. Following these compulsory courses, they were sent to the front. Syrians who join IS are rewarded with salaried jobs which for young men translates into the ability to marry and for young women the money allows them to save their families from literal starvation. Foreign fighters are receiving additional rewards: wives, sexual slaves, and sometimes homes and cars. Daily life was punctuated by brutal practices – including floggings, torture and beheadings. Defections were the result of exposure to extreme brutality, disgust over the slave trade, observations of deep hypocrisy—a total mismatch between the words and deeds of IS. Charges of corruption and complaints about battlefield decisions that produced unnecessary deaths in their own ranks were also causes of disillusionment. Our informants all had come to hate IS and warn others not to join what they gradually came to see as a totally disappointing, ruthless and un-Islamic organization.

► You can read the full paper at source's URL.

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EU Sends Terrorism Experts to the Frontlines

Source: <http://i-hls.com/2015/12/67342/>

Dec 19 – The European Union is increasing efforts to understand and combat terrorism and extremism. To this end, the **EU has sent intelligence and security experts on assignment to its missions in the Middle East, North Africa, and Nigeria.**

The European External Action Service, the foreign affairs and diplomatic corps arm of the EU, has deployed eight former intelligence, police, and military officers with far ranging experience in conflict zones, demobilization, reintegration, and disarmament, as special attachés to Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and Turkey, with a deployment to Egypt are soon to follow.

“These are people who have a background in security and police, and can develop good contacts in the security world in the countries of the Mediterranean rim,” said EU counter-terrorism coordinator Gilles de Kerchove.

The deployment plan was initiated following the Charlie Hebdo attack in Paris in February, and received extra urgency following the 13 November attacks in Paris, for which ISIS claimed responsibility.

While individual EU states have mostly good ties and cooperation with countries in the Middle East and North Africa, recent events have shown that that is not enough. To combat international terrorism, the EU needs a coherent, unified diplomatic and counter-terrorist framework.

The attachés are tasked with overseeing de-radicalization efforts, build up the host countries’ counter-terrorism efforts in cooperation with the EU, as well as reporting to Brussels on efforts in their host countries and on domestic policy in the fields of radicalization, organized crime, migration, corruption, and anti-terrorism. Their expertise allows for a deeper level of understanding with local military command.

This program is but one facet of a European initiative to combat terrorism that includes funds allocated to efforts to combat radicalization around the world, cooperation with the UN, and assistance to Middle East and North African regimes in combating radicalization and terrorism.

EDITOR’S COMMENT: I proposed exactly the same in the previous issue of the Newsletter when I wrote that HUMINT is much more efficient than super technological means in connecting the real life dots to make a thorough estimate of the things to come. It seems to me that field first responders begin to take over bureaucrats and academia that produce models usually proven wrong.

Dagestan gunmen kill one at south Russia fortress

Source: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35198059>



Dec 30 – A tourist group was attacked on Tuesday night outside the fortress in Derbent, one of Russia’s most ancient towns.

A security guard who was with the local tourists was killed. The wounded are now in hospital, five seriously hurt.

Dagestan has been battling Islamist militants for years - partly a result of separatism in neighbouring Chechnya.

It is not yet clear who opened fire on the tourists, as the gunmen fled the



scene. They ambushed the tourists - all local residents - from a nearby wooded area.



The ancient city of Derbent is considered a historical treasure and was listed by UNESCO in 2003. It celebrated its 2000th anniversary this year.

The stone Naryn-Kala fortress formed part of the northern defences of the Sasanian Persian Empire and was used by succeeding rulers for 15 centuries, UNESCO says.

Although the British Foreign Office advises against all travel to Dagestan, Russia's federal tourism agency invites visitors to explore Derbent's narrow streets or soak in the mineral waters around Makhachkala, the capital city.

ISIS Oil: Kurdish Government in Iraq Denies Reports of Transport through Its Territory to Turkey

Source: <http://www.ibtimes.com/isis-oil-kurdish-government-iraq-denies-reports-transport-through-its-territory-2240558>

Dec 27 – More than three weeks after Russia displayed satellite images to show that the Islamic State group was shipping its oil to Turkey for sale, the Kurdish Regional Government in Iraqi Kurdistan has finally issued a response. The government denies all claims that the Sunni militant group is transporting oil from the territory it controls through Iraqi Kurdistan to Turkey.

An official from the KRG, Kifah Mahmoud, said the Islamic State group, also known as ISIS, does not transport its oil through the Iraqi Kurdish region and said the satellite images Russia provided as evidence are not tankers belonging to the extremist group. He said that despite Russia's claims, his government is not turning a blind eye to the ISIS oil trade.

That claim, though, can't account for the massive amounts of oil that ISIS has been able to get from its territory in Iraqi Kurdistan to refineries in southeastern Turkey and to the port of Ceyhan near Adana.

Although ISIS lost control of major oil wells and refineries in Iraqi Kurdistan such as the Baiji complex, it is still operating in the region. The group is still in control of two oilfields in western Iraqi Kurdistan, Qaiyarah and Najmah, where it is producing about 20,000 barrels of oil a day.

The fields also have two power stations and connect to small pipelines that lead directly to Mosul, the largest city ISIS controls.



At the peak of its campaign against government troops in Iraq in the summer of 2014, ISIS exported millions of dollars' worth of oil daily, according to a recent report by George Kiourktsoglou, a researcher at the University of Greenwich in England.

ISIS exported about 15 percent of its daily oil production to the port of Ceyhan for sale on the high seas. That means the Sunni militant group must have either trucked the oil it extracted in Iraq and Syria to Ceyhan or put it in a pipeline. The only major pipeline to Ceyhan begins in Iraqi Kurdistan.

In an address to reporters on Friday, Gen. Sergei Rudskoy, director of the Main Operations Center of the Russian General Staff, said that because of the increasing number of airstrikes in Syria, oil smugglers traveling to Turkey have changed their route.

Rudskoy said the destination of the oil trafficking is Turkey, but that ISIS changed its route because of U.S. airstrikes. Now, he said, the group travels through Mosul and the Iraqi Kurdish city of Zakho.

The KRG began exporting crude in May 2014 using the Kirkuk-Ceyhan Pipeline. Baghdad could at one point access it, but fighting and damage to the infrastructure shut the central government off.

The Kurdish government, though, hoping to revive its economy via the oil trade, began exporting through its own independent pipeline that connects to the larger Kirkuk-Ceyhan route. There are also several smaller pipelines throughout Iraqi Kurdistan that connect to the big pipeline.

The oil sector, and all of its transactions, were and still are overseen by the KRG, led by President Masoud Barzani.

Pakistani Islamist attack on Indian base kills 12

Source: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/b422275c-b1e9-11e5-b147-e5e5bba42e51.html#axzz3wGWXrZ4a>

Jan 02 – At least 12 people were killed at the weekend when Pakistan-based Islamists attacked an Indian air force base, in what appears to have been an attempt to scupper peace talks between the two governments.

The attackers, said by Indian officials to have



been members of Sunni extremist group Jaish-e-Mohammad (the Army of Mohammed), crossed the border from Pakistan, hijacked cars and attacked living quarters at the Pathankot air base in Punjab.

Four were killed in a day-long gun battle on Saturday, and more were shot dead in

renewed fighting on Sunday, while the capital New Delhi was placed on alert for possible terror attacks.

Seven Indians also died at the air base. The attack came roughly a week after Narendra Modi, Indian prime minister, paid a surprise visit to his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif in Lahore for a friendly, "unofficial" meeting.

Mr Modi, leader of the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata party (BJP), has tried to revive peace talks with Pakistan since taking office 18 months ago, inviting Mr Sharif to his inauguration in New Delhi and meeting him several times subsequently.

Hina Rabbani Khar, Pakistan's former foreign minister, said: "Incidents like Pathankot are a challenge to both India and Pakistan. Such attacks can at least cause a dent in any peace process. That's why Prime Minister Modi's recent visit to Lahore could not have come at a better time. It



has made him a stakeholder in the Indo-Pak peace process.”

Pakistan condemned the Pathankot attack without admitting responsibility, with the foreign ministry saying Islamabad remained committed to “partner with India as well as other countries in the region to completely eradicate the menace of terrorism afflicting our region”.

Gen Raheel Sharif, the army commander who is unrelated to the prime minister, had previously launched a campaign against the Pakistani Taliban in the lawless border areas near Afghanistan and cracked down on criminals and extremists in Karachi, the biggest city.

That was because the Sunni Islamist terror groups sponsored by Islamabad for operations in Afghanistan had in recent years been killing people inside Pakistan, including members of the Shia minority and the children of army officers. Gen Sharif declared on New Year’s Day that 2016 would be the year when “terrorism will end”.

But Pakistani military commanders are ambivalent about terror groups such as JeM that have focused largely on attacking Indian targets in the disputed territory of Kashmir. Indian officials say the group, while officially banned, is supported by the Pakistani intelligence services; JeM’s leader, Maulana Masood Azhar, was one of three prisoners

freed by India in exchange for the release of passengers on a hijacked Indian passenger jet in 1999.

Nor is it certain that the Pakistani army, whose exalted status and large budgetary allocations depend on having India as a permanent enemy, will allow the Pakistan leader to seal a lasting peace accord with Mr Modi.

In an earlier term in office in 1999, Mr Sharif signed a peace agreement in Lahore with the BJP’s Atal Behari Vajpayee, one of Mr Modi’s predecessors as Indian prime minister.

But within months, war erupted between the two countries at Kargil after Pakistani forces infiltrated into Indian-controlled Kashmir, and by the end of the year Mr Sharif had been deposed by Gen Pervez Musharraf in a military coup.

India said after the Pathankot attack that it wanted to continue negotiations with Pakistan, although the discussion would have to include terrorism. “We want a good relationship with neighbouring and other countries, but if there is a terror attack, the government will give a befitting reply,” home minister Rajnath Singh told the Hindu newspaper. “There will be zero tolerance on terror.”

The US state department also condemned the attack, calling on countries in the region to work together “to disrupt and dismantle terrorist networks”.

Two students have died in a grenade attack at a university in southern Ethiopia

Source: <http://www.presstv.in/Detail/2016/01/01/444099/Ethiopia-university-students-grenade>



Jan 01 – “The blast killed two students and wounded six, of which four were seriously injured,” Ejigu Shiferaw, a police official in the town of Gedeo, said on Friday.



The attacker, or attackers, tossed a hand grenade at students on the campus at Dilla University on Thursday night in the diverse Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR), about 350 kilometers (200 miles) south of the capital, Addis Ababa.

Police did not cite any details on the number of suspects in police custody, or possible motives behind the attack, in the area, where there have not been any recent reports of significant unrest.

Three weeks ago, however, a bomb attack at a mosque in Addis Ababa left more than 20 people injured. Officials are yet to disclose details of that attack, for which there has not been any claim of responsibility.

Ethiopia says it has thwarted several bombing plots in recent years and blames rebel groups based in other areas of the south and southeast, as well as al-Shabab militants from neighboring Somalia, for the plots.

Ethiopian troops are part of an African Union peacekeeping mission that has been fighting al-Shabab in Somalia, affiliated to al-Qaeda, since 2011.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: I must confess that I feel bad whenever I focus on terrorist incidents happening within the Western world while at the same time similar incidents are happening on daily basis. Twenty dead in a university shooting in the US or in a European capital bombing is almost nothing compared with hundreds of people dying in Africa or Middle East. Imagine the above incident in a European university setting. The whole (our) world will be alerted and thousands of websites and newspapers would deal with that for months. But Ethiopia is from another planet, far away from Earth and most of us would not raise an eye brow for just two students' dead and six injured...

Is There a Uighur Terrorist Build-Up Taking Place in Southeast Asia?

Source <http://time.com/4161906/uighur-terrorism-indonesia-thailand-islam-isis/>



Bay Ismoyo—AFP/Getty Images Ahmet Bozoglan, left, a member of China's Uighur minority, walks for his appearance at the North Jakarta District Court on terrorism charges on July 29, 2015, in Jakarta.

Dec 31 – As if to underscore the increasingly borderless quality of jihadist insurrection, a suspected terrorist from China's remote northwest was arrested last week in Indonesia after the country's antiterrorism squad raided a house in Bekasi, on the outskirts of the capital, Jakarta.

During the Dec. 24 morning raid, the police also seized an explosive device in a car and a model of a government building at the house, along with bombmaking materials. It is believed that the suspect — a 35-year-old member of China's Uighur ethnic minority named Alli — was being groomed to carry out a suicide bombing.

“He's a Uighur who was learning Indonesian, and he was a [suicide bomber] in training,” police chief



Badrodin Haiti told the Jakarta Globe news website.

Alli is the 11th terrorist suspect arrested by the antiterrorism squad after a series of raids in cities across Java just days before Christmas. According to the police, the crackdown, which started on Dec. 18 and was based on tips from the FBI and the Australian Federal Police, foiled a plot to attack several cities on the main islands of Java, Sumatra and Kalimantan. **Among the targets were senior police officers, high-ranking government officials, Christian churches and Shi'ite mosques.**

Alli, along with six of the terrorist suspects nabbed days earlier, is allegedly part of an ISIS-affiliated terrorist ring that is linked with Bahrun Naim — an Indonesian ex-terrorism convict who has gone to Syria to fight with the Islamic State of Iraq and Greater Syria. (The remaining four belong to another terrorist group, Jemaah Islamiyah, which is aligned with al-Qaeda.)

Some of the funding for Bahrun's terrorist ring allegedly came from an Indonesian migrant worker in Hong Kong. Tasmina, who is married to Zaenal, another would-be suicide bomber arrested in the West Java town of Tasikmalaya on Dec. 18, allegedly contributed \$600 — more than a foreign domestic helper's monthly wage in Hong Kong — to buy bombmaking materials, says Rakyen Adibrata, a Jakarta-based terrorism expert who advises the Indonesian parliament.

Alli, the **Uighur suspect, is believed to have entered Indonesia via Batam, a small island off Singapore**, about two months ago — along with two of his Uighur compatriots who remain at large. In Indonesia, he is accused of getting a fake ID card that said he was born in Pontianak, West Kalimantan. "He said he was a Pontianak Chinese, but his Indonesian language is very bad," Rakyen tells TIME. "It's difficult to interrogate him."

Before entering Indonesia, the police believe, the Uighurs were in Thailand and Malaysia. A police source told the Jakarta Globe that Alli might have been linked to the Erawan Shrine bombing in Bangkok on Aug. 17. (Thai police have since ruled out that possibility.)

The Uighurs, from China's northwestern region of Xinjiang, are Muslims who speak a Turkic language. They have long complained of repression and violence at the hands of the

predominantly Chinese Han majority. Thousands have fled China in recent years, including to Southeast Asian countries like Thailand and Cambodia. The vast majority have no connection whatsoever to terrorism or Islamist extremism, instead claiming legitimate asylum. Their peaceful hope is to be allowed to go on to Turkey, but the Thai and Cambodian governments have instead deported them back to China, despite well-founded fears that the Uighurs will be persecuted on their return.

Alli wasn't the first Uighur arrested in Indonesia. In September 2014, the police detained four Uighurs who attempted to meet Santoso — the leader of the Mujahideen of Eastern Indonesia, Indonesia's most-wanted man and a jihadist who has pledged allegiance to ISIS — in Poso, Central Sulawesi, and to join his militant group. Like Alli, they too had been in Thailand, where they obtained fake Turkish passports, and later went to Malaysia before heading to Bandung, West Java. The four were sentenced to six years in jail by Indonesia's courts in July this year and, at Beijing's behest, were repatriated to China.

In early November, Indonesian security forces shot dead a Uighur called Farouk, also known as Magalasi, when they attacked Santoso's militant group in a village in Central Sulawesi.

Indonesia hasn't seen any mass-casualty terrorist attack to date since it cracked down on Jemaah Islamiyah, the jihadist group responsible for the Bali bombings in 2002 that killed 202 people. In the past five years, nearly all victims of terrorism in Indonesia have been police officers, who are blamed for the arrests and killings of jihadists.

Yet the rise of the social-media-savvy ISIS has sparked new interest. According to the Jakarta-based Institute of Policy Analysis for Conflict,

more than 1,000 Indonesians have sworn allegiance to ISIS since June 2014.

The country's intelligence agency suggests 800 Indonesian citizens have joined ISIS in the Middle East, but police chief Badrodin disputes the figure, saying "only around 60 to 70."

China itself has experienced a series of terrorism attacks, including mass-stabbing incidents in Kunming and Guangzhou train stations in 2014; bombing and knife attacks in Urumqi's market and train station in 2014; and a suicide car crash in Beijing's



Tiananmen Square — all of which were blamed on the Uighurs.

The presence of Uighurs in Indonesia, thousands of kilometers away, shows

“interesting dynamics,” terrorism expert Rakyau says. “Terrorism as ‘weapon for the weak’ is no longer characterized with a specific territory.”

Daesh release fatwa guide on when to rape female sex slaves

Source <http://metro.co.uk/2015/12/30/revealed-islamic-state-guide-on-when-militants-can-rape-female-sex-slaves-5591303/>



Dec 30 – **Islamic State theologians have issued a detailed ruling on when ‘owners’ of enslaved women can have sex with them.**

The disturbing guide is an apparent bid to curb what they called violations in the treatment of captured females.

The ruling or fatwa has the force of law and appears to go beyond previous known utterances on slavery, a leading Daesh scholar said.

The document sheds new light on how the group is trying to reinterpret centuries-old teachings to justify the rape of women in Syria and Iraq.

Among the disturbing rules, bans on a father and son having sex with the same female slave; and the owner of a mother and daughter having sex with both. Joint owners of a female captive are similarly enjoined from intercourse because she is viewed as ‘part of a joint ownership’.

The fatwa was among a huge trove of documents discovered by U.S. Special Operations Forces during a raid targeting a top Daesh official back in May 2015.

The document, which has not been previously published, has been reviewed but it remains difficult to confirm its authenticity.

Fatwa teachings

The fatwa starts with a question: ‘Some of the brothers have committed violations in the matter of the treatment of the female slaves. These violations are not permitted by Sharia law because these rules have not been dealt with in ages. Are there any warnings pertaining to this matter?’

It then lists 15 injunctions, which in some instances go into explicit detail.

For example: ‘If the owner of a female captive, who has a daughter suitable for intercourse,



has sexual relations with the latter, he is not permitted to have intercourse with her mother and she is permanently off limits to him. Should he have intercourse with her mother then he is not permitted to have intercourse with her daughter and she is to be off limits to him.'

Rape is not permitted when a woman is on her period, men must wait until the woman is 'clean'. Anal penetration is also banned.

The fatwa also instructs owners of female slaves to 'show compassion towards her, be kind to her, not humiliate her, and not assign her work she is unable to perform.' An owner should also not sell her to an individual whom he knows will mistreat her.

The United Nations and human rights groups have accused Daesh of the systematic

abduction and rape of thousands of women and girls as young as 12, especially members of the Yazidi minority in northern Iraq.

Many women and girls are given to fighters as a reward or sold as sex slaves.

Far from trying to conceal the practice, Islamic State has boasted about it and established a department of 'war spoils' to manage slavery.

In an April 2015 report, Human Rights Watch interviewed 20 female escapees who recounted how Islamic State fighters separated young women and girls from men and boys and older women. They were moved 'in an organized and methodical fashion to various places in Iraq and Syria'.

► For a U.S. government translation of the fatwa click [here](#).

Leaked Islamic State Documents: What If They Are Fake?

By Adam Taylor

Source: <http://www.meforum.org/5746/isis-documents-real-or-fake>

Dec 30 – If you want to really understand the Islamic State and go beyond the propaganda, looking at the militant group's internal documents might be a good place to start. As the group expanded over the past year and attempted to turn into a functioning state, it released several internal orders and decrees that seek to organize this "caliphate." These documents offer a glimpse of not only the way the Islamic State organizes but also the anxiety and disorder in the group that lies under the surface.

One example of this comes from documents that were recently revealed by Reuters and that appear to show the Islamic State decreeing who can have sex with captured enslaved women and who cannot. The documents showed that a bureaucracy appears to underpin even the most brutal acts committed by the group and hinted that some of the extreme behavior by its fighters led even the group's own religious authorities to balk.



On the other hand, some experts believe that some purported Islamic State internal documents shared online are hoaxes, deliberately designed to deceive. These fakes are widespread enough that **Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi**, a young British analyst who has made a name for himself with his analysis of extremist activity, recently published his own "[Guide to Islamic State document hoaxes](#)."

Tamimi's guide pointed to three recent documents widely shared online that he felt were fake. Some of these documents have fooled experts and media outlets. One of these, which appeared to show that the Islamic State planned to abandon Iraq's Fallujah province, was shared on Twitter by Col. Steve Warren, a spokesman for the U.S.-led campaign against the Islamic State. Another, which purported to be a price list for sex slaves, was reported on by the *Daily Mail* and cited by U.N. official Zainab Bangura.

Below, you can read Tamimi's explanation for why he thinks these documents are fake, as well as his broader take on why internal documents will prove important to understanding the Islamic State. Tamini's statements were sent via email and have been slightly edited for the sake of clarity.



WorldViews: Do you think Islamic State document hoaxes are particularly widespread? How many 'real' documents might there be versus hoax documents, for example?



A fake price list for Islamic State sex slaves

Aymenn Jawad al-Tamimi: One consequence of the rise of the Islamic State with the development of its administration on the ground over time — far more sophisticated than anything al-Qaeda in Iraq [the predecessor of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, which later became the Islamic State] could offer and controlling much more territory — is that there are far more Islamic State administrative documents in circulation within the lands it rules. When one takes this point into account with the rise of open-source social media channels to broadcast information, it is not hard to see how many authentic documents end up being leaked to the public, whether by anti-Islamic State activist groups [such as Raqqa Is Being Slaughtered Silently and Deir az-Zor 24], local media outlets, or more obscure individuals, including some Islamic State members.

Indeed, it turns out that at least some of the Islamic State fatwas being claimed as exclusive revelations from the Abu Sayyaf raid [a raid conducted in May that led to the death of top Islamic State official Abu Sayyaf and has

recently been cited as the source for a number of documents] earlier this year were actually put up by an Islamic State member who called himself Abu Umar al-Masri around a year ago. At the time I translated and put up some of the fatwas in my raw archive of Islamic State documents. Cole Bunzel [an expert on the Islamic State at Princeton University] then summarized all of them.

More recently, the Islamic State has recognized these problems of leaked information and is accordingly acting to restrict Internet access and ensure that as much information as possible only enters the public domain by its approval — mostly in the form of its official propaganda wings, of course, which still bombard the airwaves on a daily basis with new releases.

On balance, far more genuine Islamic State documents have publicly come to light. Generally speaking, the fakes are few in number and fairly easy to spot if you're familiar with prior specimens.

Is there something about purported internal documents that makes them especially appealing to experts and analysts, versus the more typical propaganda and witness accounts?



This forgery appears to show that the Islamic State planned to abandon Iraq's Fallujah province



Yes, there is much that is appealing about pursuing this line of evidence. I think internal documents present a more definitive view of happenings on the ground rather than witness accounts that are liable to considerable variation not only from place to place but also individual to individual, as well as problems of exaggeration and fabrication. Also, in contrast with the propaganda, internal documents help point to aspects of shortcomings within the Islamic State's administration that the Islamic State does not want you to see.

For instance, the Islamic State has acknowledged in its propaganda the need for more qualified medical personnel to help run its health department [Diwan al-Siha], but internal documents show that one problem behind this shortage is brain drain, such that on multiple occasions the Islamic State has issued threats and ultimatums to confiscate property of doctors and other medical personnel who do not return to the Caliphate.

Of course, propaganda is a basic problem beyond the Islamic State, particularly in the field of jihadism studies, which has to deal with the fact that this is what so much of the available information actually is. However, that is not to say analysis of the propaganda yields no insights: Some of the best work on Islamic State propaganda so far has been in the form of statistical analysis by theme, definitively debunking the notion that the propaganda is merely obsessed with gore, brutality and violence — a perception amplified by popular media coverage of the worst Islamic State atrocities on camera and video.

Another particularly interesting case of internal documents as a more solid line of evidence in the case of the Islamic State touches on the controversy in the spring of this year that claimed Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi [the group's leader] was incapacitated. In April, a pro-rebel Twitter account with access to information in northeast Aleppo province put up an internal document in which Baghdadi called for a mobilization in the Syrian provinces to reinforce the fighting fronts in Anbar and Salahuddin provinces in Iraq.

Sure enough, some three weeks later, an official speech by Baghdadi was released on the subject of mobilization, and with the subsequent fall of Ramadi, it is clear the Islamic State was pushing particularly hard to take Ramadi as the provincial capital of Anbar,

while the fighting fronts in Baiji in northern Salahuddin were being used to pin down Iraqi forces. I think these developments put to rest the rumors of Baghdadi's incapacitation that were ultimately based on shaky oral testimony. With the demand for information on the Islamic State, it can be tempting to leap on whatever morsels of oral 'insider testimony' might come out, but verification is extremely difficult.

What are some tell-tale signs that a document has been faked?

The fakes that have been circulated are largely poor in quality. The forgers seem to be ignorant of Islamic State labeling, there are recurring motifs, and we see some clear attempts to take jabs at certain actors perceived to be backing the Islamic State. For instance, two well-known forgeries — a purported price list for Yazidi and Christian slaves and an order to withdraw from Iraq — use the label "Islamic State of Iraq" (the Islamic State's first predecessor to claim the statehood mantle, which it did in 2006). No authentic document I have seen since 2013 uses this label, and it is a very obvious error.

Unfortunately, the fact a U.N. official endorsed the price list as authentic means that the forgery has continued to gain traction in the media. In terms of recurring motifs, the one I have seen most frequently concerns supposed orders for withdrawal: Many of these forgeries aim not only to portray the Islamic State as on the verge of defeat but also try to depict any abuses by Shiite militias and the Iraqi security forces as Islamic State fabrications, besides playing on the widespread conspiracy theory of collusion between the [Persian] Gulf states and the Islamic State.

In short, I don't think we are at the stage where forgers of Islamic State documents are becoming sophisticated in techniques. This is unlike the realms of collecting sports memorabilia and Nazi medals, where fakes can fool even some of the best authenticators in the industries. I guess one reason is that the financial incentive for forging Islamic State documents isn't so great.

What might motivate someone to make and distribute a fake Islamic State document?

The incentives at present don't seem to be financial. It seems to be more about playing on popular



conspiracy theories, portraying the Islamic State as on the verge of defeat, and inciting moral outrage and clickbait.

You mention in your blog post that Col. Steve Warren says that U.S. analysts believe the document about a withdrawal from Fallujah is real. Do you think there is any chance they are right?

[Note: In a comment provided to Foreign Policy after his tweet sparked debate about the legitimacy of the document, Warren said the document had been discovered by Iraqi security forces and vetted by U.S. analysts]

I am fully convinced that the document is a forgery despite Warren's attempts to claim otherwise. I haven't met Warren personally and can't claim to know for sure what is going through his mind. But there's a possibility he feels he must stand by the document to avoid public scandal and fallout, whatever he currently thinks of its actual veracity. Otherwise, I find it alarming if U.S. analysts actually vetted this document.

The Islamic State already argues that there's a smear campaign against it. How do these fake documents play into that?

The fake documents only bolster the Islamic State's narrative that its enemies can only try to discredit the project by lying. This reinforces the Islamic State's propaganda as the information environment for sympathizers and supporters, in my view.

What else should we bear in mind when looking at these documents?

Looking at the grand picture, one has to step back and admit the primary limitation here: Namely, the documents uncovered so far still only represent a small fraction of documents in existence. If most of the remaining documents are to enter into the public domain, it is foremost necessary for the Islamic State project to be defeated. Whatever forces, if ever, end up expelling the Islamic State from cities like Raqqa and Mosul will hopefully be wise enough to seize and preserve as many documents as they can find. In this context, on a smaller scale, the seizure of files and documents by U.S. Special Forces in the Abu Sayyaf raid represents a step in the right direction.

Sometimes I am asked why I do not write a book on the Islamic State based on some of the documents I have obtained. In my view, there is still a vast wealth of information out there that will take many years at the minimum to come to light. Writing a book at this stage seems premature. Just as the best histories of Nazi Germany have been written well after the Second World War with archives of documents made available to researchers, so I apply the same reasoning to analyzing the Islamic State. As researchers we need to be aware of the limits of our capabilities in obtaining information.

Thousands of foreign workers help ISIS keep its crude oil flowing

Source: <http://aranews.net/2015/12/17294/>

Dec 29 – **The extremist group of Islamic State (ISIS) has recruited thousands of workers with experience in the oil industry to help the group keep crude pumping from the wells of the ISIS-held oil fields in Syria and Iraq.**

The 'Iraq Oil Report' on Monday published a new report providing details on the ISIS oil operations in the region, saying that documents captured in a recent U.S. raid confirmed that the radical group has **employed more than 2,000 workers to pump crude from at least 200 wellheads in Syria and Iraq.** ISIS has reportedly offered competitive salaries to its oil workers in order to keep its crude flowing and to maintain its oil revenue despite the airstrikes by the U.S.-led coalition.

The majority of the workers came from foreign countries, the report said.

According to the records released by the U.S. government, the intensive airstrikes against ISIS's oil fields and tactical units could not prevent the group from keeping its crude oil flowing.

Experts recruited by ISIS have repeatedly fixed facilities just a few days after being hit by the coalition's airstrikes. Some of the wells continued producing despite the damage.



The radical group's revenue from oil production reaches \$40 million per month. According to 'Iraq Oil Report', ISIS produces about 70,000 barrels per day.

Yes, let's have a frank and open discussion about the causes of extremism and terrorism

By Adrian Cherney

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20151229-yes-let-s-have-a-frank-and-open-discussion-about-the-causes-of-extremism-and-terrorism>

Dec 29 – Several Australian government politicians have said a frank discussion is needed about the causes of terrorism. Resources Minister Josh Frydenberg set the tone for the week by saying “religion is part of the problem”. There is a problem “within Islam”, he added.

Liberal MP Andrew Hastie said debates about extremism are “clouded by political correctness.” Liberal MP Craig Kelly and Queensland Nationals MP George Christensen followed suit.

Frank and open debate about the problem of terrorism and violent extremism is certainly needed in Australia. But such a debate requires us to examine many possible causes. Singling out and overplaying one cause, such as religion, only stifles debate and also our policy responses.

We need an open *and* informed debate.

Recent research published by Mohammed Hafez and Creighton Mullins set out to identify why Muslims in Western societies embrace violent extremism. **This research identified four causes:**

- **personal and collective grievances**
- **networks and interpersonal ties**
- **political and religious ideologies**
- **enabling environments and support structures.**

In summary, causes relating to personal and collective grievances include economic marginalization and cultural alienation, a sense of victimization and grievances about foreign policies.

Networks and interpersonal ties refer to existing kinship and friendship ties that help reinforce extremist beliefs.

Political and religious ideologies help to demonize enemies and justify violence against them. They also help create incentives to use violence.

Enabling environments and support structures include physical and virtual settings – such as

the internet, social media and prisons – that provide ideological and material aid for radicalizing individuals. These also deepen their commitment to the use of violence.

Tackling these causes in a holistic way is what is required to counter violent extremism effectively.

Honest debate includes all issues

If we genuinely want open and honest debate, then we need also to consider uncomfortable issues. Examples include how Islamophobia and foreign policy grievances feed violent extremism and help terrorist groups recruit young Muslims by appealing to the need to defend Islam against Western governments.

Considering these factors does not mean one is justifying extremism and acts of terrorism. The argument about looking at root causes cuts both ways in the context of considering all possible causes of terrorism and extremism.

Recent [research](#) published by the Tony Blair Foundation helps clarify the roles of ideology and religion. As the authors state, it is ideology that shapes and directs the application of Islamic faith. The Islamic faith is not the issue; how it is distorted and selectively interpreted and applied is the problem.

As the report highlights, ideologies are personal and political. Extremists selectively use the Islamic faith to justify what they do.

Hafez and Mullins argue it is a strategic mistake to view the ideological underpinnings of terrorist groups and violent extremists as purely Islamic. Only when we understand how extremists use the Islamic faith to legitimize their actions and appeal to others will we be able to tackle some of the causes of extremism.

The implication of this is that Muslim scholars and leaders are the best allies and defense against extremism. This is because they have the breadth of



knowledge about Islam to denounce and challenge the extremist narrative.

Our policy responses should be empowering these scholars and leaders, rather than alienating them and the Muslim community.

We often hear the demand that the Muslim community needs to speak out more against terrorism and confront extremism. This can happen only if they are given opportunities to do so in the media and other public forums. And they should not be made to fear that when they do speak out they will be lambasted by politicians and the media for not being outspoken enough.

Uninformed comments from politicians about Islam do not promote an open and informed debate. They serve only to sideline and alienate Muslims who are best placed to tackle Islamists and violent extremists. The irony is that alienation and marginalization also make the role of counter-terrorism policing much harder.

Emphasizing only one possible cause of terrorism and extremism is all about politics. What we need instead is a sincere effort to actually think about and solve the problem of violent extremism.

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“Shared bad memories” bind fighters, terrorists to their groups

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20151229-shared-bad-memories-bind-fighters-terrorists-to-their-groups>

Dec 29 – **What binds military fighters or terrorists together so tightly that they are willing to sacrifice their own lives for their causes?**

Previous research has shown that such extreme behavior can be driven by “identity fusion,” a strong sense of “oneness” with their group. Oxford University researchers have now shed new light on the role that shared emotional experiences plays in this fusion between people’s personal and group identities.



In their paper, published in the journal *PLOS ONE*, they describe three studies.

Oxford U reports that the first two, based on online questionnaires with people living in Northern Ireland and Boston, reveal that people who share extremely bad experiences together fuse more with their respective groups and a reflective process appears to link the

shared traumatic events with the group’s identity. An experiment also shows how just thinking about a collectively traumatic event increases a sense of oneness with the group.

In the first study, 200 people of Irish and British descent in Northern Ireland who had lived during The Troubles were asked about their negative experiences as a Unionist or Republican; how frequently they had suffered for being a Republican or Unionist; and how they rated their suffering. They then answered questions about how often they reflected on these shared negative experiences and, finally, how fused they felt with Republicanism or Unionism. The findings suggest that the level of an individual’s suffering as a member of their group can be linked with their level of identity fusion, and this connection forms because of a period of reflection on their shared experiences.

The paper also reports two other studies with residents of Boston. They were asked about how they were directly or indirectly affected by the 2013 Boston Marathon Bombing, a terrorist attack that killed three people and injured more than 260. Unlike participants from Northern Ireland, Boston residents had not



experienced a long conflict, but a sudden, one-off, seemingly random attack. Again researchers found that those most affected by the event thought more about their experiences. This, in turn, predicted how strongly their personal identity fused with the City of Boston.

Researchers lastly carried out an experiment to see the effects of reviving memories of the Boston Bombing. Half of a sample of almost 100 people was randomly put into the “Boston Bombing group,” in which participants had to vividly recall their memories of that incident and write them down, and think specifically about how they and others they knew had been affected by the event. The other half, meanwhile, was given a different task of remembering more mundane things they had done recently in Boston, such as running errands or shopping. Afterwards, researchers assessed the overlap between their personal and group identities. Using standard psychological measures, they found that those who had been primed about the Boston Bombing had a heightened sense of oneness with the city.

Lead author Dr. Jonathan Jong, from the School of Anthropology at the University of Oxford, said: “Previous research has shown that people with high levels of fusion are more likely to back extreme action taken for the sake of the group, particularly when they feel their group is threatened. We find that memories of

shared bad experiences at the hands of hostile outsiders can lead to fusion. It is important to increase our understanding of the psychological causes behind intense social bonding and extremism if we are to develop effective interventions to stem the tide of conflicts we are experiencing in the world today. One possibility might be to try to disrupt the process of reflection that seems so important in connecting shared trauma with social bonding.”

The research was done as part of the Ritual Project, funded by the U.K. Economic Social Research Council. Project leader Professor Harvey Whitehouse, also from Oxford’s School of Anthropology, said: “This research into the role of shared suffering in identity fusion supports earlier project findings, including our studies of militias in Libya during and after the revolution in 2011. There, we found that fighters who had faced the most traumatic ordeals of frontline combat were more fused with friends in their battalions than with their families, whereas those who had faced less extreme experiences in the conflict were significantly more fused with family than with fellow fighters. Fusion is key to explaining the willingness of armed combatants to fight and die for one another. Understanding the mechanisms involved may help us to de-fuse combatants or harness their fusion in the service of peaceful outcomes.”

— Read more in Jonathan Jong et al., “Shared negative experiences lead to identity fusion via personal reflection, *PLOS ONE* (23 December 2015).

U.K. unprepared for terror attacks outside London: Experts

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20151229-u-k-unprepared-for-terror-attacks-outside-london-experts>

Dec 29 – **Security experts in the United Kingdom have expressed concerns about whether the United Kingdom has sufficient resources to respond to acts of terrorism outside of London.** The questions were raised against the backdrop of reports that a “friendly” intelligence agency — presumably, the CIA — has warned the governments of several European countries, the United Kingdom among them, that terrorists were planning a large-scale attack in a European capital on New Year’s Eve.

The two capitals most often mentioned in the context of the latest report are Vienna and London.



Nations that have dealt with terrorist attacks in the last 14 years // Source: commons.wikimedia.org



The *Telegraph* reports that “Four dedicated regional armed police units” could be set up to respond to a terrorist-related incident in other areas of Britain — that is, outside of London, where security experts say the police does have the resources to respond.

The *Express* reports that the Home Secretary Theresa May has been in meetings with senior counterterror officers, aiming to have units’ on-the-ready twenty-four hours a day. The government is also considering proposals to have specially trained officers ready to be reassigned from other duties in the event of a terror-related incident.

The *Observer* notes that concerns regarding the preparedness of the U.K. outside London have also been voiced inside the police. One source told the newspaper: **“Ask a regional force how long it would take them to respond to a terror attack and watch them squirm.”**

The terrorist threat level to the United Kingdom remains “severe.”

EDITOR’S COMMENT: This is a very serious issue! We usually consider capitals or big cities as the most attractive terrorist targets and all planning and resources are allocated there. But what if a country town becomes a target? A simple town without landmarks, industry, subway or concert hall but still full of people! Would the terrorist message will be different if a capital is attacked compared with unknown “X” town? Experience have shown that worst terrorist attacks were executed by a small group of maximum 10 armed men/women. In that respect during the initial response phase, local police would need a counter force of 20 highly trained, heavily equipped officers to at least contain the enemy and minimize losses until backup arrives (the special units’ mentioned in the article). It is time to plan with what we have available instead of planning in what would be ideal or desirable. Local police supported by local citizens (big communication/training gap here) can deal with problems like these only if they have the confidence that they can protect their homes and country. Unfortunately this “confidence” issue is bigger than we think of and high tech solutions might not be the best solution.

What is the citizenship status of terrorist suspects in the United States?

Source: <http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/article/2015/dec/29/what-citizenship-status-terrorists-united-states/>

Dec 29 – Republican presidential candidates sparred over immigration during the 2015 primary debates, and in recent months, they linked that topic to terrorism. Florida Sen. Marco Rubio and Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul went back and forth over the issues in a Las Vegas debate on Dec. 15.

Paul accused Rubio of being soft on immigration, and hence soft on terrorism.

"The thing is, is that every terrorist attack we've had since 9/11 has been legal immigration. Marco wants to expand that," Paul said. "I want more rules, more scrutiny. And to defend the country, you have to defend the border."

Paul’s point, his staff said, was that the terrorist attacks caused by immigrants were carried out by people who came here legally.

Paul’s phrasing about the citizenship status of terrorists was confusing, so we decided not to rate it on our Truth-O-Meter. But we did want to look at the facts about the citizenship of terrorists who’ve attacked since Sept. 11, 2001.

We looked at three different databases to find information on the citizenship status of terrorists: the [New America Foundation](#), [Ohio State University](#) and [University of Maryland’s Global Terrorism database](#).

It’s definitely wrong to state that all terrorist attacks were committed by immigrants, because there have been several notable attacks carried out by U.S. citizens.

Also, there is no simple way to summarize the citizenship status of terrorists, because it depends on how we define terrorism and what sort of incidents we include. Some terror attacks seem to be inspired by jihadist beliefs like those related to the Islamic State (called



ISIS) or al-Qaida. Other attacks seem to be motivated by racism or fear of government authority.

We'll start with summaries of seven recent high-profile attacks. (Three involved some type of legal immigration, and four did not.) Then we'll see what experts had to say about overall trends in domestic attacks.

San Bernardino, Calif.

Syed Rizwan Farook, a U.S. citizen, and his wife, Tashfeen Malik, a permanent resident, were killed by police after they killed 14 people on Dec. 2 in San Bernardino, Calif. It was the deadliest terrorist attack on American soil since Sept. 11. Farook's parents emigrated from Pakistan to Chicago. Farook was born in the United States in 1987 and was raised in California. He brought Malik to the United States on a fiancée visa in 2014 from Saudi Arabia, where she had moved from her native Pakistan.

Chattanooga

Mohammad Youssef Abdulazeez shot and killed five people at two military sites in Chattanooga on July 16, 2015, and was later killed by police. FBI director James Comey said the shooter was inspired by foreign terrorist propaganda. Abdulazeez was born in Kuwait but moved with his family to the United States as an infant, and he became a naturalized citizen.

Charleston, S.C.

Dylann Storm Roof was charged with killing nine people on June 17, 2015, in an African-American Charleston church. Roof wore white supremacist symbols and was charged with hate crimes, not terrorism charges. But when announcing the indictment, U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch said, "Racially motivated violence such as this is the original domesticated terrorism." Roof was born in South Carolina and was a U.S. citizen.

Las Vegas

Jerad and Amanda Miller ambushed two police officers eating at a restaurant and attacked a nearby Walmart in Las Vegas, Nev., on June 8, 2014. Two officers, a bystander, and the assailants were killed. On social media, the assailants decried the federal government, taxes and anti-gun laws. They were both born in the United States and were citizens.

Boston Marathon

Brothers Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev were the assailants in the Boston Marathon attacks where two explosive devices detonated on April 15, 2013, killing three spectators and injuring more than 260 people. A police officer was killed during the manhunt, which also led to the death of Tamerlan. In May, a federal jury sentenced Dzhokhar to death. The brothers immigrated to the United States as children after their parents fled Chechnya. They arrived in the United States on tourist visas, and then their family applied for asylum. Dzhokhar became a U.S. citizen on Sept. 11, 2012, while Tamerlan had a green card and had applied for citizenship.

Milwaukee area

Wade Michael Page, a member of a white supremacist organization, attacked a Sikh temple on Aug. 5, 2012, near Milwaukee. Six people were killed and four others wounded before Page was shot by a police officer and subsequently died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound. Page was born in Colorado and was a U.S. citizen.

Fort Hood, Texas

Army Major Nidal Malik Hasan, a psychiatrist, shot and killed 13 people on Nov. 5, 2009, at a military site in Fort Hood, Texas. He later said the shooting was justified because the soldiers he killed were "going against the Islamic Empire." Before the attack, he had sent messages to a cleric who had been described as a leader for al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula. (The administration initially labeled that shooting workplace violence, but President Barack Obama later called it terrorism.) Hasan was of Palestinian descent, but he was born in Virginia and was a U.S. citizen.

Terror databases and trends

There is considerable debate about how to define terrorism. Some attacks stem from jihadist



beliefs related to al-Qaida, others seem to stem from complaints about the American political system.

"When it comes to terrorism, no broad sentence such as 'all terrorists are ...' will ever really work," said Neil Shortland, a professor at the Center for Terrorism and Security Studies at the University of Massachusetts. «'Terrorism' as a behavior is too diverse; and those who do it are equally diverse."

Right-wing terrorism comprises a large portion of terrorism in the United States, and it tends to be committed by Americans, said Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies.

"Of those, the vast majority don't have a relationship to the immigration system," he said.

The New America Foundation, a Washington think tank that promotes data-driven research for social and economic policy, did an analysis of "homegrown extremism" since 2000. The foundation compiled data on 499 extremists, who either adhered to jihadist ideology inspired by al-Qaida or were motivated by right- or left-wing political beliefs. This database includes attacks as well as those accused of terrorism-related offenses, such as plotting attacks or fundraising.

New America found that about 64 percent of the extremists were U.S.-born citizens and 80 percent were either American-born or naturalized citizens. The database shows eight out of 499 extremists were illegal residents; all eight were jihadists.

A *New York Times* analysis cited by many experts we interviewed found that half of the jihadist attacks since 2001 were committed by men born in the United States. Many others were naturalized citizens. Some were noncitizens but were traveling legally, such as Richard Reid, the attempted shoe bomber in Miami in 2001, who didn't need a visa because he was from Britain.

Overall, databases of terrorist acts in the United States show that many were committed by Americans or naturalized citizens, though some high-profile incidents have involved legal immigrants.

"Empirically, domestic terrorism is carried out by citizens -- not immigrants -- with right-wing terrorism, racial hate crimes, and the sovereign-citizen movement making up a majority of domestic terrorist incidents," said Joel Day, assistant professor of security and global studies at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. "Other domestic incidents have indeed been carried out by those who came here through legal channels."

Dying woman 'plans ISIS attack in Europe' amid refugee infiltration fears

Source: <http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/630210/Islamic-State-ISIS-Syria-Russia-terminal-cancer-Georgia>

Dec 30 – **Anti-terror police are desperately searching for the 21-year-old, identified only as Oygul M., after fears she will attack Russia.**

The woman, who has brain cancer, is believed to be based in Georgia with a 29-year-old male terror suspect, known as Bulat A.



But she could take advantage of Europe's migrant crisis by entering Russian territory disguised as a Syrian refugee, officers said. She is travelling with a Turkish terror man as well as two men from south west Russia. Oygul is said to have graduated from school in the port city of Rostov-on-Don. She started her degree at the

North-Caucasian Academy of Civil Service but dropped out after being diagnosed with the



illness. **And doctors have reportedly said she may be considering becoming a suicide bomber because she is coming to the end of her life.**

Oygul's mother, named Barno, rejected the mass police hunt to find her cancer-stricken daughter. She told local media Oygul is married to an Egyptian man and is being treated in Cairo rather than plotting an attack. She claimed she had been sent to the Egyptian capital by doctors in Moscow.

Silent bomber' couple jailed for London terror plot

Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-35198500>

Dec 30 – A husband and wife who plotted a terror attack in London have been jailed for a minimum of 27 and 25 years.



Mohammed Rehman, 25, discussed targeting the London Underground and Westfield shopping centre on social media under the name "Silent Bomber".

He and his wife Sana Ahmed Khan were convicted of preparing terrorist acts.

Jailing them both for life at the Old Bailey, Mr Justice Baker told Rehman he had been "determined to

fulfil the Islamic State's call for jihad".

The couple's trial had heard how bomb-making chemicals were found at Rehman's Reading home, where he had filmed himself setting off a small explosion in the back garden.

Silent Bomber (@InSeneca2God · May 11

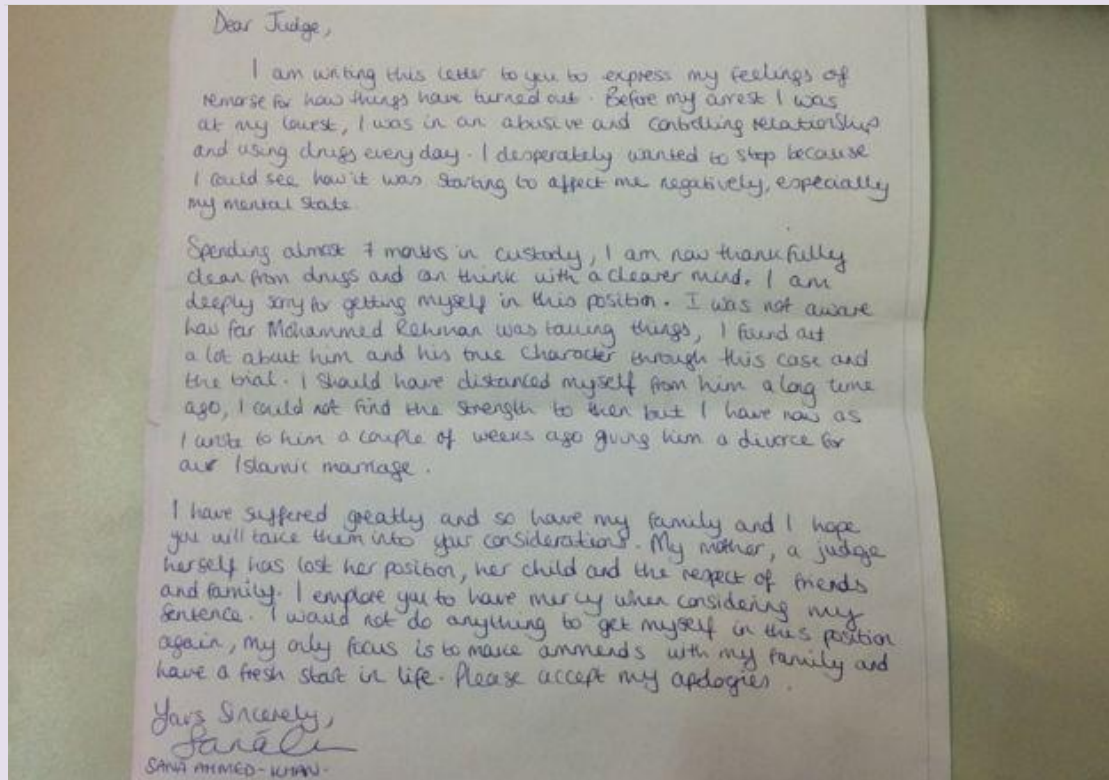
Test detonation of my keys to paradise :) 35 pounds of HME



He had been planning an attack to coincide with the 10th anniversary of the 7 July London bombings, the trial was told.

Ahead of the sentencing hearing, Khan had sent the judge a handwritten letter saying she had divorced Rehman a couple of weeks previously and that she should have "distanced myself from him a long time ago".





The judge rejected her argument, telling Khan: "I am satisfied that it was you who became interested in the theological justification of its aims, and thereafter encouraged Mohammed Rehman to pursue its ideology."

30,000 more reasons to worry about terrorism in 2016

Source: <http://www.cnn.com/2015/12/30/the-threat-of-isis-foreign-fighters-coming-home.html>

Dec 30 – **There could be as many as 30,000 foreign-born members of militant group Islamic State that could soon be returning to their home countries ready for radicalization and terrorism, according to the latest research.**

European cities remain on high alert following the Paris attacks in November, in which 130 people died after European-born terrorists carried out bomb and gun attacks, and the lockdown of Brussels. And there are fears of further attacks.

Security services in Europe remain on high alert should members of Islamist terrorist groups, such as the so-called Islamic State, strike again in revenge for the Western airstrikes against ISIS in Syria and Iraq.

"The risks presented by returning jihadis will likely only increase over the coming year, as more of the estimated 30,000 foreign fighters who have joined Islamic State are expected to return to their countries of origin," analysis firm

Verisk Maplecroft said in a report released in early December.

"Islamic State has illustrated its adeptness at reaching out to predominantly young Muslims across Europe, Africa and Asia, as well as the Middle East and North Africa, through an extensive propaganda apparatus."

ISIS' use of social media and slick productions has enabled the group to boost its "virtual community of would-be jihadis around the world," Verisk noted.

Foreign fighters

With the group able to attract foreign recruits online, ISIS has been inciting its followers to commit acts of terror at home or so-called "lone wolf" attacks. It is estimated that ISIS has attracted around 30,000 foreign fighters from as many as 100 countries since 2011, according to the Institute for Economics and Peace.

The institute's 2015 "Global Terrorism Index", published in



November, shows that many of those foreign fighters came from other Muslim nations such as Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Morocco and Turkey (the "top five" countries of origin).

However, rivalling the numbers of fighters coming from across the Muslim world were thousands of fighters from the West. **As many as 2,700 were estimated to be from Russia, as many as 1,750 from France and hundreds from Germany, the U.K. and Belgium (the top five non-Muslim countries of origin for ISIS fighters).**

This is reflected in what happened in Belgium and France this year: The majority of the Paris attackers were born and bred in France and Belgium, the second generation of migrants.

Europe therefore is waking up to an uncomfortable reality: Unemployment and disenfranchisement, and a lack of integration, can become a combustible mix for some young men and women, making them easy to radicalize against the West with many journeying to Syria to take up arms for ISIS – or to stay and fight on home soil.

Indeed, ISIS has encouraged its followers to commit attacks at home saying that those who could not journey to Syria should attack within the so-called "crusader" nations – those involved in airstrikes against ISIS, such as the U.S., France, Russia and U.K.

That advice has been borne out in attacks directed at Europe at home and abroad. From the Charlie Hebdo massacre in Paris at the start of the year to the attack on British tourists in Tunisia, the downing of a Russian jet in Egypt in October and the Paris attacks that followed in November, those responsible for carrying out these predominant attacks have all claimed to be ISIS members or affiliates allied to the group.

Europe bracing itself

Paul Beaver, a U.K.-based defense analyst, told CNBC that, Western European capitals

were "bracing themselves for another year of high threat levels" as intelligence and security services work to ensure that "home-grown terrorists" with ISIS allegiances do not create another Paris-style attack.

"The risk is that the terrorists will become more innovative as they try to find new ways of attacking and damaging the Western way of life. Link this aspiration of some form of pay back from the damage inflicted on so-called IS in Iraq with a desire for a caliphate from Spain to Indonesia and the result is increased pressure," he added.

Part of the problem, Beaver noted, was that unlike terrorist groups that operated in the 1980s and 1990s, such as the Provisional IRA in Northern Ireland, "the new brand of terrorist does not require any form of central control" and are predominantly individuals without 'cells' in the traditional sense.

As Europe faced a new kind of terrorist, people could have to relinquish some closely held freedoms as authorities looked to strengthen their response to the threat although there are concerns that this plays into the terrorists' hands.

There are also fears that pointing the finger at foreign-born fighters will play to rightwing parties in Europe, creating more divisions and anti-immigration sentiment at a time when there are thousands of refugees fleeing civil war in the Middle East. Europe as a whole faced some uncomfortable decisions, Beaver said.

"The security services need more and more resources and capabilities to monitor borders, passports, telecommunications and all the other attributes of a modern, civilised society that a liberal democracy holds dear. There will be more intrusion into private lives; there will be greater risk; there will be another terrorist outrage; but there will be giving in to demands which the vast majority of people in Europe find repulsive," he noted.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: When they speak about 30,000 this means 30,000 names! And if you know the names and their IDs then you can simply close the door and leave them outside to leave their dreams in the countries chosen to fight for. UK is a big island and one has to cross half the world to travel there (compared to other nations being within walking or swimming distance from hot spots). If numbers are speculative or estimated (based on what evidence?) then the whole thing is a bit fishy and we should all investigate what is behind these "experts" warnings.



Former MI5 spy claims Paris terror attack not by ISIS

Source: <http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/world/former-mi5-spy-claims-paris-terror-attack-not-by-isis/177288.html>

Dec 30 – **A former British spy has claimed that the Paris terror strikes last month were an inside job by western intelligence rather than by Islamic State (ISIS).**

David Shayler, formerly with MI5, has released a video on YouTube claiming there is evidence that a "dark design" was behind the attacks on November 13, which claimed 130 lives.

"I think there is some dark design in the pattern of the attacks that took place in Paris on Friday, November 13. Once again it has been blamed on ISIS, but it appears to bear all the hallmarks of a Gladio-style operation," the 49-year-old claims in the video titled 'Shayler the Christ speaks to the Nation'.

According to a 'Daily Express' report, Operation Gladio was the codename for a clandestine NATO operation in Italy during the Cold War era to prepare for and carry out armed resistance there in the event of a Warsaw Pact invasion and conquest. Claims that alleged terrorist attacks in Italy during the Cold War were actually carried out by secret NATO officers have been subject to parliamentary inquiries in Switzerland and Belgium.

Shayler resigned from MI5 after five years working there in 1996 and went on to leak a series of details about MI5 operations, including claims MI6, was involved in a February 1996 failed assassination of former Libyan dictator Colonel Gaddafi.

MI5 is British intelligence agency working to protect the UK's national security against threats such as terrorism and espionage.

In the latest video, Shayler also suggests that the two-hour siege by French police in the wake of the attacks had been staged. "They [attackers] left ID. They would have been highly trained not to leave ID, so anyone who believes that has got to be pretty gullible," he said.

Since his leaks of intelligence information, the former spy went on to become a cross-dresser and made some outlandish claims, including that he is a reincarnation of Jesus Christ. He also declared that all four attack sites in the French capital were his former haunts and indicated that they may have been chosen to target him. "Did they deliberately plan to hit those places to map out over Paris a cross that would pass over where I used to live...to scare me." Now people might find that fanciful and egotistical, but I think that is a perfectly valid interpretation of the data that we have," he claims.

EDITOR'S CORNER: In Greece we say: *"From a small child or a crazy person you learn the truth!"* And we all know that those who do not follow the main stream are usually characterized as crazy and are humiliated accordingly until one day (after a few decades) someone proves how right they were. I think it is at least wise to consider conspiracy theories as an opportunity to re-evaluate our perspectives and ways we see things around us.

What China's Anti-Terrorism Legislation Actually Says

By Benjamin Bissell

Source: <https://www.lawfareblog.com/what-chinas-anti-terrorism-legislation-actually-says>

Dec 30 – **On December 27, China's National People's Congress passed the country's much-debated anti-terrorism legislation.** Although the text is still being translated into English, numerous analyses have already emerged, some based on apparently outdated versions of the law. As a service to future commentators, below is a brief analysis—based on the original Mandarin—on which portions of the legislation did, and did not, make the final cut.

Foreign observers have been most concerned by Beijing's reputed insistence on companies establishing a "backdoor" to encrypted communications and keeping data stored on Chinese citizens within the country.



In terms of encryption, **Article 18** as passed states that internet service providers (ISPs) must extend technical interfaces, decryption, and other technical assistance and support to anti-terror authorities. This language appears to walk back earlier drafts of the law that mandated “backdoors.” However, it is unclear what precisely “decryption and other technical assistance” entails. The provisions requiring that information on Chinese citizens be stored in China does not appear in the final bill.

Article 3 broadens the legal definition of “terrorism.” Previous drafts added creating social panic and endangering public safety to terrorism offenses. The final law goes further and also includes the vague “violating person and property” (qinfan renshen caichan 侵犯人身财产) as possible terrorism.

Article 43 consolidates most of China’s sprawling anti-terrorism bureaus into a single National Counter-Terrorism Intelligence Center. This follows President Xi’s attempts to centralize his power over public security and intelligence bureaus by appointing himself head of various ad-hoc leading groups (lingdao xiaozu 领导小组) in Beijing, most notably the group on Internet Security and Informatization and the group on Comprehensively Deepening Reforms. The move also comes after the recent announcement by Zhongnanhai that the State Council would proceed with its 5-year plan to strengthen the rule of law in China.

Notably, **Article 69** of the final law permits Chinese provinces and counties in border regions to collaborate with neighboring countries in intelligence-sharing and law enforcement. This may seem anathema to China’s unitary political system, but Beijing actually has a long tradition of delegating relevant powers to local authorities, from the late Qing era all the way through Maoism and the reform and opening up. The nod to cross-border collaboration also comes as Beijing continues to analyze the impact cross-border flows between China, Pakistan, and Southeast Asia has on stemming militancy. Although some argue that the instability in Xinjiang is homegrown and due primarily to repressive Chinese practices, China insists much of it is the result of foreign extremists and radicalized Uyghurs infiltrating Xinjiang society.

Article 71 permits Beijing to send security forces abroad on anti-terrorism missions with the approval of the military and the respective countries. This is testament to the growing vulnerability of Chinese assets abroad and the Chinese fear of transnational militancy. At least 4 Chinese citizens died in terrorist activities in Mali and Syria in November, causing popular and social media furor in China. Additionally, Beijing asserts that over 300 Uyghurs have joined the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

Article 90 restricts the right of media and other bodies or individuals to report on the details of terrorist attacks and on the government’s reaction to them. Beijing can detain people for up to two weeks and levy fines of 200,000 yuan (31,000 USD) for disseminating false information, reporting on the methods of terrorist actions, transmitting “gruesome or inhumane scenes” from terrorist incidents, or transmitting the identities of involved individuals.

These are a few of the most salient points among many aspects of the legislation. The bill’s passage



comes at a critical time for Beijing. The country has had some wins as of late; its recent success in compelling Thailand to return several Chinese Uyghur nationals was seen as a testament to its growing assertiveness and savvy in protecting its national security interests. And the \$45 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) proceeds apace. This mammoth project is aimed at bolstering the two countries’ transport and security infrastructure and preventing the flow of transnational jihadist

groups from simmering areas in the Middle East and Subcontinent to Xinjiang. But the task remains daunting - Yunnan remains a nexus of drug and people-smuggling, hostilities



persist along the China-Myanmar border, and Xinjiang's huge area (it is roughly the same size as Iran) continues to bedevil China's rapidly-growing security forces.

China's quagmire in Xinjiang and its resulting buildup of security assets there is only escalating. Despite China's long-held *ronghe* (融合) policy, which seeks to promote assimilation of ethnic minorities through cultural interchange and economic development, casualties continue to pile up in the region, especially in the Uyghur-dominated south around Kashgar. Where economic development fails, Beijing is intent on continuing its "strike hard" policy of bringing militants to heel, especially following the Paris attacks. President Xi appears to be taking a page from US statecraft; not only is he personally interested in the security situation, but he aims to centralize and update China's security services to put down the militancy there once and for all. Already in 2015, over 335 Communist Party officials have been purged in Xinjiang for various "disciplinary violations," border patrols have increased, and restrictions on "extremist behavior" and "propaganda" have been tightened.

What remains to be seen is whether this new law—and President Xi's designs in Xinjiang—ultimately succeed in establishing Chinese sovereignty and stability in its border regions.

Ben Bissell is an analyst at a geopolitical risk consultancy and a Masters student at the London School of Economics. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Virginia with majors in political science and Russian in 2013. He is a former National Security Intern at the Brookings Institution as well as a Henry Luce Scholar, where he was placed at the Population Research Institute in Shanghai, China.

Examining how ISIS's martyrdom appeals affect the brains of potential recruits

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20151231-examining-how-isis-s-martyrdom-appeals-affect-the-brains-of-potential-recruits>

Dec 31 – **Understanding the reasons why young people are susceptible to recruitment by violent extremist organizations, like the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), is a formidable undertaking which requires parsing a complex entanglement of social and neurological influences.** An ambitious new research study lead by Political Scientist Robert Pape and Neuroscientist Jean Decety plans to take on this problem in an effort to determine exactly how cultures of martyrdom mobilize support for their most violent acts, especially suicide attacks. The results may be powerful tools in preventing future recruitment by these types of organizations — so much so, notes the University of Chicago's Division of the Social Sciences that the Department of Defense's Minerva Research Initiative has selected the project to receive \$3.4 million in funding over the next five years. According to Pape, "this project will create a whole new pool of knowledge that will make an enormous contribution in an important policy area. As this new information goes forward, it could well

influence policy decisions that will impact our national security."

"In the past, we have collected many recruitment videos and martyr testimonies, and surveyed various groups around the world to gauge audience reaction and figure out what makes the videos appeal and what doesn't," Pape told UChicagoNews. "Until now, there has not been a method to study whether it is a message's intellectual content or emotional impact that resonates with a viewer."

"In combination with psychological dispositions, the methodology will enable us to predict whether violent extremist organization appeals will resonate with and influence the receiver," added Decety, who directs UChicago's Brain Research Imaging Center.

Investigating tools of recruitment

Video can be a powerful tool of persuasion for groups like ISIS. These "martyr videos" are often highly produced last testaments of suicide bombers who use the medium as a means of expressing their motivation to



act, in hopes of inspiring new recruits to embrace the same mode of thinking. While these types of videos have been produced for decades, it is only since the advent of high quality, inexpensive production equipment and software, as well as efficient means of global distribution via social networks, that martyr videos have become an integral part of recruitment strategies. In the first phase of the project, Pape's team will systematically analyze the content of videos produced by a wide range of violent extremist organizations. In phase two, Decety's team will use functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to investigate the neural pathways through which martyrdom appeals evoke sympathy in the viewer. They aim to uncover exactly what is happening in the brain when an individual is persuaded to change their beliefs. Until now, there has not been a method to study whether it is a message's intellectual content or emotional impact that resonates with a viewer. By using fMRI, researchers can see what areas of the brain "light up" when specific messages are heard.

An unprecedented approach

Historically, political scientists and neuroscientists have been relatively distant colleagues. Opportunities to collaborate have been infrequent within these two fields of the social sciences not only at UChicago, but in the discipline as a whole. Pape believes this project to be truly unprecedented.

"Over the last fifteen years, we've had a tremendous rise of research in terrorism and insurgency and at the same time, over the last fifteen years, we've had a tremendous rise in using neurological tools and techniques like fMRI scans to better understand psychological processes but we've never had these two streams of research married together to work hand in hand before. This is unique in the world."

It may also influence the way research is conducted more broadly. Division of the Social Sciences Associate Dean for Research & Strategic Initiatives, Cate Goebel, was instrumental in crafting the proposal to the Minerva Initiative and can attest to the singular nature of the project's methodology.

"To my knowledge, this is the first major research project to use functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to identify

messaging tactics and audience neurobiological characteristics that, combined with psychological dispositions, predict whether violent extremist organization appeals will resonate with and influence the receiver. It's also the first time we've brought political scientists and psychologists together in this way. If the project is successful, my hope is that our faculty members will use this approach to study political violence and media more broadly."

David Nirenberg, Dean of the Division of the Social Sciences, thinks this project may be the birth of a whole new school of thought at the University of Chicago. According to Nirenberg, the project embodies the collaborative, creative approach to inquiry that the University is famous for.

"What is beautiful about this project is the way in which it combines methodologies — qualitative and quantitative, socio-political analysis and cognitive neuroscience — to open a new approach in the field of terrorism research. Two distinctive Chicago approaches, to international relations and to cognitive neuroscience, are coming together to tackle a difficult problem. This is the type of collaboration out of which so many "Chicago Schools" of social science have been born, and I'm excited to see what this one will produce."

The Minerva Research Initiative agreed to fund an additional two phases of the project that will include an expansion of the social investigation to a wider group of violent extremist organizations and to extend the neurological investigation to potential martyr recruits in conflict areas. The final phases of the project include published findings and a conference to share results with leading scholars and policymakers.

Building counterterrorism strategies

Understanding how ISIS and similar groups effectively use media to recruit participants to conduct violent acts provides the knowledge required to create opposing strategies. The Social and Neurological Construction Martyrdom Project will provide tools that will allow defense professionals to do just this. The project will develop a detailed analysis of violent extremist organizations' communication strategies and a breakdown by region and campaign in order to



provide a nuanced view of the culture of martyrdom. The final report will also include a set of indicators that can predict a population's susceptibility to persuasive videos distributed by ISIS and similar groups. Overall, the project aims to produce deeper understanding of the neurology of empathy and persuasion. According to the proposal, the project investigators "anticipate it will contribute to a capability to develop tailored communications strategies for successful counterinsurgency and counter-terrorism efforts."

Genesis of the project

UChicago notes that the Social and Neurological Construction of Martyrdom Project is an outgrowth of ongoing research on suicide terrorism conducted by the Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism (CPOST) lead by Pape. As part of this research, the team compiled a large collections of martyr videos from a number of extremist groups including the 9/11 hijackers, the July 2005 suicide bombers in London, numerous suicide attackers from Palestinian groups in Iraq and Lebanon and other places around the world. Recently, Pape approached Decety for ways to use various psychological and biometric tools to measure audience reactions to martyr videos. Once the Minerva funding opportunity became a

possibility, a full collaboration evolved to carry out the research.

Many hands touched the proposal process, adding to its success. Goebel worked with Pape and Decety to identify the funding opportunity, to define the objectives and scope of the project, and to develop and refine the proposal. The team also worked with Kate VonHolle, Director of Federal Research Development at the University of Chicago, in Washington, D.C., who met with the Minerva program officer and provided helpful information about the proposal review process. It is an ideal fit for the Department of Defense initiative, which, according to Goebel, "supports basic research in the behavioral and social sciences with obvious potential applications in, and relevance to, U.S. military and defense. Understanding violent extremist organization strategies will be critical for the military to develop effective counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism efforts."

Decety hopes the project will encourage others to marry neuroscience, psychology, and politics in other ways. "We are hoping that we can use this study as a platform to build more quality political neuroscience and to see how neuroscience can inform political theories of attitude change, of opinions," he told UChicagoNews.



Using headphones in public increases threat of terrorism says former intelligence chief

Source: <http://www.gloucestershireecho.co.uk/Using-headphones-public-increases-threat/story-28457401-detail/story.html>



Jan 03 – **Commuters should not use headphones, or give their full attention to their mobile phones in public because it makes them more vulnerable to terrorism a former intelligence boss has said.**



Dame Pauline Neville-Jones, who was head of the Joint Intelligence Committee said she was alarmed by how oblivious many people were to their surroundings.

"I think being alert is very important. I am alarmed by the number of people I see wandering along the street entirely engaged in their mobile telephones and with their ears plugged into music and they are not aware of their surroundings. You need to be aware of your surroundings," she told BBC Radio 4's Today programme.

"You do have to take some personal responsibility."

Dame Pauline said people in Britain would also have to get used to more and more disruption to daily life through actions against terrorism, such as when two railway stations in Munich were evacuated and closed on New Year's Eve owing to a security threat.



She said: "I do think we are going to have to get used to what we have seen yesterday in Germany – that is to say, alerts which close places of public functions, and higher levels of security in big public gatherings. That is prudence and proper caution on the part of intelligence and the police authorities."

EDITOR'S COMMENT: I was watching the other time a YouTube video showing a young girl that she was walking in a pier fully concentrated to her tablet that she fell to the sea and killed herself... This article should be taken seriously and citizens must change their mindset on where to use their electronics. One day their life might depend on their (bad) habits! If you see something, say something. But if you cannot see something, you might kill your self!

2 killed, 8 injured in terrorist attack in Tel Aviv

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/bull20160101-2-killed-8-injured-in-terrorist-attack-in-tel-aviv>



Jan 01 – Three hours ago a gunman shot and killed two people and injured eight – four of them seriously – at the center of Tel Aviv. Hundreds of police officers, using drones and sniffing dogs, have been searching for the gunman.

The police have released videos from security cameras showing the gunman calmly buying an unidentified item at a store, then taking his backpack off his shoulder, putting it on a display table near the store's door and pulling an automatic weapon out of it, then stepping outside the store. The gunman, wearing a short winter coat and sunglasses, then begins to shoot people on the sidewalk before running away.

Weapon experts say that the automatic rifle the gunman was using was an older type of weapon popular among Palestinians in the West Bank, but also among Israeli Bedouins and criminal gangs.

Half an hour or so after the shooting, an abandoned taxi was found on the outskirts of Tel Aviv, with blood on the front seat and dashboard. It is not yet known whether there is a connection between the shooting and the abandoned taxi.

The immediate suspicion among Israeli security experts is that the shooting is related to the recent surge in attacks by Palestinians on Israeli citizens. Most of these attacks were perpetrated by knife-wielding youths, so the use of an automatic weapon at the center of Tel Aviv should be regarded as an escalation of the campaign.

If it was a terrorist attack, it represents an escalation in yet another way: The attacks by knife-wielding youths are typically spontaneous, without planning or forethoughts. All the attackers so far have been captured or killed at the scene immediately after the attack.



The attack in Tel Aviv involved an automatic weapon, and the shooter managed to escape. It is not yet known whether he had assistance from one or more people waiting for him in a car to whisk him away, or perhaps he commandeered a taxi to drive him away, then killed the driver and disappeared.

Either way, it appears that today's attack involved more planning and preparations than previous attacks.

An ongoing war among Israeli crime gangs has also involved the killing of rivals, but the method preferred by these gangs typically involves booby-trapping a car with explosives rather than shooting – and, in any event, crime-related shooting typically targets a specific individual.

Stopping the Palestinians' Simmering Terrorism

By Brig.-Gen. (res.) Yossi Kuperwasser

Source: <http://acdemocracy.org/stopping-the-palestinians-simmering-terrorism/>

Jan 04 – The Palestinian terror wave is not letting up, and fighting it more effectively requires a close examination of its roots and its objectives. While not baseless, the explanation that it is a spontaneous outbreak stemming from continued Israeli control of the territories, building in the settlements, the horrendous Jewish terror attack in Duma, economic hardship, or the lack of a political horizon, does not suffice.



Arabic Caption: "We've come to slaughter you." Published after the massacre of four rabbis and a Druze policeman in Jerusalem in November 2014.

If any or all that were true, then the Palestinians could have accepted far-reaching offers to establish a Palestinian state, or, at least, to return to the negotiating table; alternatively, the terror wave would already have erupted much earlier than it did.

In reality, the Palestinian leadership with Mahmoud Abbas at the helm, which rejects negotiations and now admits that it spurned the offers of statehood, stands unequivocally behind the ongoing stabbing and car-ramming attacks, which have been added to the stone-throwing and hurling of firebombs which characterized the problematic security situation

until October 2015. With the support of a large majority of the Palestinian population, this leadership encourages the continued attacks and does not hide its satisfaction with them.

On December 27 in *Al-Ayyam*, senior publicist Hamada Farawne lavished praise on the terror wave, calling it a further stage of the unending struggle of all the Palestinians – including the Israeli Arabs – against Zionism, which will culminate in the Palestinians' return to their homes in pre-1967 Israel and the regaining of their property. After the January 1, 2016, attack on a Tel Aviv pub in Tel Aviv, Fatah – headed by Abbas – tweeted, "Settler (sic) killed, 4 injured on Dizengoff St. in Tel Aviv."

What is occurring resembles the cooking of soup. First one has to heat the soup to the point that any slight increase in the heat will bring it to a boil. Likewise, in a gradual process, the basic elements of the Palestinian identity – as the leadership views them – are instilled in the psychic infrastructure of the Palestinian population as a whole, and particularly of the young people. According to these principles, the mission of the Palestinians is to hasten Israel's inevitable disappearance through a constant struggle in which all means are permissible.

The Palestinian leadership's ceaseless incitement guarantees that the heat will always be very high. How, though, does one bring things to a boil and at the same time make sure the soup does not burn? The tried-and-true way to reach a boiling point is the Al-Aqsa issue. It worked in September 2000. It worked in 2014 (when the spate of car-ramming and stabbing attacks reached its apex with the synagogue massacre of four



rabbis in Har Nof) when Abbas, stressing to Fatah members in Jerusalem the need to prevent “herds of settlers” from contaminating the holy site, invoked a Koran verse that is interpreted as sanctioning jihad. And it worked in September 2015, when Abbas again spoke of preventing settlers from defiling Al-Aqsa.

The Palestinians continue to argue about what level of heat will ensure a quality soup. Unlike Hamas, which wants to stoke a general conflagration with terror attacks using firearms launched from the areas under Fatah control (see the recent arrests in Abu Dis, etc.), Abbas favors a calibrated bubbling that will not boil over. He fears that all-out terror will make it hard to retain Western support, undermine his rule, and strengthen Hamas.

The intra-Palestinian code Abbas uses to ensure the right level of heat is “popular (peaceful) uprising.” Every Palestinian understands that this code, which was espoused at the Sixth Fatah Congress in 2009, refers to terror without firearms – that is exactly what has been happening over the past three months. So far Abbas has rightly assessed that this relatively low flame will not diminish Western support for him and for the Palestinian issue in general (see recent statements by Secretary of State Kerry and the resolutions of the Greek parliament). On the contrary, it revives interest in the Palestinian issue; enables progress on the unilateral path; does not disrupt the ongoing security cooperation with Israel, which is key to constraining Hamas; and, moreover, does not shake the Israeli center-left’s commitment to a solution that is generous to the Palestinians.

Even if the Israeli center grasps more and more that there is no partner for an agreement, it will view Abbas as a positive symbol; avoid stating the bitter truth about his role in

encouraging the terror; cling to ideas that lack all feasibility, like unilateral separation, as an alternative to an agreement; keep pointlessly scaring itself about a need to decide between a Jewish state and a democratic one (the Oslo agreement created a political framework for the Palestinians while leaving responsibility for Israeli security in Israel’s hands); and divert attention to escapist subjects such the ardent interest in the faulty Miss Universe declaration and other matters – just not Palestinian terror. Putting a stop to the terror wave requires making clear to Abbas and the Palestinians in general that the benefit of sustaining it is declining and the cost is rising. Destroying the homes of terrorists and beefing up the Israeli security forces’ presence is not enough. It is also vital, for example, to clamp down on Palestinians entering Israel illegally, cut back the number of Palestinian workers in Israel, and intensify surveillance of those exiting the problematic Jerusalem neighborhoods as well as inspections of Palestinian vehicles entering jointly used roads.

Such measures are not pleasant nor photogenic, but they are essential to enhancing security. In parallel, Israel must clarify to the Palestinians’ Western supporters the role that the Palestinian leadership has played in encouraging the wave of attacks and demand that they stop supporting the phenomenon.

Last week it was difficult to watch the State Department spokeswoman reject 30 senators’ request to close the PLO office in Washington by claiming that its presence is requisite to promoting the two-state solution (not for two peoples), while totally ignoring the senators’ assertions about the PLO’s incitement and payment of salaries to Palestinian terrorists and their families. The exchange was not covered in the Israeli media.

Prior to San Bernardino Attack, Many Were Trained to Spot Terrorists; None Did

By Jana Winter

Source: <https://theintercept.com/2015/12/31/prior-to-san-bernardino-attack-many-were-trained-to-spot-terrorists-none-did/>

Dec 31 – In mid-November, just weeks before the deadliest terrorist attack on U.S. soil since 9/11, the Joint Regional Intelligence Center and the sheriffs’ departments of San Bernardino and Riverside counties held the

First Annual Inland Terrorism Liaison Officer Conference in Fontana, California. The two-day event — for law enforcement, public officials, and select



members of the private sector — included sessions like “Policing Violent Extremism” and “Preventing Lone Wolf Attacks.”

In fact, this part of California’s Inland Empire has become home to a cottage industry of counterterrorism training in recent years aimed at teaching people how to spot would-be terrorists before they attack. By all accounts, those trainings failed to help anyone spot Syed Rizwan Farook and Tashfeen Malik, the married couple who shot and killed 14 people and injured 22 others at a meeting of San Bernardino County Health Department employees on December 2.

Many of the trainings, which focus on helping attendees identify “behavioral indicators” of potential terrorists, were held at the Ben Clark Training Center in Riverside, California, less than 25 miles from where the attacks took place.

These behavioral indicators have become central to the U.S. counterterrorism prevention strategy, yet critics say they don’t work. “Quite simply, they rely on generalized correlations found in selectively chosen terrorists without using control groups to see how often the correlated behaviors identified occur in the non-terrorist population,” Michael German, a former FBI agent who is currently a fellow at the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law, told *The Intercept*.

The trainings are based on flawed theories that just don’t stand up to empirical scrutiny, according to German. “The FBI, [National Counter-Terrorism Center], and [Department of Homeland Security] promote these theories despite the fact they have been refuted in numerous academic studies over the past 20 years,” he said.

Yet the behavior indicator training business appears to be booming in California, where the training sessions are sponsored by an alphabet soup of counterterrorism organizations that have sprung up in recent years, including the Joint Regional Intelligence Center; the Los Angeles chapter of InfraGard, a partnership between the FBI and private sector; and the state fusion center.

The Joint Regional Intelligence Center, in turn, has produced dozens of Official Use Only intelligence bulletins focusing on behavior indicators. One intelligence bulletin, from March 2015, identified potential indicators of

radicalization including “history of mental instability/illness”; “employment/financial problems”; and “marital/family problems.”

Southern California’s enthusiasm for terrorist spotting dates back to 2002, when it was home to the first Terrorism Liaison Officer program, the controversial initiative that enlists and credentials community members and private sector industry representatives to report any potentially suspicious behavior. The program was first launched out of the Los Angeles chapter of InfraGard — which covers seven nearby counties including Riverside and San Bernardino where the attacks occurred and the perpetrators lived; the program has since been rolled out nationwide.

The Los Angeles chapter of InfraGard has also been a major beneficiary of federally funded grant money for counterterrorism training. In 2013 the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors doubled the funding of its multimillion-dollar sole source contract with InfraGard to \$2,530,000 and extended it through 2018.

One of the companies hired by InfraGard to conduct counterterrorism training is CT Watch, headed by Roque “Rocky” Wicker, who also holds an executive leadership position with the Los Angeles InfraGard chapter. Employees of CT Watch have taught seminars, such as “Threat of ISIS and radicalization in the homeland.”

“The indicators work,” Wicker told *The Intercept* in an interview. “Behavior indicators work. You just need to train the right people.”

If Wicker is right, then the dozens of trainings held in California over the past year failed to train the right people to spot San Bernardino shooter Farook, who was a state employee and would have interacted with other state officials on a daily basis, or his friend Enrique Marquez, who was indicted Wednesday on charges related to his role in plotting with Farook to carry out attacks in 2011 and 2012.

In the months leading up to the attacks, law enforcement sources say terrorism trainings had increased in response to threats specific to California. For example, a recent issue of *Dabiq*, the Islamic State’s magazine, had listed potential central California targets.

Recent training sessions held in Riverside include “How to assess



the threat posed by a potential lone wolf attacker,” “The Stealth Jihad in the United States,” and “Behavior threat assessment: preventing the Active Shooter,” which took place on October 22, just weeks before the San Bernardino shootings. The last one was designed “to equip law enforcement and security stakeholders with the skills and tools necessary to identify potentially violent individuals, assess the risk they pose of engaging in violence, proactively manage the risk and prevent violent attacks — including active shooter events.”

There were also three separate “Tactical Response to School & Community Violence” active shooter trainings in November, the most

recent of which was held on December 2, the same day as the terrorist attack. Participants in the training were among the first to arrive at the scene of the San Bernardino shootings.

As for why behavioral indicator spotting failed to identify the San Bernardino shooters, one problem is simply that the indicators are overly broad. A local law enforcement official involved in the vetting of suspicious activity reports in the Riverside area told *The Intercept* that prior to the attack, they’d received hundreds of suspicious activity reports, “most of which turn out to be bullshit. We run them down of course, but mostly, it’s a lot of nothing.”

Jana Winter worked as an investigative news reporter at FoxNews.com from 2008 until November 2014, breaking a wide range of stories involving wrongdoing at federal agencies, including at the Secret Service and the Department of Homeland Security. She also wrote exclusive reports on cyber investigations and the use of federal informants. In 2012, Winter revealed that accused Colorado movie theater shooter James Holmes sent a notebook containing violent illustrations to his psychologist prior to his deadly rampage. The defense sought to force Winter to name her confidential law enforcement sources. She refused, sparking a nearly two-year legal battle that culminated in a landmark ruling from the New York Court of Appeals in her favor. The ruling kept Winter out of jail, reaffirmed the importance of confidential sources to newsgathering, and strengthened the state’s shield law.

Terror threats, attacks are the new normal for Europe: Experts

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160104-terror-threats-attacks-are-the-new-normal-for-europe-experts>

Jan 04 – Security experts say Europe faces a “new normal” of more threats, terrorist attacks, and disruption to major events as security worries remain high in the months ahead.

Following the 13 November attacks in Paris, terrorism analysts in the United Kingdom and Europe say the continent’s intelligence and security services have accepted the reality that ISIS appears not only to have the intention to continue to attack targets in Europe, but also the capability professionally to plan and execute such attacks.

The signs of this growing awareness were evident on New Year’s Eve. Munich was partially evacuated following a terror threat on New Year’s Eve, and different events in other European cities were cancelled or scaled down owing to security concerns.

Margaret Gilmore, a senior associate fellow at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), told the *Guardian* that more disruption was likely.

“For the last fifteen years there have been terrorist organizations who have wanted to carry out attacks in crowded places, so in that sense this is nothing new. And since the attack in 2008 in Mumbai we have been aware of the possibility of the marauding multi-site gun attacks.

“But what is new now is that ISIS has proved they are capable, after Paris, of carrying out terrible attacks beyond its traditional arena of the Middle East.”

She added that the attack on the French capital had demonstrated how quickly the group had grown. She said security services in each country would still have to evaluate each threat on its merits, but the knowledge that ISIS has the capability to carry out large-scale attacks would mean more security — and potentially more cancellations of high-profile events.



“It is clear from what we saw in Paris that they are capable of controlling the process — able to train, plan and execute these attacks — and that is something that the security services across Europe will be taking very seriously indeed,” she told the newspaper

Prof. Rik Coolsaet, a terrorism expert at Ghent University in Belgium, said that although there was nothing new in terrorist groups wanting to attack high-profile public gatherings such as New Year’s Eve, ISIS’s appeal meant Europe was entering a new era.

He told the *Guardian* that the group had become the “object of all kinds of fantasies for all kinds of individuals, from thrill-seekers to the mentally unstable,” who wanted to be part of the ISIS, and that made the security services’ task much harder.

“In the months ahead we are going to be facing a new normal,” Coolsaet said. “One day the hype surrounding Isis will have vanished, but until that happens I fear there will be more threats, more disruption, more houses raided and more arrests as countries come to terms with the scale of this group and its intentions ... It is something we will have to get used to.”

He also warned there was a danger of people conflating the refugee crisis Europe is facing with the growing terror threat.

“What I do fear is the combination of these two things into something near hysteria. We must not confuse these two separate issues and we must be wary of any politicians who try and do that for their own ends, to the detriment of the very fabric of our society,” he said.

EDITOR’S COMMENT: What really makes an individual an “expert”? Should experts be poticially correct as well? Should experts just analyse facts or should they also propose solutions?

Two Weaknesses Could Undo the Islamist Movement

By Daniel Pipes

Source: <http://www.meforum.org/5761/two-islamist-weaknesses>

Jan 04 – The Islamist movement may appear stronger than ever, but a close look suggests two weaknesses that might doom it, and perhaps quickly.

Its strengths are obvious.

The Taliban, Al-Shabaab, Boku Haram, and ISIS take Islamism – the ideology calling for Islamic law to be applied in its entirety and severity – to unbearable extremes, rampaging and brutalizing their way to power. Pakistan could fall into their hands. The ayatollahs of Iran enjoy a second wind thanks to the Vienna deal. Qatar has the highest per capita income in the world. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is becoming Turkey’s dictator. Islamist operatives swarm the Mediterranean toward Europe.

But weaknesses within, especially squabbling and disapproval, could undo the Islamist movement.

Infighting became vicious in 2013, when Islamists abruptly stopped their prior pattern of cooperation among themselves and instead

began internecine fighting. Yes, the Islamist movement as a whole shares similar goals, but it also contains different intellectuals, groups, and parties with variant ethnic affiliations, tactics, and ideologies.

Its internal divisions have spread fast and far. These include Sunnis vs. Shiites, notably in Syria, Iraq, and Yemen; monarchists vs. republicans, notably in Saudi Arabia; non-violent vs. violent types, notably in Egypt; modernizers vs. medieval revivalists, notably in Tunisia; and plain old personal differences, notably in Turkey. These divisions obstruct the movement by turning its guns inward.

The dynamic here is ancient: As Islamists approach power, they fight amongst themselves for dominance. Differences that hardly mattered when in the wilderness take on great importance as the stakes get higher. In Turkey, for example, the politician Erdoğan and the religious leader Fethullah Gülen cooperated until they dispatched



their common enemy, the military, from politics, when they turned against each other.

Unpopularity, the second problem, may be the biggest peril for the movement. As populations experience Islamist rule first hand, they reject it. It's one thing to believe in the abstract about the benefits of Islamic law and quite another to suffer its deprivations, ranging from the Islamic State's totalitarian horrors to the comparatively benign emerging dictatorship in Turkey.

Signs of this discontent include the large majorities of Iranians who reject the Islamic Republic, the wave of exiles out of Somalia, and the massive Egyptian demonstrations of 2013 protesting a single year of the Muslim Brotherhood in power. As with fascist and communist rule, Islamist sovereignty often leads to people voting with their feet.

Should these two tendencies hold, the Islamist movement is heading for trouble. Some analysts already see the Islamist era having ended and the emergence of something new from its wreckage. For example, the Sudanese

scholar Haidar Ibrahim Ali argues that a "post-Islamization" era has begun, when Islamism's "vitality and attractiveness have been exhausted even among the most ardent of its supporters and enthusiasts."

The enemies of Islamism have much work ahead. Muslims must both fight this movement and develop a compelling alternative to its goal of implementing Islamic law, explaining constructively what it means to be a Muslim in 2016. Non-Muslims can serve as their helpful auxiliaries, providing everything from applause to funds to guns.

Islamism's mounting problems offer grounds for confidence but not for smugness, as another reversal in course could take place at any time. But if current trends hold, the Islamist movement will have been limited, much as fascism and communism before it, damaging Western civilization, not destroying it.

Whatever the trend, defeating Islamism remains the challenge.

Daniel Pipes is president of the Middle East Forum.

ISIS can now use decommissioned shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160106-isis-can-now-use-decommissioned-shoulderfired-antiaircraft-missiles>

Jan 06 – **Weapon experts say that ISIS engineers have developed advanced new weapon systems capable of shooting down passenger jets.**



The *Independent* reports that new footage shows ISIS militants creating a homemade

thermal battery which could be used as a power source for decommissioned military surface-to-air missiles.

Different terror groups have had access to these missiles since the 1970s, but experts note that storing such systems for long periods of time requires the development of thermal batteries to power the missiles when they are taken out of storage and into the field. Developing such batteries and maintaining them requires advanced knowledge.

Kim Sengupta, the *Independent's* defense correspondent, said the development was significant.

“After the United States and the United Kingdom entered Afghanistan in 2001, there were fears that Stinger missiles given

by the Americans to the Afghan Mujahedin to shoot down



Russian aircraft may be used by the Taliban against the Western forces” he said.

“That never came to pass because the missiles’ batteries had a limited shelf life and the Taliban were not able to find a way around that. If ISIS has developed a process that enables them to replace these batteries that will obviously be of major concern.”

Other experts note that with access to this kind of battery, ISIS would be in a position to recommission thousands of discarded and moth-balled missiles and take them to the field. Sky News, which showed the new video, said the missiles, once locked on their targets, are 99 percent accurate.

ISIS have two main sources for shoulder-fired missiles.

Libya had thousands of such missiles in its arsenal, and when Col. Qaddafi was toppled in November 2011, many of these missiles were captured by various armed militias in the countries, including Islamist militias which would later affiliate themselves with ISIS. The second source is depots of the Iraqi army in Anbar province. When, in spring 2014, the Iraqi army melted away and fed without fight in the face of advancing ISIS fighters, it left behind hundreds of these U.S.-supplied missiles. These missiles are now in ISIS hands.

Sky News also showed another in which ISIS instructors train militants on how to operate a remote-controlled car carrying explosives. These cars could be used to launch attacks on high value targets.

Major Chris Hunter, a former British Army bomb disposal technician and now counter-explosives expert told the *Independent* that the footage was “one of the most significant intelligence finds” in terms of ISIS.

“What we’ve seen with their typical propaganda videos is they’re very, very high quality. They’re designed, they’re produced to inspire people and prospectively touch the nerves of anybody who is viewing them, they’re done a very specific way,” he said.

“With this training footage it’s very clearly purely designed to pass on information — to pass on the progress in the research and



development areas - and it gives us a very good insight into where they are now, what they’re aspiring to do and crucially the diversity of the types of threats we might face.”



Isis workshop in Raqqa making driverless car bomb - video

► Watch video at: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/06/inside-isis-terrorism-workshops-video-shows-raqqa-research-centre>





EDITOR'S COMMENT: If you have money you can buy batteries and/or scientists. If you have the money you can also conduct R&D to produce your own batteries. And IS has the money and the most important of all: they have the evil will to use such weapons against commercial airplanes. No surprise so far. The surprise would be to start considering IS as a serious opponent and as savages with sandals and beards with low IQ and low tech means of assault. Real life events showed that they adapt faster and their modus operandi is a mixture of low/high tech weaponry that one day might be catastrophic.

Oregon siege: the U.S. militia movement is resurgent – and evolving

By Crawford Gribben

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160106-oregon-siege-the-u-s-militia-movement-is-resurgent-and-evolving>

Jan 06 – **For several days now, a small group of armed men have occupied an office of the National Wildlife Refuge in southeastern Oregon, 300 miles from Portland. They are demanding the “return” of land from the federal government to the American people, and leniency for two ranchers convicted of arson on federal lands.**

By chance or by design, the siege overlapped



with President Obama's announcement of a

sweeping executive order to restrict the unlicensed sale of guns and enforce background checks for gun buyers — measures widely decried by gun ownership advocates on the right.

The Oregon protesters are led by the sons of Cliven Bundy, a Nevada rancher who in March and April 2014 precipitated an extended stand-off with federal agents over unpaid grazing fees on federally owned land. That episode drew the approval of prominent conservative pundits,



which in turn encouraged scores of protesters to rally to Bundy's defense, and identified his clan as martyrs and ideologues in the re-birth of America's anti-government militia culture.

Shortly after the occupation of the wildlife center, Cliven's son Ammon Bundy, the spokesman of the militia, set up a new Twitter account (now suspended). Identifying his group as #CitizensforConstitutionalFreedom, he began laying out his principles.

He argued that "It's up to us, We the People, to restore and defend the Constitution," and emphasizes that as "peaceful people" his supporters have "not put anyone in danger" — "unlike other protest [sic] that have taken place in this country over the last year and a half."

But these pronouncements aside, he's given very little further detail on his aims, identifying no obvious exit strategy. And with his call for other militias to join the rising, Ammon Bundy may have initiated one of the thorniest domestic challenges of President Obama's final year in office.

So where did the militia movement come from – and why has it suddenly come back?

Tragedy and terror

There is of course a long history of distrust towards the federal government in America, one of which the militias of recent decades are acutely aware. Drawing on anti-Communist organizations of the 1950s and the paranoia of the Cold War, militia culture grew towards a fever pitch in the 1980s and 1990s. Novels such as 1978's *The Turner Diaries* spun myths about the condition of American modernity that provided both ideas and inspiration to violent and unstable white supremacist movements. Many of the same ideas were presented to the wider public in less political and racist terms in hugely popular films, among them "Red Dawn" (1984).

The tragedy and incompetence of the security agencies' responses to the sieges of the Weaver family on Ruby Ridge, Idaho (three deaths, August 1992) and the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas (seventy-six deaths, April 1993) only confirmed to many patriots that the government was willing to pursue unconstitutional methods to attack liberty-loving, gun-owning religious communities and political conservatives.

But the popularity of this newly radicalized "paranoid style" came to a sudden halt on the

second anniversary of the burning of the Waco compound, when Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols bombed a federal building in Oklahoma City in what was then the most significant terrorist incident in American history, killing 168 people.

One year later, the siege of the Montana Freemen seemed like a last hurrah for militia culture. Its peaceful conclusion suggested that security agencies had learned the lessons of earlier disasters, and were now willing to engage with armed patriots in a manner that would both deny them martyrdom and ensure public safety.

But now the Bundys' invasion of the wildlife sanctuary has announced that militias are back. Their popularity began to grow again after President Obama was first elected, as commentators on the radical right began to wonder whether conservatives might ever regain power. Many among their number began to speculate how best to survive or resist what they thought a perverse and illegitimate new direction in American culture.

Increasingly, they turned to websites such as survivalblog.com and the survivalist novels and manuals of James Wesley Rawles, a bestselling Penguin author whose Web site claims more than 320,000 hits per week.

In 2011, Rawles began to promote the evacuation of religious conservatives to the "American Redoubt," a territory covering several states in the Pacific Northwest. As I was told by several of my interviewees during fieldwork in Idaho, several thousand people have heeded his call. Many will have been shocked by the horrors of the Planned Parenthood videos, the Supreme Court's recent ruling on same-sex marriage, and the possibility of an invasion of Muslim refugees.

And the number of migrants to the Redoubt could increase dramatically now President Obama has issued his executive order on gun control, which sidesteps the Congress to limit freedoms that many believed were guaranteed by the Second Amendment.

So it's perhaps not especially surprising that the latest Bundy stand-off is taking place in the Pacific Northwest, nor that it is happening now. What may be more surprising is that the Bundys and their supporters are moving away from some of the old militia movement's fundamental tenets.



Young guns

The new coalition is broad and ideologically diverse, and its principal spokesmen explicitly repudiate racism. Some of its leaders promote

the goal of a theocratic society: Rawles's Penguin bestseller, *How to Survive the End of the World as we Know It* (2010), argues that the Ten Commandments provide the most secure basis for society. Other leaders are emphatically political: the Ill Per Cent societies promote a particular libertarianism that justifies physical force only in self-defense.

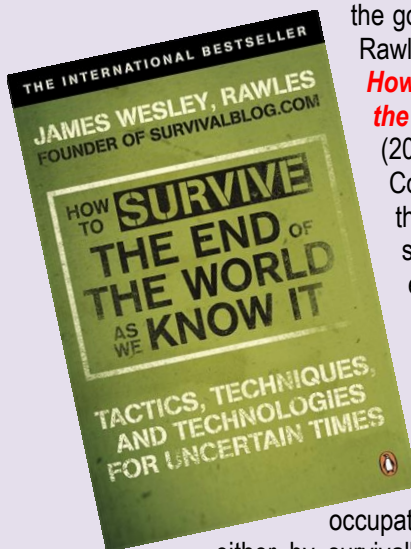
Notably, the Oregon occupation is not being supported either by survivalblog.com or Ill Per Cent leaders, and it may represent the Bundys' jockeying for position in the intensely competitive world of anti-government activism. But Ammon Bundy represents the breadth and innovation of these new interests. His new Twitter account evidences respectful engagement with at least one self-described "Afrocentrist" who had hoped that "your movement might ignite something bigger for Americans and their rights." One irony of the

occupation may be to demonstrate that the militia movement is turning its back upon racism — even as the government's lack of immediate armed intervention fuels fears that its response may be racist.

That suggests that #OregonUnderAttack could be the first significant example of a new militia ethos in action — one that could potentially reach across racial divisions to enable a broader discussion of constitutional issues as they affect all Americans. But the "double standard" argument over the authorities' tentativeness shows that there's still a way to go — as did a *New York Times* interview in which the elder Bundy wondered aloud if black Americans were better off under slavery.

Meanwhile, Twitter commentators have played upon the rural background of the Oregon militia to deride its members as #YallQaeda — yet the aspirations of #CitizensforConstitutionalFreedom for political change in America go far beyond the complaints about agricultural zoning that supposedly began the occupation.

The invasion of the wildlife sanctuary may demonstrate the power of social media to do for American militia culture what Facebook and Twitter contributed to the Arab Spring — even though Ammon Bundy's most useful asset may be President Obama's increasingly hard-line moves against guns.



Crawford Gribben is Professor of early modern British history, Queen's University Belfast.



Terror hits India again: Things we don't learn from the West

By Amandeep Sandhu

Source: <http://www.ibnlive.com/news/india/terror-hits-india-again-things-we-dont-learn-from-the-west-1185461.html>

Jan 05 – A few weeks back, there was a dastardly terrorist attack in Paris. Many people changed their DPs, many expressed shock, many tracked their friends, but what did we in India, as audiences, learn?

Did we not learn that:

- The premier addressed the nation as soon as possible.
- The security moves were kept from public TV.
- They did not indulge in visual mourning, show of bodies; show of sites of gruesome violence.

Everything that was reported was in text, in written reports.

What did it imply?

The French premier immediately signaled how the nation was rallied in the cause. There was no Science Conference to attend, no helicopters factories to inaugurate, no Yoga talks to be made, no RSS meetings to attend. As a nation, France is also fractured, as we are, but in its crises it stood together. Forget taking personal responsibility and resigning.

For decades now, it has been a trend in India that the politicians cling to their seats. But can the nation expect an address by the Prime Minister? Can the nation expect that its



leader will assess the failure of his leadership where it takes 60 hours to neutralize 6 terrorists? Would we evolve a policy that we will not give in to the public's lust for visual drama and TV channel craze for TRPs and not beam live operations by security forces? Kargil, 26/11, Pathankot.

America watches the Iraq War coverage in its prime time from half way across the globe, we do not have to do it. Would we put in a policy to have a media centre and put out consistent information and not the Home Minister, Food Minister, Punjab government, sending out conflicting messages? There is an effort involved in reading. The effort leads to sentiments but in a measured manner unlike TV. What is this pornography of pain that we now indulge in?

The whole episode has not only been very sad but also very humiliating. No wonder we as a nation stay stuck in hyperbole, drama, and mudslinging. The only thing we do not value is human life.

Amandeep Sandhu is the author of two books - Roll of Honour, a fiction based on the events of 1984 and another fiction Sepia Leaves. He lives in Bengaluru.

Planes left Pathankot air base after intelligence alert

Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Planes-left-Pathankot-air-base-after-intelligence-alert/articleshow/50460909.cms>

Jan 06 – **Alerted by intelligence about the presence of the jihadis and their designs on Pathankot air base, the Centre got the IAF to remove its birds from the forward operating base at least 6 hours before the terrorists managed to breach the outer perimeter, disclosed sources.**



THE PRIME SUSPECT OF PATHANKOT ATTACK

Behind Dec 13, 2001, PARLIAMENT ATTACK

JAISH-E-MOHAMMAD (ARMY OF THE PROPHET)


- ▶ Jem launched Jan 31, 2000
- ▶ Like LeT, Jem too controlled and funded by Pak agencies
- ▶ Formed by Maulana Masood Azhar in Karachi after India released him from jail during terrorists-for-hostage swap (Dec 31, 1999), following hijack of IA Flight IC 814
- ▶ Outfit banned in 2001

MODUS OPERANDI

Storm high-security target, including security forces' bases, camps and convoys; kill as many security personnel and civilians as possible before getting killed in retaliatory action

Pathankot strike, and barring the Parliament attack, Jem confined its ops within J&K

- ▶ Last year February, it was reported Khalistani terror groups had found new ally in Jem's Masood Azhar
- ▶ Masood Azhar and brother Abdur Rauf Asgar use the front of Al Rahman Trust to raise funds for terror activity



Regretting the "lapse" of the security personnel which helped terrorists enter the strategically vital installation and which has cast a shadow on the government's response, sources said the precise intelligence was the sign of a successful counter-terror operation.

Official sources said that 9 columns of Army were called in along with Gaurda commandos of IAF while two columns of NSG and Punjab Police were mobilized. Responding to the criticism that the Army was not deployed, sources said Army Chief Gen Dalbir Singh Suhag and IAF Chief Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha were involved in crafting the response as soon as the intelligence agencies cautioned that terrorists could be heading towards Pathankot air base. "We flew the planes out while army personnel threw a cordon around

ammunition and fuel dumps as well as radars and Air Traffic Control installations," said a source. Approached by TOI, National Security Adviser A. K. Doval called the response to the fidayeen attack a success. He said: "In security affairs, what happens to you matters a great deal. But what matters more is how you respond to it. What happens to you is not always in your hands, but how your respond is indicative of your planning, preparedness, correct anticipation, co-ordination and courage. In that respect, as a counter-terrorism response, it is a highly successful operation for which our Army, Air Force, NSG and Police, which played a vital role, need to be complimented."

They said that after the terrorists ambushed the five members of



Defence Security Corps of retired military personnel at 3.30 am, they failed to make much headway. "Apart from the sad loss of the Garuda commando, Gursevak Singh, who was killed during the gunfight, terrorists were contained within 35 metres of the outer perimeter. The death of Lt Colonel Niranjan Kumar, who died when the explosives on the body of a dead terrorist went off, was an accident," said a senior functionary.

Sources also said the terrorists were a determined bunch and this is borne out of the fact that there were 29 explosions even after the last of them had been taken out.

"They had packed huge amounts of explosives in their suicide vests. Grenades and explosives kept going off hours after the terrorists had been neutralized, giving the impression of a continuing exchange of fire," said a source.

Islamic Radicalization In French Prisons: Can Isolation Program Prevent Charlie Hebdo-Style Terror Attacks?

Source: <http://www.ibtimes.com/islamic-radicalization-french-prisons-can-isolation-program-prevent-charlie-hebdo-2249922>

Jan 06 – For the few dozen people in France living in cell blocks designated for inmates suspected of practicing radical Islam, life is isolating. Most inmates are closed in their cells for the majority of the day,



without access to the internet or other forms of communication and a judge must give permission for them to use the phone in order to speak with family or lawyers. They pass their days speaking with each other, praying and waiting the months or years until their release.

"They have the feeling of being completely separated from other prisoners and even from all other human beings," said Florian LaStelle, a French lawyer who has defended clients accused of attempting to join Islamic terror groups in Syria. "These are people who spend 22 hours out of 24 in a cell and their only form of

communication is with other people who are suspected of being radicals," he said.

To combat a growing threat of radicalization, the French government began a new segregation policy in several of the largest prisons in January 2015, weeks after Islamic terrorists Said and Chérif Kouachi stormed the offices of satirical weekly Charlie Hebdo, killing 12 people over the magazine's cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad. The policy separates alleged Islamic extremists in order to allow for increased surveillance, while preventing them from spreading their ideology to the rest of the prison population. While some defense analysts have argued that isolation is a necessary evil, many experts said the policy has not helped curb terror because of its lack of focus on rehabilitation. It may even serve as a recruitment tool, reinforcing stereotypes that France is biased against practicing Muslims, critics said.

Imprisonment has helped facilitate a "criminal social ladder," said Elie Tenenbaum, a terrorism and defense analyst for the French Institute of Foreign Relations, a think tank based out of Paris. "When you come out, you're no longer a small-time criminal; now you're in the big game," he said.

Two of the terrorists involved in the January 2015 attacks on Charlie Hebdo and a kosher supermarket, as well as several of the terrorists from November massacres claimed by ISIS in Paris that left 130 dead, passed through the French prison system. Following these revelations, French authorities began to view prisons as fertile ground for radicalization, spurring the state to find a way of limiting the influence of extremist prisoners.



U.S. prisons now breeding ground for Islamic terrorists, experts warn

Source: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/u.s.prisons.now.breeding.ground.for.islamic.terrorists.experts.warn/75750.htm>



US President Barack Obama tours the El Reno Federal Correctional Institution in El Reno, Oklahoma, in this file photo taken July 16, 2015.

Jan 06 – A former New York state official has warned that the entire U.S. federal and state prison systems have become a "breeding ground" for Islamic terrorists.

Home-grown terrorists confined in these prisons could radicalise fellow inmates, who could end up as lone wolf terrorists when they are released, experts warned, according to Fox News.

"If we continue to downplay the threat, we do so at our own peril," says Patrick Dunleavy, author of "The Fertile Soil of Jihad: Terrorism's Prison Connection" and retired deputy inspector general of the Criminal Intelligence Unit of the New York Department of Correctional Services.

The number of convictions of domestic terrorists has reportedly risen as the Islamic State (ISIS) began ramping up its recruitment in the U.S. About 71 convicts have been sent to prison for ISIS-related charges including 56 in 2015, according to the George Washington University's Program on Extremism.

The FBI is also investigating 900 cases of ISIS-linked radicalisation.

About 100 inmates serving time on terrorism-related sentences are due for release in the next five years, according to the Congressional Research Service. More terror suspects may be transferred to U.S. prisons from Guantanamo Bay in the coming months.

"We have never been faced with such a large number of terror inmates before," said Republican Rep. Peter King during a recent Homeland Security Committee hearing on countering violent extremism in prison.

The U.S. Bureau of Prisons should monitor and isolate these inmates, King said.

Dunleavy warned that criminals have been radicalised in prisons for years, warning that the situation could get worse.

He cited the case of Chicago gang member Jose Padilla, who converted to radical Islam while in prison in the 1980s and was accused of planning to detonate a "dirty bomb" in the U.S. Padilla is currently serving a 21-year sentence for conspiring to commit acts of terror overseas.

Dunleavy said many other inmates in state and federal



prisons have also been radicalised, either by listening to fellow inmates or hearing sermons on contraband devices smuggled into prisons. Mark Hamm, professor at Indiana State University, said thousands of federal prisoners have converted to Islam and other religions. However, he said most of the converts do not subscribe to violent interpretation of their faith. But he then added that it takes only a few radicalised inmates to create a threat.

"It is not the sheer number of prisoners following extremist interpretations of religious doctrines that poses a threat. Rather, it is the potential for the single individual to become radicalised," he said.

The FBI said radicalised inmates are a concern as they could urge other prisoners to attend radical mosques when they are released; could incite violence in prison; and could pass skills used in terrorism activities.

Sisters of Battle: Analyzing Female Terrorists

By Erik Kleinsmith

Source: <http://in homelandsecurity.com/sisters-of-battle-analyzing-female-terrorists/>

Dec 18 – Following the terrorist attacks in Paris, France, I wrote about the value of intelligence analysts seeking out and identifying brothers within a terror organization. Such familial bonds can provide counterterrorism analysts with potential patterns and trends of individual and group activity.

The attack in San Bernardino, California highlights a parallel set of implications involving the female terrorist. As more and more stories emerge about Tashfeen Malik (age 27) and her husband Syed Farook (age 28), it appears Malik had a key role in their radicalization, had pledged allegiance to ISIS, and was instrumental in the preparation and execution of this heinous crime.

For anyone surprised that a woman would take such a role in the abject horror that a terrorist-style mass murder brings, understand that the presence of women in a terror group is neither a new phenomenon nor limited to any one type of group or role.

While terrorism, much like other forms of asymmetric warfare, is a male-dominated calling, history is full of examples of women who been drawn to terrorism—albeit for different reasons than why men are drawn to it.

Some of the most notable examples of female terrorists include:

- **Sophia Perovskaya:** A leading member of the Russian anarchist terror group, Narodnaya Volya, which assassinated Tsar Alexander II in 1881. She was quickly caught and subsequently became the first female terrorist in Russian history to be executed.

- **Leila Khaled:** Hijacked TWA Flight 840 in 1969 and attempted to hijack El Al Flight 219 in 1970 as part of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine or PFLP. She was captured during the second attempt but exchanged for hostages a few days later. She now lives in Amman, Jordan.
- **Ulrike Meinhof, Gundrun Ensslin, and Astrid Proll:** Noted members of the Red Army Faction or Baader-Meinhof Gang founded in 1970. Played active roles in the various robberies, shoot-outs and assassinations conducted by the group throughout the 1970s.
- **Fusako Shigenobu:** Founder of the Japanese Red Army, a communist militant group, in 1971. Connected to the Israeli Lod Airport Massacre of 1972. Arrested and currently serving time in a Japanese prison for her various terrorist activities.
- **Satsita Dzhebirkhanova and Amanta Nagayeva:** Two female Chechen terrorists also known as “Black Widows” who each detonated a suicide bomb on separate Russian flights on August 24, 2004.

Obviously, this list could go on and on to include the many women who have participated in suicide bombings, intifada attacks, and supporting actions through the years. Female terrorists should not be considered an anomaly. They are, in fact, quite common, as are **some of the particular trends and patterns that can be associated with their presence.**

- **Women are more prevalent in leftist/Marxist groups than in radical Islamic Jihadi groups.** While many Islamic



groups will welcome women into their ranks, they are often there for specific, non-leadership tasks. Contrary to this are the many Leftist/Marxist groups who were either founded by women or had women in leadership positions.

- **Women are often used by terrorist groups because they are effective.** As terror groups actively seek out soft targets (i.e., non-military), the fact that they are viewed as less threatening and receive different treatment by security personnel can be a great benefit to a group's operations. For example, getting by security checks was a key element to the success of the Dzhebrkhanova and Nagayeva suicide attacks.
- **Women attackers will also typically receive more attention and coverage from the media,** making them an even more effective way for terror groups to get out their messages. Showing the world that women are drawn to their cause is an excellent recruiting tool for any extremist group, helping them to appear to be more widely accepted.
- **Female terrorists have a better chance of survival and to have a life beyond terrorism.** While joining a terror group for a majority of males is a one-way door, women have a greater chance of surviving as a terrorist and in some cases returning to normal society afterwards. This is partly because of the more supporting roles they tend to take, and also because they are more often accepted back into their respective societies after their stint in terror has ended.

Investigation Techniques

For the police investigator or intelligence analyst, finding a woman within a terror group—like finding brothers—often leads to more information. These include, but are not limited to, the following **analytical tips for analysts who have identified a woman in a terrorist group:**

- **Look for the male in the group who is attached to her.** If you find a woman, start looking to identify the male counterpart that she is directly linked with in the group. Most often, women are recruited and radicalized by a significant man already in the group such as a lover or family member. It is rare

for women to enter into a terror group alone or bonded with other women. If preliminary reports about Tashfeen Malik hold true, we may be looking at a slight deviation. While she was still attached to a man, her husband, it's looking like she may have been the one who radicalized Syed versus the other way around.

- **Look at the differences in what motivates the female(s) in your group compared to the males.** Where male terrorists will more often be motivated by comradery, power, or glory for their cause, female motivations will tend to be centered around the safety and security of their family or community. In the context of Maslov's hierarchy, a female terrorist's needs are much more foundational than a male's. The presence of women in a group will change how you should look at the motivations, goals, and objectives of the rest of the group.
- **Look for differences in their attitudes toward ruthlessness.** Because of their more fundamental set of motivations, female terrorists' attitude toward violence will be different than men as well. They will also understand that they, as a female, can be perceived as weak or sympathetic with their victims. Therefore, women are more prone to sacrifice themselves in the form of suicide attacks and bombings and will not shy away from resorting to violence to compensate for any perception of weakness. For example, if a terrorist group that contains a woman are holding hostages, look for the female to demonstrate her ruthlessness in order to establish that she is just as dangerous as her male comrades.
- **Look at the role of women in a terror group to correspond with their role in their society.** The notion that women will only be found in supporting roles and not "run and gun" with the boys is a myth. Women are just as apt at sharpshooting, bombing, taking hostages, and executing prisoners as men are. What's important to understand is that a terror group's social and rank structure will mirror the society it came from and the role of the woman in the group is no exception. For example, in leftist/Marxist



groups, look at women as leaders, planners, bomb makers, and even trigger pullers. In radical Islamic groups, women will rarely be accepted in leadership positions. Women are welcome in these groups, but only in certain roles. An exception to this would be in isolated or self-radicalized cells that would then pattern the particular host society, such as one in a more Western country.

- **Expect publicly known information about terrorist women to be exploited by the group.** Media attention is a critical part of extremist groups in exporting their message of terror. The extra focus media will give to women only helps to get terrorists' message out. This includes the recruitment message; highlighting women may even shame men into joining.
- **Look for female presence as a sign of potential weakness or vulnerability in a**

group. As written by Mia Bloom in a *Washington Post* article, "Female Suicide Bombers are Not a New Phenomenon", the use of women may signal a difficulty in the group either in being able to attack certain targets or in their inability to recruit enough men to continue operations. There could be several reasons why a group has women. Some may be an indication of a weakness rather than a strength.

Unfortunately, the attack in San Bernardino won't be the last attack in the latest wave of terror directed at Americans. It also will not be the only time we will see a woman as a major participant. For the intelligence analyst and police investigator, understanding the unique aspects of female terrorists is a critical part of understanding and predicting the future actions of the group.

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HSSAI Releases American Foreign Fighters: Implications for Homeland Security Final Report

Source: <http://www.anser.org/node/3273>



Concerns regarding the foreign fighter threat continue to be expressed by U.S. government officials. The unprecedented number of persons joining the fight in Syria, the relative ease of travel to the conflict, and inadequate intelligence resources are some of the unique security challenges. From a homeland security perspective, there are implications for border security, intelligence, immigration, law enforcement, and countering violent extremism.

The [American Foreign Fighters: Implications for Homeland Security Final Report](#) examines the terrorism-related behaviors of U.S. persons who have traveled or attempted to travel abroad to fight with designated foreign terrorist organizations and identifies implications to inform homeland security decision makers. We conducted an



extensive literature review to characterize current aspects of the broader foreign fighter threat. This review synthesized reporting on foreign fighter motivations, recruiting techniques, and the role of social media in furthering those objectives. We also sought to identify the current understanding of foreign fighter travel.

An in-depth analysis of cases involving 63 U.S. foreign fighters (and aspiring foreign fighters) was used to provide context for the literature review, and identify characteristics exhibited by U.S. foreign fighters that are not widely discussed in the public literature. These cases are individuals who were publicly identified between December 2011 and May 2015. A focus of our analysis was to identify any terrorism-related behaviors these individuals may have exhibited prior to their offense. Particular attention was paid to understanding any patterns or trends with respect to these individuals' social media use and travel planning. These knowable terrorism-related behaviors could inform improvements to security measures and countering violent extremism efforts.

Key findings

PROFILES: We were unable to ascertain any profile for the type of person who has sought to become a foreign fighter. Our data set included males and females ranging in age from 15 to 47 years. They hailed from locations across the United States. Some were described as being loners or disenfranchised, while others were said to be successful and charismatic. The group included students and former members of the U.S. military. Some of the persons had spouses and children in the United States whom they intended to leave behind, while others had families they sought to take with them. Many of the individuals were prevented from leaving the country by law enforcement. Others successfully left the United States to fight in conflict zones, with a few voluntarily returning home. Only one of the persons was arrested on suspicion of plotting a domestic terror attack after his return.

SOCIAL MEDIA: We found that social media are more than a venue for foreign fighter recruits to receive jihadist propaganda. They also actively push content across a variety of platforms, which enables a public view of their ideological transformation and beliefs. Nearly

all of the foreign fighters we studied used social media to communicate with other likeminded individuals, to include co-conspirators and other foreign fighters, recruiters, or facilitators located overseas. While some of these communications are available for public view, many persons took steps to ensure the security of their planning and discussions. Of those who successfully traveled abroad, many continued to use social media accounts to provide status updates, post propaganda, and encourage others to join them in the conflict.

PLANNING: The decision to travel overseas and join a terrorist organization requires a significant amount of planning and logistics. The individuals in our data set often needed to acquire basic travel documents, such as passports and visas, in addition to plane tickets. They relied on co-conspirators or existing foreign fighters to facilitate and coordinate their itineraries. Many did not have easy access to sufficient money, and engaged in a variety of means to pay for their trip and expenses overseas. They also prepared for combat by engaging in physical fitness training and gathering appropriate gear.

Implications

This study demonstrates the threat from foreign fighters is distinctive and continues to evolve. The takeaways from our analysis of cases involving Americans highlight several issues that could have implications for homeland security efforts.

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) efforts can be strengthened by incorporating travel behaviors of foreign fighters

Foreign fighters exhibited several terrorism-related travel behaviors that do not appear to be covered by existing CVE efforts. First, they frequently needed to acquire documentation (e.g., passports) prior to traveling abroad. There appears to be an opportunity to expand current CVE initiatives with the State Department, by informing passport officials to be aware of suspicious behaviors that could be exhibited by potential foreign fighters.

Second, a few individuals engaged in financial aid fraud to finance their travel. Incorporating institutes of higher education and the Department of Education Office of Inspector General in CVE efforts could help



identify potential foreign fighters through improved reporting and investigation of fraud cases. A broader integration of non-security partners in CVE is important to expand opportunities that can identify suspicious behaviors. However, incorporating these capabilities must be done carefully. To date, engagement with other non-security partners have been confusing, sporadic, under-resourced, and occasionally confrontational with law enforcement.

Our counter-terror travel programs are only as good as the information that serves them

Counter-terror travel programs are successful at interdicting known or suspected terrorists when they can leverage comprehensive and accurate information. Unfortunately, our study found that foreign fighters were able to depart and return to the U.S. in the absence of an active investigation. This highlights the limits to counter-terror travel programs. Relying on a range of international, federal, state, local, community partners, and families is critical for

the U.S. to continue focusing on efforts to identify potential foreign fighters as early as possible.

Foreign fighters are adaptive adversaries, requiring constant reevaluation about intent and capabilities

Terrorist organizations, exemplified by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), have successfully demonstrated an ability to remain relevant by developing a dispersed, persistent, and cohesive online presence. They also employ innovative technical capabilities and focusing messaging to circumvent security efforts. These include outreach efforts providing recommendations on travel paths that limit suspicion, and informing potential foreign fighters about the need to communicate on encrypted messaging services. As the terrorism-related behaviors and travel itineraries of American foreign fighters evolve, so too must the responses of U.S. law enforcement officials, intelligence agencies, and CVE partners.

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Ireland's Foreign Fighters

By James Brandon

Source: [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/tm/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=44952&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=26&cHash=cc225e2b73cea6bff372f1be5b057533#.Vo9_f1LgVj8](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/tm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=44952&tx_ttnews[backPid]=26&cHash=cc225e2b73cea6bff372f1be5b057533#.Vo9_f1LgVj8)

Jan 07 – Since the start of the Syrian uprising in 2012, around 30 to 50 Irish citizens are believed to have traveled to the country to join various Sunni rebel groups. At least three of them are known to have been killed. Although these numbers are

small compared to other large European countries such as France or Germany, they are high when taking into consideration Ireland's total Muslim population of around 50,000.



Indeed, according to one study, Ireland has the highest rate of Muslim participation in the Syrian conflict of any country besides Finland ([The Journal](#) [Ireland], September 5, 2014; [CNN](#), September 1, 2014). The proportion of Irish recruits active with the Islamic State (IS) group is also believed to be high. For instance, in November, the country's former justice minister said that the government was aware that approximately "30-40 people from this country [...] had gone to fight with Islamic State in Syria," including both citizens and residents of Ireland ([Independent](#) [Ireland], November 21, 2015).

As in many cases, the initial wave of Irish volunteers to fight in Syria in early 2012 and 2013 were motivated more by anger at the

veteran of the Libyan uprising, and who later described his motivations: "It wasn't a religious war of any sorts... the mission in general was to topple the dictatorship. And our mission in particular was to help the Syrians themselves: train them how to protect themselves, how to maintain their weapons to topple the regime. After we passed on what knowledge we had, I returned" ([Irish Times](#), August 1, 2012; [Independent](#) [Ireland], February 7, 2012).

Another Irish citizen who travelled to Syria during this early phase to join Liwaa al-Umma was a Jordanian-born Palestinian, 22-year old **Alaa Ciymeh**, who had been brought up in Ireland before returning to Jordan in 2008. He was killed while fighting for the group in April 2013 ([Irish Times](#), May 3, 2013; [Herald](#)

[Ireland], June 27, 2014).

Another Irish citizen, 22-year old Hudhaifa ElSayed, who was of Egyptian origin but raised in Ireland's County Lough, was killed with Liwa al-Umma during a clash with Syrian government forces in Idlib province in northern Syria in December 2012 ([The Journal](#), December 20, 2012). Another individual, 16-year old Shamseddin Gaidan, a Dublin resident of Libyan origin, was killed in Syria in February 2013 fighting with an unknown



Syrian government's brutal crackdown on protesters than by clear aspirations to set up an Islamic State. Many of these fighters also operated relatively openly. **Mahdi al-Harati** for example, a Irish-Libyan, became a leading figure in the Libyan uprising against Colonel Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 and a minor Irish celebrity in the process, openly traveling to Syria to assist rebels there in 2012 ([Irish Times](#), August 13, 2011). Drawing on his Libyan experience, al-Harati helped found Liwaa al-Umma, a relatively moderate Islamist-leaning militia, before returning to Ireland. Liwaa al-Umma later merged with the Free Syrian Army, the main western-backed rebel group. Al-Harati's presence attracted at least two other Irish nationals to join Liwaa al-Umma. One was al-Harati's brother-in-law, Housam Najjair, a 33-year old builder who was also a

rebel group, having crossed into the country from Turkey the previous year ([Independent](#) [Ireland], February 23, 2013).

Although details of Irish involvement in more hardline groups such as the Islamic State or al-Qaeda's official Syrian affiliate, Jahbat al-Nusra, are scarce, there is evidence that Irish citizens are active with these groups. In August 2014, Irish media reported that a self-described "Irish-Nigerian" convert to Islam had been trying to recruit individuals to come to Syria via the ask.fm internet forum, an approach used by other Islamic State recruiters ([Independent](#), August 21, 2014). In one exchange, the individual - whose online name was "Muthenna ibn Abu" - defended IS's beheading of British aid worker, David Haines ([Independent](#), September 14,



2014). His identity and current whereabouts are unknown.

There is evidence that Ireland, as well as a key exporter of jihadists, is home to a number of Islamic State supporters who are actively providing financial and other forms of support, using the country not only as a recruiting center, but as a logistical hub. At present, the Irish government is seeking to deport a 52-year old individual (who cannot be named for legal reasons) to a Middle Eastern country ([The Journal](#), December 29). The government has described him as "the foremost organizer and facilitator of travel by extremists prepared to undertake violent action" on behalf of Islamic State in Ireland, and of having also recruited for jihadist groups in Afghanistan (Ibid). In a potentially related development, in November 2015, citing a security service source, Irish media reported that "a small number of Irish-based Muslim extremists" with a "central group consisting of around 12 radicals" had been sheltering British and European jihadists, including supplying them with fake passports for travel ([Irish Independent](#), November 1, 2015). The source additionally said that Ireland was being used as a stop-off point for jihadists en route to Turkey, in order to confuse security services watching for jihadists travelling to Turkey directly (Ibid).

There is also evidence that some of the Islamic State's online supporters are based in Ireland. In November 2015, independent cyber security analysts used leaked details of Islamic State-supporting Twitter accounts to establish that between 20 and 50, active Islamic State online-based supporters were residing in Ireland ([The Journal](#), November 23). In another indicator of latent support for the Islamic State domestically, Irish Muslims responsible for organizing a 'Not in Our Name' protest against the terrorist group in July 2015 have said they were assaulted by two self-identified Islamic State supporters in an unnamed mosque in Dublin ([Irish Times](#), July 27).

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One potential cause of Irish radicalization, aside from the typically effective propaganda, is the range of Islamist groups from the Arab world with strong ideological commitments to "sharia law" and to creating an "Islamic state" are strongly entrenched in Irish Muslim communities.

These have prepared the ground for recruitment and hampered attempts to combat

it. Most notably, the Muslim Brotherhood-linked Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland (ICCI), based in a mosque in Clonskeagh on Dublin's outskirts, has positioned itself as a representative of all Muslims in Ireland and consequently enjoys privileged access to the government. This group is closely tied to the hardline European Council for Fatwa and Research, run by Muslim Brotherhood figurehead Yusuf al-Qaradawi, which has sought to promote highly conservative interpretations of Islam to European Muslims. Even today, ICCI's website openly offers PDFs of books calling for adulterers to be flogged or stoned to death, thereby directly promoting the same core Islamist ideologies as the Islamic State itself, even while remaining a key partner of the Irish government [1].

As with other Islamist-influenced organisations in the West, the ICCI has also consistently denied that any radicalization is taking place in Ireland, greatly hampering the authorities' attempts to understand domestic radicalization or gain the support of Muslim communities. For instance, following the November 2015 Paris attacks, the ICCI's spokesman, Ali Selim, told Irish media that while he condemned the attacks, Irish Muslims "have not been entertaining the ideas [the Islamic State] has been trying to sell them" ([RTE](#), November 14, 2015). The ICCI has also sought to publicly undermine other Muslim group's anti-Islamic State protests, for instance, refusing to join an anti-Islamic State march organized by a non-Islamist Sufi Muslim group, further undermining Irish efforts to combat Islamist radicalization ([Irish Independent](#), July 5, 2015).

To date, the Irish government, which has traditionally maintained a neutral foreign policy, has said relatively little publicly about the potential Islamist terrorist threat.

For instance, after the Paris attacks, the defense minister said that "the latest threat assessment to Ireland does not increase... it is low," and rejected claims that the country's 9,500 strong Defence Force was inadequately equipped to deal with the terrorist threat ([RTE](#), November 18, 2015). His remarks underscore the government's assessment that the Irish security services, despite their small size, have an extremely competent counter-terrorism wing, honed over decades of tackling Irish republican militancy. The



question, however, is to what extent this expertise can now be repurposed towards dealing with militant Islamism, especially given that the threat is rapidly growing and evolving. The Irish police (*Garda*), however, took one important initial step in 2014 when it established a 'Counter Terrorism International' unit to specifically target Islamist extremists and militants linked to Ireland (*Independent*, January 18, 2015). The Irish security services also already enjoy close links with various international partners, particularly the UK and the U.S. as well as the European Union, and are therefore positioned to leverage these relations to monitor and counter Islamist militant threats linked to the Middle East, the UK or Europe.

Despite this progress, the Irish security services - even its specialized Islamist-focused unit - face significant resourcing

and expertise shortfalls. Irish media recently reported the police lack key counterterrorism tactics such as knowledge of the Arabic-language skills, a dedicated unit tracking jihadist social media and a de-radicalization strategy to rehabilitate returning foreign fighters (*Irish Examiner*, November 21, 2015). As the above instances demonstrate, Irish jihadists' alleged use of the country as a logistical and transport hub where false passports can be procured poses potential risks not only to Ireland but also to its allies. Uniquely, Irish citizens do not need passports to travel to the UK, and the country is part of the EU and enjoys easy travel to the US under the latter's visa waiver system.

As a result, Islamist radicalization in Ireland may not just pose a threat within Ireland's borders, but also to countries further afield.

Notes

1. 'Adultery and Fornication in Islam', PDF document, Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland [Last accessed: December 29, 2015] http://www.islamireland.ie/site/assets/files/1181/adultery_and_fornication_in_islam.pdf

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Al-Shabaab Recruitment from Kenyan Universities Alarms Officials

By Sunguta West

Source: [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/tm/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=44951&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=26&cHash=669dc6d18e816cfac5af82202397cc87#.Vo9_dLgVj8](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/tm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=44951&tx_ttnews[backPid]=26&cHash=669dc6d18e816cfac5af82202397cc87#.Vo9_dLgVj8)

Jan 07 – **Al-Shabaab, the Somalia-based Islamist militant organization, is still**



actively recruiting from neighboring Kenya even as the group suffers major setbacks in southern Somalia. Underpinning the group's

notable success in recruitment is the radicalization and indoctrination of young men in order to prepare them for the battle in Somalia and beyond (*The Standard*, November 5, 2015). This trend has clear implications for efforts to tackle al-Shabaab in Somalia, as well as for Kenya's own internal security.

The methods and aims driving al-Shabaab recruitment have changed in response to the combat theater in which the actors operate (*The Star*, November 2, 2015). Initially, recruitment targeted desperate slum youths in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi and the port city of Mombasa, but the tactics and the individuals they prey on has since changed. According to officials in Kenya's National Security Intelligence Service



(NSIS), the militants are increasingly luring well-educated university students to the group, thereby penetrating institutions of higher learning with recruitment, training and indoctrination efforts ([Daily Nation](#), June 29, 2015). Like the slum youths al-Shabaab previously targeted, students and recent graduates are been offered money, jobs and opportunity. Typically, such opportunities include a \$700 per month salary, upkeep for their families, and a list of economic and spiritual benefits, which have led many educated individuals to accept al-Shabaab's offer. Reports indicate that al-Shabaab may be seeking the development of chemical weapons to employ in East Africa. Perhaps for this reason, recruits with science background – such as chemical, electrical, and mechanical engineering – have reportedly been a priority ([Intelligence Brief](#), May 24, 2015; [The Star](#), November 2, 2015).

Although the recruitment process has netted young people from all parts of Kenya, the majority are from Muslim-dominant regions in the country's northeastern territory ([Intelligence Briefs](#), May 25, 2015). The recruits' presence in the militant group has been put on display by its propaganda videos, which feature fighters speaking a Kenyan Kiswahili dialect ([Daily Nation](#), November 1, 2015). In April, Kenyan security agencies learned firsthand the impact of educated Kenyan recruits after it was revealed that one of the Garissa University College attackers was a prior University of Nairobi (UON) law student. The attack killed 148 people, primarily university students in Garissa, a town often cited as the gateway to Kenya's northern districts.

Abdirahim Mohammad Abdullahi, the former student behind the attack – killed by Special Forces during an operation to retake the university – was a privileged son of a chief in Mandera ([Kenya Today](#), April 25, 2015). Abdullahi had graduated in 2013 and worked for a local bank as an advisor before joining the ranks of al-Shabaab. He became the second university student to die while carrying out an attack on behalf of al-Shabaab. Another university graduate died by suicide bomb in 2014 in an al-Shabaab raid on a police station in Nairobi. That attacker, Abdul Hajira, had disappeared for a year before reappearing to complete his studies in a Bachelors of

Commerce degree ([Citizen TV](#), August 2, 2015).

Student recruits like Abdullahi are believed to be under the wing of Sheikh Ahmad Iman Ali, an engineer recently declared the supreme leader of al-Shabaab's Kenyan branch. Ali, a former student of the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), additionally heads video production within al-Shabaab ([Wardheernews](#), December 14, 2015). Based in Somalia since 2009, Ali's recruitment efforts are believed to target not only students, but also deprived individuals in the Majengo slums in Nairobi where he grew up. Shabaab recruiters like Ali are recruiting street children between ages 12 and 16 residing in the coastal region. The children tend to be "easy targets," as they often lack fundamental human needs, such as housing, clothing and food, which the group promises to provide in return for membership. Al-Shabaab also offers them a sense of family, purpose and belonging ([Daily Nation](#), November 1, 2015). In August, security agencies named the top al-Shabaab members responsible for recruiting Kenyans; they included the aforementioned Ali, as well as Abdifatah Abubakar Ahmad and Ramadan Hamisi Kufungwa. The latter two are leaders of the Jeshi la Ayman ('Army of Ayman'), a group formed by the militants to increase the number of attacks in Kenya. They have also participated in some large attacks in Kenya's coastal region, where they reportedly focus many of their recruiting efforts ([Tuko](#), August 17, 2015).

Recently, however, divisions between foreign fighters and ethnic Somalis have escalated, threatening to tear apart the militant force. This infighting is exacerbating the pressure on the group coming from increasingly effective operations in Somalia by the African Union's African Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). In particular, the loss of strategic towns and key revenue sources in Somalia due to AMISON actions have left the group looking weak and disjointed. An additional cause of the divisions within the group has been whether the organization and its various, diverse sub-factions should pledge allegiance to the Islamic State or remain loyal to al-Qaeda ([Intelligence Brief](#), April 27, 2015).



Since the emergence of the Islamic State, foreign fighters in al-Shabaab have pushed to strengthen links with the group. These fighters are convinced that linking themselves with Islamic State would raise al-Shabaab's status to that of a global jihadist group, as opposed to its current profile as a regional heavyweight. The rift between foreign recruits and the more locally-focused ethnic Somalis that comprise al-Shabaab appeared to widen in October with international media reporting that a faction led by the formerly UK-based Abdul Qadir Mumin had pledged its loyalty to the Islamic State ([Tuko](#), October 23, 2015).

These developments have put foreign al-Shabaab fighters on a collision course with native Somali fighters who, though loyal to al-Qaeda, see the current battle partially in nationalistic terms; it is away to liberate the country from foreign influence. Indeed, al-Shabaab has constantly emphasized its allegiance to al-Qaeda in spite of personnel changes in both groups. Al-Shabaab's previous leader, Mukhtar Abu Zubair, pledged allegiance to al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri after the death of Osama bin Laden in 2012. Abu Ubaidah made a point of renewing al-Shabaab's allegiance to al-Qaeda under his leadership 2014 after his promotion ([Daily Nation](#), September 17, 2014).

Even with tumultuous internal politics, recruitment by al-Shabaab's leaders have continued to be successful. In particular, the presence of Kenyan foreign fighters has accelerated the recruitment of new individuals from Kenya, bringing on board both Somali and non-Somali speakers and expanding the

organization's reach. So far, the group has been keen to use Kenyans to attack their country. Al-Shabaab has sought to target since the 2011 invasion of Southern Somalia by the Kenya Defense Forces (KDF), which dealt a heavy blow to the group's previously strong presence in that region.

In spite of the apparent influx of Kenyan fighters into al-Shabaab, there is a notable flow of individuals departing the group, as well. In the last few months, 700 al-Shabaab members are believed to have left the group and returned to Kenya ([The Star](#), November 4, 2015). Many have sought to take advantage of a government amnesty program announced in April after the Garissa University college attack, while others have returned on their own accord after promises made by al-Shabaab recruiters were not kept. Many foreign fighters returned with amputated limbs, head injuries and other significant bodily harm.

Al-Shabaab has unquestionably penetrated Kenya's institutions of higher learning, radicalizing and recruiting students. The government's poor monitoring of these institutions has directly impacted the success of such efforts, and Kenya should prioritize the issue. Until the country takes a proactive stance on the outflow of foreign fighters from its country and into the ranks of al-Shabaab, Kenya risks losing highly trained, educated students to the appeal of a terrorist organization and, as seen in the Garissa University College attack, knowledgeable students may be able to carry out more complex, effective attacks.

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Fresh militant violence in Philippines illustrates continuing jihadist presence

By James Brandon

Source:[http://www.jamestown.org/programs/tm/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=44949&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=26&cHash=0a4498d3cb6c7f9fae610653d2b61dbe#.Vo9_XFLgVj8](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/tm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=44949&tx_ttnews[backPid]=26&cHash=0a4498d3cb6c7f9fae610653d2b61dbe#.Vo9_XFLgVj8)

Armed members of Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) kidnapped and killed nine Christian farmers in the southern Philippines island of Mindanao on December 24 ([Manila Bulletin](#), December 27, 2015). On the same day, also in Mindanao, BIFF militants attacked Pigcawayan town using a range of

weapons including 40mm mortars ([The Standard](#) [Philippines], January 2). The military was able to repulse the attack, leaving six militants and one official dead. The militants simultaneously launched at least two other largely unsuccessful



attacks in the villages of Shariff Aguak and Linantangan; the latter attack reportedly involved up to 50 militants (Ibid). The attacks underline Mindanao's status as a center of Islamist militant activity, despite many years of counter-insurgency work by the Philippines



government in conjunction with the U.S.

The BIFF, which conducted the latest attacks, is a hardline splinter group of the Mindanao Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), a more secular Muslim militant group. BIFF separated from MILF in 2008 after the latter reached an agreement with the government. The MILF and BIFF sporadically cooperate, however, as shown in the 'Mamasapano incident' in January 2015; the incident occurred in the form of a clash between members of these militant groups and the military, killing leading militant Zulkifli bin Hir as well as 44 members of the Philippines special forces ([Rappler](#), February 3, 2015). Although the early 2015 Mamasapano clash disrupted government attempts to reach a political agreement with MILF in the hopes of ending longstanding separatist violence, the group has carried out few significant attacks in recent months ([Inquirer](#), January 3). MILF has continued, however, to publicly push for the government to grant greater autonomy to the predominantly Muslim Bangsamoro region of western Mindanao, arguing that this is necessary to undercut popular support for more hardline separatist and Islamist groups ([Philippines Star](#), December 24, 2015). The latest BIFF attacks show that the Islamist

groups remains active and willing to target both civilians and troops in Mindanao province.

Unrelated violence in the Philippines involving al-Qaeda-affiliated Abu Sayyaf, which follows a global jihadist agenda unlike the relatively parochial BIFF and MILF, has also occurred during the last month.

In particular, government troops launched raids against Abu Sayyaf in the isolated Sulu region, the group's main stronghold, located to the south of Mindanao. Following five days of fighting, the government said that it had killed 26 Abu Sayyaf militants, mainly in and around Al Barka town, with three soldiers also reported to have been killed ([Inquirer](#), December 20, 2015). If true, these losses are a significant setback for the group, which is believed to have only several hundred active fighters. Among those reportedly killed was a Malaysian bomb-maker by the name of Mohammed Najib, also known

as Abu Anas, alleged to be one of the group's key technical experts ([The Star](#) [Malaysia], December 17, 2015). According to Malaysian security sources cited by local media, 37-year-old Najib had a degree in electrical engineering from University of Malaya (UM) and was believed to have joined Abu Sayyaf in 2014. Najib has, however, more recently sworn his allegiance to the Islamic State, and reportedly has helped Malaysians travel to the Middle East to join the group (Ibid).

On January 4, soldiers disrupted what was potentially an Abu Sayyaf attempt to kidnap 26 locals in Ungkaya Baku, Basilan, where the organization has a known presence. The soldiers intercepted a bus full of passengers that gunmen had earlier commandeered at gunpoint ([Philippines Star](#), January 4). Later that day, government forces claimed to have arrested a wanted militant known as Junni Jamala in Patikul town, Sulu ([Philippines Star](#), January 4). The authorities said that the individual was believed to have been involved in an Abu Sayyaf unit specializing in assassinations. The government's decision to take the fight to Abu Sayyaf on their "home turf" may indicate an increased tempo of counter-insurgency operations in the coming year.



James Brandon is a political and security risk analyst. He was Director of Research at the Quilliam Foundation, a UK-based think-tank, from 2008-2011, and was a journalist for print, broadcast and online media between 2002-2007, reporting on terrorism and Islamism from around the Middle East and Europe. He has an MA in Middle Eastern Studies from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) and is an Associate Fellow at the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSR) at Kings' College, London. He currently works for a leading political risk and security consultancy and is based in Singapore and London. He has been quoted widely in the international media and has conducted research projects for a wide range of western governments.

American charged in bombing attack on US base in Afghanistan

Source: <http://www.terrorismwatch.org/2016/01/american-charged-in-bombing-attack-on.html>

Jan 07 – **A U.S. citizen already accused of going to Pakistan to train with al-Qaida was charged Wednesday with helping build explosives for a 2009 suicide attack on an American military base in Afghanistan.**

The court papers didn't identify the base or detail the damage. News accounts from the same 2009 date cited in court papers described a dual-car bomb attack at Forward Operating Base Chapman in Khost City, near



THE WASHINGTON POST

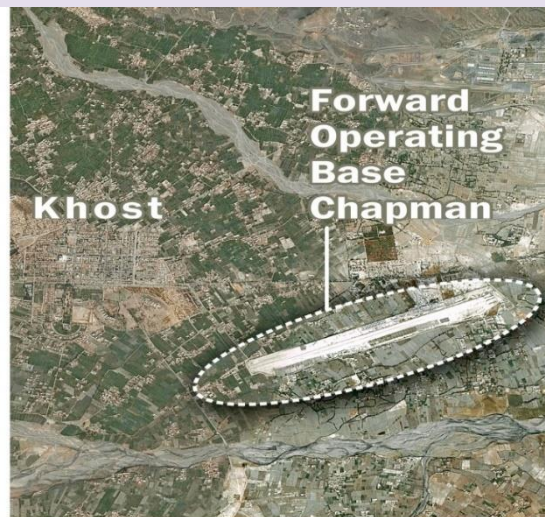


Image source: GoogleEarth

Forward Operating Base Chapman: Located about two miles southeast of the city of Khost, it's named after Sgt. Nathan Chapman, the first American soldier killed by enemy fire in 2002.

A revised indictment charges Muhanad Mahmoud Al Farekh with conspiracy to murder U.S. nationals, conspiracy to use weapons of mass destruction and other crimes. He is to appear Thursday in federal court in Brooklyn; there was no immediate comment by his lawyer.

The charges stem from an attack on Jan. 19, 2009, involving two vehicles driven by unidentified suicide bombers that were rigged with explosives, the new indictment says. Only one of the bombs detonated. Al Farekh's fingerprints were later found on packing tape used on the second explosive, the indictment says.

the border with Pakistan, which killed one Afghan and wounded several others, but harmed no Americans.

The **30-year-old Al Farekh, who was born in Texas**, "allegedly turned his back on our country and tried to kill U.S. soldiers in the course of executing their sworn duty to keep us safe," Brooklyn U.S. Attorney Robert Capers said in a statement.

Al Farekh was brought from Pakistan to the United States in April to face initial charges of providing material support to terrorists. Federal authorities alleged he and two other students at the University of Manitoba in



create these divisions between us and the others," explained Eric Bergemann, a Los Angeles psychologist.

"When those things are repeated by the media, we get more and more scared because we are continuously reminded about those things that are out of our control."

Bergemann said that the traumatized then sometimes turn their focus on perceived enemies, in order to feel like they are doing something to avert danger.

Anti-Muslim attacks have been on the rise since a Muslim couple shot 14 people to death and injured 22 others in the California city of San Bernardino last month.

The climate of fear is powerful.

Bergemann's clients tell him, "I'd like to do this event, but I'm concerned about being in a public place" because an attack could take place there, he said.

'Kill drill'

In many offices, employees are taught procedures to follow in case of an active shooter situation.

In one Los Angeles business building, notices repeat the sheriff department's message that **you have three options during an active shooter situation: Run, hide or fight.** Many schools also hold "kill drills," where children

learn how to hide in case a shooter comes onto school grounds.

"To some degree to kids who grow up like that, it's gonna be like earthquake drills, like it's normal, and that's kind of sad," said Catherine Mogil of the UCLA Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior.

"This generation may end up having a higher level of anxiety or hyper-vigilance like our military kids," added Mogil, a licensed clinical psychologist.

In Roseburg, Oregon, "the whole community is on edge... kids are affected as well," said deputy fire chief Robert Bullock.

Three months ago, a mentally unstable student killed an assistant professor and eight fellow students with an assault rifle in that usually peaceful community.

Firemen, nurses and police officers are still under "a lot of post-traumatic shock," Bullock told AFP.

He pointed to "sleeping problems" and other difficulties.

"There's people, their patience is very short, and some people are on an emotional roller coaster. One minute they're fine, the other, very emotional," Bullock added.

"Certain words make their hair stand up because they think they heard, 'shooting...'. I don't think any of them will completely heal."

Was Paris Police Station Attack Islamic Terrorism? Suspect Yelled 'Allahu Akbar' Before Being Killed, Officials Say

Source: <http://www.ibtimes.com/was-paris-police-station-attack-islamic-terrorism-suspect-yelled-allahu-akbar-being-2254338>



#Paris police station attacker carried #Daesh flag
sptnkne.ws/ax7m

7:07 PM - 7 Jan 2016



Jan 07 – The person who apparently waged a failed terror attack late Thursday morning at a Paris police station has been identified as Sallah Ali, according to a report from Agence France-Presse. Ali's identity was confirmed from his fingerprints, as the Moroccan-born homeless man had previously been convicted for theft.

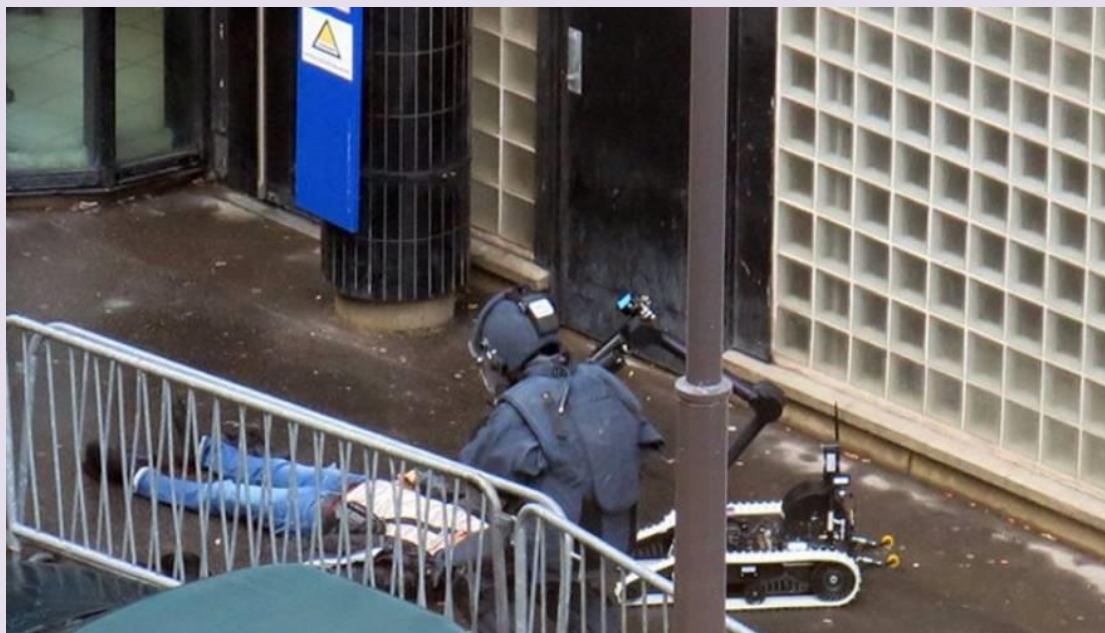
Hours after Ali's death, the city slowly returned to a sense of normalcy, with public transportation resuming, but schools remained in lockdown mode out of an apparent abundance of caution. The Paris prosecutor's office also confirmed it

planned on framing its investigation around an act of terror.





Ali reportedly approached a police station while wielding a butcher knife and wearing what apparently appeared to be a belt or vest laced with explosives before he yelled out, "Allahu Akbar," an Arabic



phrase increasingly associated Islamic extremism even though it is translated as "God is great."

Police shot Ali dead on the scene before finding a handwritten piece of paper on him that featured ISIS' black flag symbol, prompting a French law enforcement official who requested anonymity because he was not allowed to speak publicly on the matter to say it was "more likely terrorism."

The attempted attack came exactly one year after the fatal terror attacks in Paris that targeted the editorial offices of satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo for how publication depicted the Prophet Muhammad, a holy figure in Islam. Paris had recently begun to heal from yet another terror attack late last year, including a coordinated series of bombings and shootings across the city that left more than 100 people dead Nov. 13, 2015.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: What short of question is that?



Trump, Muslim Immigration, and Terrorism

By Raymond L. Richman

Source: http://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2016/01/trump_muslim_immigration_and_terrorism.htm



Jan 08 – **Candidate Donald Trump has called for the United States to bar all Muslims from entering the country until the nation's leaders can "figure out what is going on"**. Saying that "hatred" among many Muslims for Americans is "beyond comprehension," Mr. Trump said in a statement that the United States needed to confront "where this hatred comes from and why..." "Until we are able to determine and understand this problem and the dangerous threat it poses, our country cannot be the victims of horrendous attacks by people that believe only in jihad, and have no sense of reason or respect for human life," Mr. Trump said.

According to the *New York Times*, "Repudiation of Mr. Trump's remarks was swift and severe among religious groups and politicians from both parties. Mr. Trump is "unhinged," said one Republican rival, former Governor Jeb Bush of Florida, while another, Senator Marco Rubio of Florida, called the ban "offensive and outlandish." Hillary Clinton said the idea was "reprehensible, prejudiced and divisive." Organizations representing Jews, Christians, and those of other faiths quickly joined Muslims in denouncing Mr. Trump's proposal. Even Pres. Obama joined in.

All seem to have forgotten that Muslims from many Mideast countries have participated in terrorist attacks in the U.S., attacks on U.S. passenger airplanes, and attacks in friendly countries like the Philippines and France. The Muslim terrorists involved in those attacks came from Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Kuwait, Pakistan, Chechenia, and others with Muslim populations. America's leaders ought to have figured out what's been going on two decades ago.

Had the ban been imposed by Pres. Clinton after the first bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993 and after the warnings he received from the Philippine Police after the attacks in the Philippines in 1995, we would have avoided the attacks of Muslims in the U.S. during the past two decades and saved thousands of American lives.

The following Muslim attacks took place in the U.S. since 1993:

- On January 25, 1993 in Langley, Virginia, two Americans were killed and three injured. Who was the perpetrator? An American Muslim named Kasi who was captured by a joint FBI-CIA



task force in Pakistan in 1997, tried and executed.

- On February 26, 1993, the first World Trade Center bombing occurred. A bomb was installed in a van parked in the garage and exploded, killing six and injuring more than one thousand. The bomb was fabricated and emplaced by an Iraqi, Abdul Rahman Yasin. The attack was planned by a group of terrorists from several Muslim countries. Among them were Ramzi Yousef and Eyad Ismoil, both of whom were involved in the Bojinka plot in the Philippines the following year.

killling a Japanese businessman and injuring 10 passengers. The flight was carrying 273 passengers. The blast blew a hole in the floor and the cabin's rapid expansion severed several control cables in the ceiling, cutting off control of the plane's right aileron, as well as the first officer's steering controls. The flight crew maintained control of the Boeing 747-200 and brought it to an emergency landing at Okinawa's Naha Airport. One of the terrorists was named Murad. According to a report sent from the Philippines to the U.S. in January 1995, an American agent who



- In 1994-5, the so-called Bojinka plot was exposed by the Philippine police. It began with the construction of bombs, which were tested by placing one in a theatre in Manila injuring several patrons and another on a Philippine Airlines airplane on a Manila to Narita route. The plane stopped at Cebu where the terrorist Youssef left the airplane. Yousef had boarded the flight under the assumed name of Arnaldo Forlani, using a false Italian passport. Another bomb was placed under a seat on a Boeing 747 and exploded over Okinawa,

interrogated him stated "What the subject has in his mind is that he will board any American commercial aircraft pretending to be an ordinary passenger. Then he will hijack said aircraft, control its cockpit, and dive it at the CIA headquarters."

- Two years later, on September 11, 2001, the second World Trade Center bombing took place. Four planes were hijacked by 19 al-Qaeda members. Two planes crashed into the World Trade Center in New York City one into the Pentagon, and one



was forced down by its passengers into a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Nearly three thousand were killed. Fifteen of the perpetrators came from Saudi Arabia, a “friendly” Muslim country. Two were from the United Arab Emirates, and one each from Egypt and Lebanon. The terrorists had entered the United States on tourist or student visas.

- On July 4, 2002 at Los Angeles airport, an Egyptian gunman shot and killed two people and was himself killed by El Al airline guards. On November 5, 2009, a Muslim American army medical officer at Fort Hood, near Killeen, Texas, killed thirteen soldiers and injured thirty-three. On April 15, 2013, two brothers, Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnev, planted bombs near the finish line of the Boston Marathon. The blast killed three and injured one hundred three others. Both immigrated from Chechnya as Muslim refugees. Russia warned that one of the brothers was a possible terrorist. But neither the CIA nor the FBI kept track of their activities.

Aside from these bombings, there is ample precedent for bans on travel and immigration to the U.S. In 1882, the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed which targeted Chinese immigration. In 1932 President Roosevelt and the State Department essentially shut down immigration during the Great Depression. This was accompanied by voluntary repatriation to Europe and Mexico, and coerced repatriation and deportation of between 500,000 and 2 million Mexican Americans in the Mexican Repatriation.

In 1986, the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) was passed and contained an amnesty for about 3 million illegal immigrants already in the United States, and mandated the intensification of some of the activities of the United States Border Patrol or INS (now part of Department of Homeland Security). It imposed mandatory deportation in some cases. Well over two million individuals have been deported since 1996.

Mark Krikorian, who has served as Executive Director of the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS) since 1995, writes “while the president doesn’t have the authority that Obama has claimed, to let in anyone he wants for any reason (under the guise of “parole”), he does have the statutory authority to keep anyone

out, for any reason he thinks best. He notes, that under 8 USC §1182: “Whenever the president finds that the entry of any aliens or of any class of aliens into the United States would be detrimental to the interests of the United States, he may by proclamation, and for such period as he shall deem necessary, suspend the entry of all aliens or any class of aliens as immigrants or non-immigrants, or impose on the entry of aliens any restrictions he may deem to be appropriate.”

Besides the history of Muslim terrorist acts, many Muslims, here and abroad, are believed to look favorably on Jihad and even the actions of Muslim terrorists. As Eli Litman wrote in a letter to the editor of the *Wall Street Journal* (12/14/15):

The fact that mass demonstrations occurred throughout the Muslim world after the Danish Muhammad cartoon incident, but not after any of the dozens of large-scale terror attacks... is an indirect indication of what is approved of and what is not. Even the OIC (Organization of Islamic Cooperation of 57 member states) refused to condemn terrorism, labelling it as “acts of resistance” in the aftermath of 9/11 and ever since.

Nor is the mass support of terrorism confined to Islamic Nations; there were no visible Muslim participants in the solidarity marches in France after the *Charlie Hebdo* massacre, nor have the European Muslim communities who had organized so many anti-American demonstrations before both the Afghanistan and Iraq invasions, managed even a single march to condemn any of the mass killings in the name of their religion.

This is true of the majority of American Muslims as well.

Muslim failure to control or even criticize Muslim terrorism and to report potential terrorists in their midst justifies taking some action against the entire Muslim community in the U.S. and the rest of the world. **As the terrorist actions that have taken place to date confirm, barring Muslim travel to the U.S., with some exceptions, is the least of the actions the U.S. should take. Had we done so under the previous Democratic president, Bill Clinton, we would have avoided thousands of American deaths cause by foreign Muslim terrorists.**



EDITOR'S COMMENT: You have to be American to fully understand the content of this propaganda article (or a French, British or Spanish). Logic dictates that not all Westerners are good and not all Muslims are bad. Logic also dictates that action generates reaction. On top of logic is politics. This complex combination is the one that generates current global turmoil. Perhaps it is time to reboot and start over trying to unveil the roots of the problem. And the problem is the inherent mindset of civilizations' superiorities. Despite the fact that all recognize that the clash of civilizations is real, no one is willing to say it loud and clear. Civilizations come together with certain beliefs and standards that go well back in time. There is only one solution: either the two worlds will co-exist in peace and harmony or a global war will settle it for good. But this message requires the presence of great leaders, currently not available. It also requires concerned citizens, also not currently available. Pushing problems under thick carpets is not working anymore. World citizens will have to choose between global prosperity and peace or global chaos. Unfortunately, simple things are the most difficult to achieve.



Security experts fear 'European 9/11' in the coming year

Source <http://u.afp.com/ZPQr>

Jan 08 – Just a week into the year, France has already been rattled by an attempted attack on a police station, but counter-terrorism officials have far graver fears for Europe in 2016.

November's attacks in Paris, in which 130 people were killed by Islamic State group jihadists, showed the trauma that could be caused by a group of men with Kalashnikov rifles, but experts fear it could be just the start.

"Unfortunately, I think 2015 was nothing," a counter-terrorism official told AFP on condition of anonymity.

"We are moving towards a European 9/11: simultaneous attacks on the same day in several countries, several places. A very coordinated thing. We know the terrorists are working on this," he added.

He said the Islamic State group was recruiting and training Europeans "with the goal of sending them back to hit their countries of origin".

"They have the necessary false documents, the mastery of the language, the sites, the weapons. We stop a lot of them, but it must be recognised that we are overwhelmed. Some will get through -- some already have."

Recent arrests of jihadists returning from Syria and Iraq have added to concerns, he said.

"The profiles are changing. We are seeing ultra-radical guys return, very battle-hardened, who should have stayed over there."

"Before we mostly had guys returning who had made a mistake, who didn't realise that war can

be painful. But now, we are seeing guys return who are sticking to their chosen path."

Rapid response needed

Faced with an enemy that is happy to die and maximise civilian casualties, the challenge for France's security forces is to massively speed up response times.

"There will always be a delay for intervention forces that we have to reduce as much as possible," Colonel Hubert Bonneau, head of the elite GIGN police, told AFP.

"In the Bataclan, the killing of 90 people took 20 minutes. It stops when there is the opposition of security forces," he said, referring to the attack on a Paris concert hall on November 13.

It took two-and-a-half hours for police to storm the concert hall as they tried to gather information on the layout of the building and position of the jihadists.

Bonneau said this new type of threat meant there were no classic hostage situations such as in the past.

"Hostages are just a buffer to slow the progress of security forces. If we don't intervene as quickly as possible there will be more victims. That's the lesson to draw from the attacks of November 13 that will change our mode of intervention.

"We need to have surgical action, as forceful as possible and as quickly as possible," he said.

Just a rehearsal

Multiple, pan-European plots are not new and have been disrupted



on several occasions, including one in late August 2010, said Yves Trotignon, a former analyst for France's DGSE intelligence service.

"At that time, it was still Al-Qaeda," he said.

"The teams were due to arrive in Western Europe, recover pre-placed material -- handguns and assault rifles. It was disrupted by the Americans, who carried out a series of preventative drone strikes in Afghanistan and Pakistan against the guys thought to be mounting the operation.

"This type of multiple attack is part of the worst-case scenarios for 2016," said Trotignon.

"I know that in European capitals, particularly London, specialised services are working on this theory."

Police, military and intelligence services are constantly adapting to the shape-shifting threat, but so are the other side and often more quickly and effectively, the specialists said.

"It's not just us that learn the lessons, it's the Islamic State as well," said the counter-terrorism official.

He said a key lesson was to stay away from telephones, which have often been a key way to monitor potential attackers.

"They take lessons from the press investigations, read everything on the subject. They saw that it took two-and-a-half hours to launch the police raid at the Bataclan," said Trotignon.

They also saw that "the explosives weren't good, that they must be changed, that the guys left too many traces. They learn fast."

"If the quality of the attackers improves, we will have a problem," he said, adding that there was a "terrible pessimism" among security service professionals for 2016.

"Maybe we will say that 2015 was just a rehearsal," he added.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Although this is a very short article, it concentrates many of the security problems evolved in 2015: (1) return of European terrorists with real combat experience to their European homelands; (2) need for operational plans' update; (3) need for realistic urban training simulating possible scenarios; (4) possible infiltration of jihadists taking advantage of the massive illegal immigration flows; (5) fast adaptation of terrorists' tactics; and (6) need of intelligence services reshaping and lack of information exchange. Most of the above should have been already taken into account well before 2015 and especially after the Mumbai multiple attacks. But we did not. It is of utmost importance for each nation to know exactly what is going on within its own borders. It is very easy to accuse others for not securing Europe but at the same time we have explosives' home labs or terrorists living in refugees' camps. We also have citizens that are not part of the security game mainly because we do not want to upset or panic them. Street intel is much more effective than drones and super-computers and complex softwares trying to connect the visible dots. We also have certain nations that still think that they are immune because they are nice people not directly involved in operations in hot spots. Finally we always forget that current situation is not an army against another army – only a bunch of people with guns. If we cannot restore confidence in both state response mechanisms and populace then most probably 2016 would be a year to remember! If we continue spending money for aspirins instead on prevention and pre-emptive measures then even the element of (our) surprise will be outdated. Last but not least: we have to think if wars are the only causative of counter-violence. We have to answer the question: Will global peace will automatically eliminate terrorism? If yes, let's try to see how we are going to achieve it. If no, then we have to admit that destiny will determine our future and let it be.

France's Oedipal Islamist Complex

Source: <http://www.terrorismwatch.org/2016/01/frances-oedipal-islamist-complex.html>

Jan 10 – **France is at war! Perhaps. But against whom or what?**

Last November, when the Islamic State staged the shootings that killed 130 in Paris, it did not send Syrians. A year ago, when al Qaeda in

the Arabian Peninsula purportedly ordered the deadly attack on the office of *Charlie Hebdo*, it did not send gunmen from Yemen. Rather, both groups drew from a



reservoir of radicalized French youth who, no matter what happens in the Middle East, are already disaffected and are seeking a cause, a label, a grand narrative to which they can add the bloody signature of their personal revolt.

The rallying cry of these youth is opportunistic: Today it is the Islamic State; yesterday, they were with al Qaeda; before that, in 1995, they were subcontractors for the Algerian Armed Islamic Group, or they practiced the nomadism of personal jihad, from Bosnia to Afghanistan, by way of Chechnya. Tomorrow they will fight under another banner, so long as combat death, age, or disillusion do not empty their ranks.

There is no third, fourth, or nth generation of jihadis. Since 1996, we have been confronted with a very stable phenomenon: the radicalization of two categories of French youth — second-generation Muslims and native converts. The essential problem for France, therefore, is not the caliphate in the Syrian Desert, which will disappear sooner or later, like an old mirage that has become a nightmare. The problem is the revolt of these youth. And the real challenge is to understand what these youth represent: whether they are the vanguard of an approaching war or, on the contrary, are just a rumbling of history.

Two readings of the situation dominate at the moment and are shaping the debates on television and in the opinion pages of newspapers: These are, basically, the cultural explanation and the Third World explanation.

The **first** puts forth that recurring and nagging “war of civilizations” theory: The revolt of young Muslims demonstrates the extent to which Islam cannot be integrated into the West, at least not so long as theological reform has not struck the call of jihad from the Quran. The **second** interpretation evokes post-colonial suffering, the identification of these youth with the Palestinian cause, their rejection of Western intervention in the Middle East, and

their exclusion from a French society that is racist and Islamophobic. In short, the old song: So long as we haven’t resolved the Israel-Palestine conflict, there will be a revolt.

But the two explanations run up against the same problem: If the causes of radicalization are structural, then why do they affect only a tiny fraction of those in France who call themselves Muslims? Only a few thousand, among several million.

But these young radicals have been identified! All the terrorists who have actually taken action were, notoriously, in the “S File” — that is, on the government’s watch list. I don’t wish to get into a discussion here of prevention — I simply note that the information about

them is there, and it is accessible. So let us look at who they are and try to draw some conclusions.

Nearly all the French jihadis belong to two very precise categories: They are either “second-generation” French — that is, born or raised from a very young age in France — or they are “native” French converts (whose numbers have increased with time, but who already constituted 25 percent of radicals at the end of the 1990s). This means that, among the radicals, there are practically no “first-generation” jihadis (including recent arrivals), but especially no “third-generation” jihadis.

The third-generation category in France is growing: The Moroccan immigrants of the 1970s are now grandparents. But one does not find their grandchildren among the terrorists. And why do converts, who never suffered from racism, wish to brutally avenge the humiliation experienced by Muslims? Especially since many of these converts — like Maxime Hauchard, the Normandy-born man who appeared in the Islamic State’s beheading videos — come from rural France and have little reason to identify with a Muslim community that for them exists only in theory. In short, this is not a “revolt of Islam” or one of Muslims, but a specific problem concerning two categories of youth, the majority of whom are of



immigrant origin. This is not, then, the radicalization of Islam, but the Islamization of radicalism.

What is the common ground between the second generation and the converts? It is, first of all, a question of a generational revolt: Both have ruptured with their parents or, more precisely, with what their parents represent in terms of culture and religion.

Members of the second generation do not adhere to the Islam of their parents, nor do they represent a tradition that is rebelling against Westernization. They are Westernized. They speak better French than their parents. They have all shared in the youth culture of their generation — they've drunk alcohol, smoked weed, flirted with girls in nightclubs. A large number of them have spent time in prison. And then one morning, they (re)converted, choosing Salafi Islam, which is to say, an Islam that rejects the concept of culture, an Islam possessing of norms that allow them to reconstruct the self all by themselves. Because they want nothing of the culture of their parents or of the Western culture that has become a symbol of their self-hatred.

The key in this revolt is the absence of the transmission of a religion that is culturally integrated. It's a problem that concerns neither the first generation, whose members bring cultural Islam from their country of origin but who haven't been able to pass it down, nor the third generation, who speak French with their parents and who have, thanks to them, a familiarity with how Islam can be expressed in French society. **If it is true that there are fewer Turks than North Africans within the radical movements, it is undoubtedly because the transition has been smoother for the Turks, since the Turkish state took it upon itself to send teachers and imams to its overseas communities (which poses other problems, but allows the Turks to avoid the adherence to Salafism and violence).**

Young converts, similarly, adhere to a "pure" form of religion; cultural compromise is of no interest to them (which is completely different from previous generations who converted to Sufism). In this they join the second generation in their allegiance to an "Islam of rupture" — generational rupture, cultural rupture, and, finally, political rupture. It serves no purpose to

offer them a "moderate Islam"; it is the radicalism that attracts them in the first place. Salafism is not only a matter of sermonizing financed by Saudi Arabia — it's also the product that suits these youth, who are at odds with society.

What's more — and this is the greatest difference from the circumstances of young Palestinians who take up diverse forms of intifada — the Muslim parents of radicalized second-generation youth do not understand the revolt of their progeny. More and more, as with the parents of converts, they try to prevent the radicalization of their children: They call the police; if the children have left the country, they follow to try to bring them back; they fear, with good reason that the older children will draw in their younger siblings. Far from being the symbol of the radicalization of Muslim populations as a whole, the jihadis explode the generational gap, which is to say, quite simply, the family.

The jihadis are on the margins of Muslim communities: They almost never have a history of devotion and religious practice. Quite the opposite. Journalists' articles all resemble each other in their astonishment. After each attack, they question the inner circle of the murderer, and there is always the same sense of surprise. *"We don't understand; he was a nice boy (or a variation: "just a harmless juvenile delinquent"). He wasn't observant: He drank, he smoked joints, he went out with girls.... Ah, yes, it's true, in the last few months he changed — he let his beard grow and began to inundate us with religion."* For the feminine version, see the plethora of articles about Hasna Aït Boulahcen, "Miss Frivolous Jihad."

This cannot be explained by the idea of *taqiyya*, or concealment of one's faith, because once they are "born again," these youth do not hide anything, but rather display their new conviction on Facebook. They exhibit their new almighty selves, their desire for revenge for their suppressed frustrations, the pleasure they derive from the new power lent them by their willingness to kill, and their fascination with their own death. The violence that they subscribe to is a modern violence; they kill in the manner of mass shooters in America or Anders Breivik in Norway — coldly and calmly. Nihilism and



pride are profoundly tied to each other.

The fanatical individualism of these youth goes back to their isolation from Muslim communities. Few among them regularly attend a mosque. The religious leaders they eventually choose to follow are often self-proclaimed imams. Their radicalization arises around the fantasy of heroism, violence, and death, not of sharia or utopia. In Syria, they only fight war; none integrate or interest themselves in civil society. And if they take sexual slaves or recruit young women on the Internet to become the wives of future martyrs, it's because they are in no way socially integrated in the Muslim societies that they claim to defend. They are more nihilist than utopist. Even if some of them have spent time with Tablighi Jamaat (a movement that preaches fundamentalist Islam), none of them have joined the Union of Islamic Organizations in France, and none have participated in a political movement or undertaken efforts to support Palestine. None took up community service: delivering meals for the end of Ramadan, preaching in mosques, or going door to door. None have undertaken serious religious study. And none have taken an interest in theology, not even in the nature of jihad or of the Islamic State.

They were radicalized within a small group of “buddies” who met in a particular place (neighborhood, prison, sport club); they recreate a “family,” a brotherhood. There is an important pattern that no one has studied: The brotherhood is often biological. There is very often a pair of “bros” who take action together (the Kouachi and Abdeslam brothers;

Abdelhamid Abaaoud, who “kidnapped” his little brother; the Clain brothers, who converted together; not to mention the Tsarnaev brothers, the authors of the Boston Marathon bombing in April 2013). It is as though radicalizing a sibling (sisters included) is a way to underscore the generational dimension and the rupture with the parents. The cell members make an effort to create emotional ties among themselves: A member will often marry the sister of a brother in arms. The jihadi cells do not resemble those of radical movements inspired by Marxism or nationalism, such as the Algerian FLN, the IRA, or the ETA. Founded on personal relationships, they are more difficult to infiltrate.

The terrorists therefore are not the expression of a radicalization of the Muslim population, but rather reflect a generational revolt that affects a very precise category of youth.

Why Islam? For members of the second generation, it's obvious: They are reclaiming, on their own terms, an identity that, in their eyes, their parents have debased. They are “more Muslim than the Muslims” and, in particular, than their parents. The energy that they put into reconverting their parents (in vain) is significant, but it shows to what extent they are on another planet (all the parents have a story to tell about these exchanges). As for the converts, they choose Islam because it's the only thing on the market of radical rebellion. Joining the Islamic State offers the certainty of terrorizing.

Call for urgent security review of how Paris attacks ringleader got ferry to UK

Source: <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/jan/10/paris-attacks-ringleader-abdelhamid-abaaoud-entered-uk-in-2015>

Jan 10 – **The Home Office is facing calls to launch an urgent review of security at ferry terminals after it emerged the Islamic State commander who planned the terror atrocities in Paris travelled undetected through Dover earlier last year.**

Abdelhamid Abaaoud was a wanted terrorist at the time of his visit, in which he was able to visit fellow jihadis under the noses of Britain's security services and police. While in the UK, Abaaoud also took pictures of British landmarks on his phone.

The shadow home secretary, Andy Burnham, has urged Theresa May to hold an urgent review of security at UK ferry terminals. “This adds to the growing questions about about border security at our seaports,” he said.





The revelation adds to the pressure on May, the home secretary, who is already facing demands to explain how a terror suspect, Abu Rumaysah – who is thought to be the masked figure who appeared in an Isis propaganda video earlier this month – managed to flee Britain after being arrested and bailed by police.

Burnham continued: “Not only did we discover last week that a UK terror suspect on bail waltzed out at the border, we now learn a terror suspect from the continent freely walked in through the same route.

“It would appear extremists perceive the ferry border to be a weak link. The home secretary must conduct an urgent review of border security at ferry terminals and provide urgent reassurance that passports are being properly checked on exit and arrival in the UK.”

May “cannot continue to ignore the growing number of security breaches on her watch,” Burnham added.

UAE anti-terror centre launches #DeludedFollowers campaign

Source: <http://www.thenational.ae/uae/uae-anti-terror-centre-launches-deludedfollowers-campaign>

Jan 10 – A joint anti-terror initiative by the UAE and the United States is using a hashtag as another weapon in its online fight against extremism.



The Sawab Centre launched the #DeludedFollowers Campaign on its Twitter and Instagram accounts with the aim of shedding light on ISIL’s recruiting methods.

The campaign hopes to expose ISIL enlisting tactics such as portraying the Iraqi and Syrian conflicts as a war of civilisations between Islam and the West, alleging the mistreatment of Muslims around the

world, distorting Islamic terminology and spreading disunity among people and their leaders.

Through these methods, the centre said, ISIL targets those who feel desperate, are on the margins of society, and impacted by chaotic and unpredictable social and economic conditions.

New recruits are exploited and mistreated by the organisation and often put on the front lines of the conflict, according to numerous official reports.

Seen as expendable, the most recent conscripts are regularly used as suicide bombers and human shields by ISIL, according to the centre.



Sawab is publicising this treatment online through ISIL defectors' testimonials.

It has also stressed that educating societies about the danger of joining terrorist organisations is a crucial piece in the greater worldwide effort in limiting resources available for terrorism.

The centre, named after the Arabic word for “the right and spiritual path”, was formed in July of last year.

ISIS instructs Western followers on how to avoid detection by police

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160111-isis-instructs-western-followers-on-how-to-avoid-detection-by-police>

Jan 11 – ISIS is a sophisticated terrorist organization, as its savvy use of social media shows. Its sophistication shows in other ways as well: It has issued instructions to its followers in the West, who are plotting terrorist attacks against Western targets, advising them how to avoid detection by intelligence and law enforcement agencies. The *Independent* reports that the **58-page English-language ISIS manual, published online, advises followers of the Islamist organization to trim their beards so they look fashionable rather than a sign of religiosity, wear Western-style aftershave and deodorant, and even pretend to be Christians by wearing cross necklaces.**

The document, titled **“Safety and Security Guidelines for Lone Wolf Mujahideen,”** explains how Islamist militants can avoid being spotted or having the plot they are working on thwarted by Western security officials, and also suggests potential targets to attack.

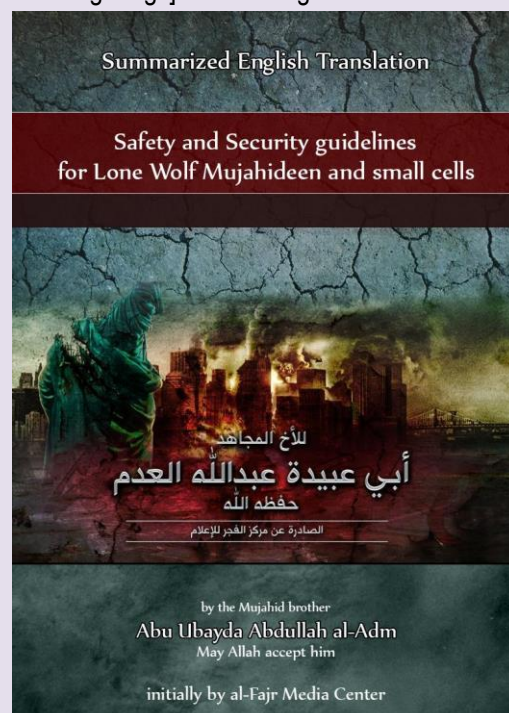
“No doubt that today, at the era of the lone wolves, brothers in the West need to know some important things about safety in order to ensure success in their operations,” the manual’s introduction reads.

“We thought a lot of non-Arabic speaking brothers would find it interesting and may apply it in their blessed operations,” it adds.

The guide, for example, highlights the “potential” – from the terrorists’ point of view — of attacking nightclubs because the loud music would initially mask the sound of the terrorists’ firearms, and the typical small number of exits could trap the club goers and cause additional panic.

The guide explains to Muslims who were not born in a Western country how they can avoid simple mistake which may lead to law enforcement agencies spotting and arresting them.

“If you can avoid having a beard, wearing qamis [Islamic tunics], using miswak [teeth cleaning twigs] and having a booklet of dhikr



[prayers and devotional acts] with you, it’s better. It is permissible for you to wear a necklace showing a Christian cross,” the document explains.

“As you know, Christians — or even atheist Westerners with Christian background — wear crosses on their necklaces. But don’t wear a cross necklace if you have a Muslim name on your passport, as that may look strange,” the guide adds.

The *Independent* notes that the instructions manual is the latest example of ISIS’ English-language propaganda. The organization has released dozens of online documents, instructing its followers on everything from how to build a bomb factory to



how to cross into Syria via Turkey without being caught.

Istanbul Bombing Was a Strike against Turkey's Economy

Source: <http://time.com/4178110/istanbul-bomb-isis-turkey-germany-economy/>



Depo Photos/Zuma Press This image made from footage on a tourist's camera shows an explosion at Sultanahmet Square near the historical Roman obelisk in Istanbul, Turkey, Jan. 12, 2016.

Jan 12 – A deadly ISIS bombing in Istanbul threatened to deal Turkey's tourist economy a major blow, as Germany's government warned its citizens there to avoid crowds and key landmarks and some tour agencies began to offer Turkey-bound travelers free cancellations.



The attack, in which a 28 year Saudi man (Nabil Fadli) identified by police as an ISIS member detonated an explosive device inside a crowd of German tourists, killing 10 people and wounding 15, appeared designed to inflict maximum damage on Turkey's \$30 billion tourism sector.

The suicide bomber (photo) struck right next to an 3,500-year-old Egyptian obelisk and just outside the iconic Blue Mosque, the very heart of Istanbul's historical district. Near the scene of the explosion, which had been cordoned off by Turkish police, local shopkeepers reported hearing a thunderous blast and seeing people fleeing the area. "We thought our windows would break," one told TIME,

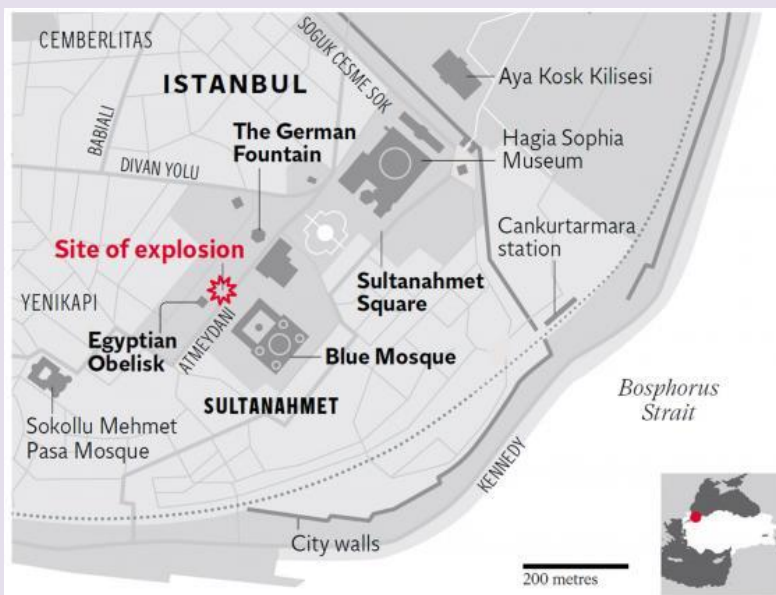
describing the strength of the blast.





All of the dead were foreign tourists and of those, at least eight were reportedly German citizens. “For many years, we Germans have not been hit so hard by terrorism as in Istanbul today,” the country’s foreign minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, said. Over 5 million Germans visited Turkey last year, more than any other nationals.

Turkey’s Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu called Germany’s Chancellor Angela Merkel to express his condolences. In a statement, he noted that the suicide bomber, named by police as Nabil Fadli, was an ISIS member. Other officials confirmed that the bomber had entered Turkey from neighboring Syria, but



ISIS has not yet taken responsibility for the attack.

The explosion, powerful enough to be heard in neighborhoods miles away, was the latest in a wave of violence that has washed over Turkey in the past few months. Against a backdrop of deadly clashes between Turkish security forces and the insurgent Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), Islamist extremists have staged brutal attacks. In October, a pair of suicide bombers killed 102 people during a peace rally in the

capital, Ankara. Months earlier, another attack left 33 dead in Suruc, a town on the Syrian border. Officials have blamed both attacks on ISIS militants, many of them homegrown.

Tuesday’s bombing, however, appeared to be the first major ISIS attack to deliberately target a tourist area in the country, a development Turkish officials and tour operators had long feared. Tunisia saw a huge drop in tourists last year after ISIS gunmen killed 38 tourists, mainly from the United Kingdom, on a beach in the town of Sousse.

Having already been buffeted by last year’s bombings as well as tensions with Russia, said Naz Masraff, an analyst at risk consultancy the Eurasia Group, Turkey’s tourist sector was now poised to suffer “even greater losses” in 2016.



"It's been bad, and it's going to get worse," said a travel agent, who asked to be named only by his first name, Suleiman, as he sat in his office only a few hundred yards from the blast site.

By targeting Germans, the attack threatened to further fuel the backlash against Merkel's pro-Syrian refugee policy, said Soner Cagaptay, director of the Washington Institute's Turkish Program. "By bringing the war to Istanbul," he added, "ISIS also aims to preemptively undercut Turkish-U.S. cooperation against that group." Turkey and the U.S. have been in talks to push ISIS back from a 60 mile strip of land across the Turkish border in Syria.

A young Canadian tourist, Alison Aho, who had heard the blast while boarding a tram, tried to keep calm. She had initially planned to spend three months in Turkey, she said, but promised her parents, alarmed by news of last year's Ankara bombing, to cut the trip down to a month. She was now debating whether to shorten it further. "I know my safety should be my number one concern," she said. "But I feel this can now happen anywhere."

What the Islamic State gains from the Istanbul terror attack

By Ishaan Tharoor

Source: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/01/12/what-the-islamic-state-gains-from-the-istanbul-terror-attack/>

Jan 12 – The suicide blast that ripped through a historic, touristy Istanbul neighborhood on Tuesday killed at least 10 people, all whom were foreigners. The attack, which Turkish authorities say was carried out by a Syrian national linked to the Islamic State militant group, took place in Sultanahmet, in the shadow of some of the city's most famous monuments and sites, including the Hagia Sophia complex and the Blue Mosque.

It cemented the sense of threat that now faces the country. "Turkey is the first target of all terrorist groups," President Recep Tayyip Erdogan declared in a televised address from Ankara.

As my colleagues Erin Cunningham and Brian Murphy report, the attack marks a departure from the Islamic State's previous successful strikes within Turkey, which mostly targeted Kurdish and leftist political groups. This, instead, was in the heart of the country's most iconic locale, steeped in centuries of Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman history, and a magnet for tens of millions of tourists each year.

"The vast plazas and surrounding streets are normally busy with merchants, vendors and visitors," Cunningham and Murphy write.

Turkey's lucrative tourism industry contributed about \$34 billion to the country's GDP in 2014, but the recent havoc of the Syrian civil war, as well as hostilities with Russia, led to a pronounced dip over the past year. A bombing of this scale in Sultanahmet will only intensify the jitters.

According to Hurriyet Daily News, an English-language newspaper based in Istanbul, the attacker — identified as Nabil Fadli, a 28-year-old Syrian man who was apparently born in Saudi Arabia — joined a throng of some three dozen German nationals touring near the ancient Obelisk of Theodosius. He then blew himself up. A Turkish official told the Associated Press that nine of the dead were Germans.

It's not clear whether the Syrian attacker had specifically targeted Germans, but the casualties underscore a tragic irony given the extent to which Germany has opened its doors to Syrian refugees.

"By targeting Germans, [the Islamic State] seems intent on creating an anti-refugee backlash in Europe, hoping to fuel already rising anti-Islam sentiments on the continent," Soner Cagaptay, Turkey expert at the Washington Institute of Near East Policy, writes in an email to WorldViews. "Additionally, this attack will, unfortunately, drive further backlash against German Chancellor [Angela] Merkel's pro-Syrian refugee policy."

Merkel spoke defiantly from Berlin. "Today Istanbul was hit. Paris has been hit. Tunisia has been hit. Ankara has been hit before," she said, referring to earlier Islamic State strikes in various parts of the world last year.

"International terrorism is once again showing its cruel and inhuman face today."

The German leader was hailed by Time magazine as the Person of the Year in 2015, in large part



because of her courageous, moral stance regarding the plight of refugees. But in the face of growing domestic pressure, Merkel has backtracked, taking a tougher line while seeking to fast-track deportations of asylum seekers who commit crimes abroad.

For the Turkish government, the attack marks a new, perilous moment. Last year, the Islamic State carried out what's regarded as the worst terror strike in the history of the Turkish republic, killing 102 people at a leftist rally in Ankara. Rather than serving as a rallying point for national unity, the Ankara bombings only deepened the country's bitter polarization, with critics of Erdogan and his ruling Justice and Development Party accusing the government of incompetence and even tacitly enabling the militants.

In recent months, Turkish authorities have stepped up counterterrorism operations against the Islamic State, cracking down on suspected cells within the country while also joining the United States in its air war against the jihadists' positions in Syria. There has also been a greater clampdown on Turkey's porous border with Syria, through which the Islamic State maintains its networks to the rest of the world. Vice President Biden is expected in Turkey later this month, a visit that will signal expanding security cooperation in the fight against the extremist group.

"The Turkish-U.S. plan is to take a 60 mile long territory held by Isis across the Turkish border in Syria, plugging the last gap for Isis access to Turkey and Europe from Syria," writes Cagaptay, using an alternative name for the Islamic State. "Isis knows that this move will cripple its finances and recruitment drive and prestige and is, therefore, acting preemptively to

hurt Turkey so Ankara will stand down or at least cool off against the group."

Still, for much of last year, Ankara seemed as, if not more, concerned by the gains made by Syrian Kurdish factions, which have direct ties to the Kurdish separatist movement within Turkey, as by the ravages of the Islamic State. A counterinsurgency operation is ongoing in the country's restive southeast, where a number of Kurdish-majority towns are under curfew. On the same day as the Istanbul bombing — and on the other side of the country — funerals were held for Kurdish youths killed in clashes with Turkish security forces.

On Tuesday, Erdogan issued a strongly worded riposte to a letter signed by 1,000 local and foreign academics — including the leftist American scholar Noam Chomsky — calling on him to halt the campaign in the Kurdish areas and return to the table to negotiate with Kurdish separatists.

"You are not enlightened persons, you are dark," Erdogan fumed. "You are nothing like intellectuals. You are ignorant and dark, not even knowing about the east or the southeast." Skeptics of Turkey's Syria policy believe that Erdogan and Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu have played a dangerous game in their conspicuous support of rebel groups in Syria — and that now the chickens are coming home to roost.

"Today's bombing in Istanbul may be the incident that finally brings Turkey to shift focus and concentrate its efforts on the true enemy: violent jihadist groups," writes Stephen Kinzer, a senior fellow at the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs at Brown University. "It is late in the game for such a switch."

Ishaan Tharoor writes about foreign affairs for The Washington Post. He previously was a senior editor at TIME, based first in Hong Kong and later in New York.

Istanbul: Why a decades-old terrorist tactic has gotten uglier and more random

Source: <https://www.timeline.com/stories/istanbul-decades-old-terrorist-tactic-has-gotten-uglier-and-random>

On January 12, 15 people were injured and 10 killed by an explosion in a heavily visited area of Istanbul, where the Blue Mosque and Hagia Sophia draw millions of tourists a year. Tourism

brings \$35 billion to the country annually, representing roughly 4% of its economy — and the attacks



will likely put a major dent in that figure in the coming months.

Countries, including Turkey, have tried to get better at thwarting attacks on tourists — and to do damage control when those efforts don't

killed 11 Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics in 1972; Palestinian terrorists pushed a wheelchair-using American man, Leon Klinghoffer, off a cruise ship in 1985; an Islamist group butchered 62 people, mostly tourists, at an archaeological site in Deir el-Bahri, Egypt in 1997.

Tourist destinations and the broader industry, however, were slow to respond, even as deadly attacks continued, choosing instead to keep their efforts subtle so as not to spook travelers. Police wore “soft uniforms” — khaki pants and T-shirts, say — rather than the classic one. “Security was not seen and not heard,” Tarlow explained.

After 2001, tourists began demanding more blatant security measures, and risk-management strategies were adopted at major tourist destinations.

Governments and the travel industry identified vulnerable targets, created tourism-oriented policing units, tourist-centric hospital units, new systems of communications, and ready access to translators.

But as tourist destinations began getting more serious about preventing or mitigating attacks targeting tourists, the attackers' tactics also changed. Attacks became more random, less targeted, like the one in Istanbul.

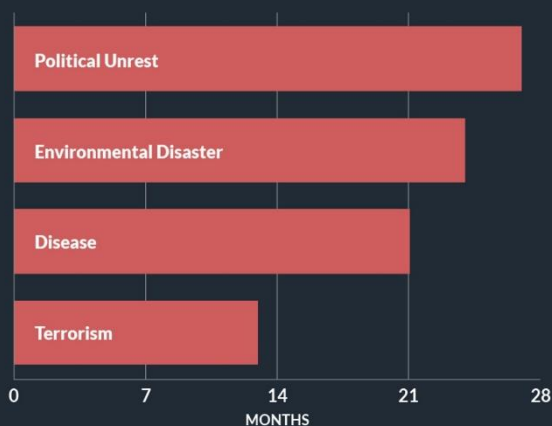
“In the 21st century, it became: ‘I don't care who I kill, I just want numbers,’” Tarlow said. “They've made it one step further along the road to horror. ... Now they don't even care who's coming to the square. It's just: I want to kill some people. It went from targeted-random to random-random. No one's even created the vocabulary for it yet.”

Easing the anxieties of potential tourists has gotten more difficult, too, largely because media coverage of attacks has become so ubiquitous and relentless — and because information spreads with lightning quickness across social media.

Even as normalcy returns to a tourist site after an attack has happened, the perceptions held by would-be travelers thousands of miles away linger for a long time.

“The further away you are, the longer it stays in people's memories,” Tarlow said, “because it seems worse.”

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE FOR TOURISM TO RECOVER FROM TERRORISM?



TIMELINE

SOURCE: WORLD TRAVEL AND TOURISM COUNCIL

work. But decades ago, when the “golden age” of tourist-targeted terrorism first began, no one was prepared.

In the late 1960s and early '70s, hijackers commandeered dozens of airplanes from the US and Cuba. The “skyjackings,” as they were then called, became so common that US airliners carried the approach plans for the Havana airport on board, just in case.

“The real attacks started coming in the 1960s, with hijacking. But then people got a lot more serious by the 1970s,” said [Peter Tarlow](#), a Texas-based expert on the impact of terrorism on tourism, who has consulted in countries across the world. “In the 1960s, it was almost a joke. You got a free trip to Cuba. By the '80s and '90s, it was no longer a joke. Now it was: ‘We're going to kill you.’”

From the '70s through the '90s, a series of high-profile tourist-related attacks grabbed the world's attention: A Palestinian group hijacked five planes that originated at European and Asian airports in September 1970; the Palestinian group Black September



UK should prepare for use of drones in terrorist attacks, says think-tank

Source: <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/jan/11/drones-terrorist-attacks-security-thinktank>

Jan 11 – Commercially available drones have the potential to be converted into flying bombs capable of hitting targets such as nuclear power stations or the prime minister's car, a report by a security thinktank has warned.

"Drones are a game changer in the wrong hands," warns the lead author of the report by the Oxford Research Group's Remote Control project.

The [report](#), The Hostile Use of Drones by Non-State Actors against British Targets, highlights concerns that "drones will be used as simple, affordable and effective airborne improvised explosive devices".

It lists a range of potential targets including foreign embassies, nuclear power stations, a G7 summit or the prime minister's car. "The UK government, police, military and security services will need to introduce countermeasures to reduce or mitigate the risk of commercially available drones being used for attack," it reads.

Recommended countermeasures include licensing drones, laser systems to protect targets, radio-

Model	Weight	Payload	Flight time	Range	Max speed	Camera	Operating conditions	Price
Parrot BeeBop	0.4 kg	0 kg	12 mins	250 m (extendable)	29 mph	Yes (14MP)	Dry conditions only	£700-900 (RTF)
Blade 350 QX2	1 kg	0.2 kg	10 mins	1,000 m	32 mph	Yes	Dry conditions only	£200-300 (RTF)
3DR IRIS+	0.9 kg	0.2 kg	16 mins	800-1,000 m	40 mph	Yes	Dry conditions only	£500-600 (RTF)
DJI Phantom 2 Vision +	1.2 kg	0.2 kg	25 mins	600 m	33 mph	Yes (14MP)	Dry conditions only	£800-1,200
DJI Phantom 3 Professional	1.2 kg	0.3 kg	28 mins	1,900 m	35 mph	Yes (12MP)	Dry conditions only	£1,000-1,200
Walkera Scout X4	1.7 kg	0.5-1.0 kg	25 mins	1,200 m	40-50 mph	Yes	Dry conditions only	£700-900
Yuneec Q500 Typhoon	1.1 kg	0.5 kg	25 mins	600 m	54 mph	Yes (12MP)	Dry conditions only	£900-1,100 (RTF)
SkyJib-X4 XL Ti-QR	15 kg	7.5 kg	15 mins	3,000-25,000 m	24 mph	Yes	Wind	£7,500-8,000
Altura Zenith ATX8	3.1 kg	2.9 kg	45 mins	1,000 m	44 mph	Yes	Light rain/snow	£15,000-20,000
MicroDrones MD4-1000	2.65 kg	1.2 kg	88 mins	5,000 m	26 mph	Yes	Light rain/snow	£20,000-30,000

frequency jammers, and clear guidance for the police and the army to shoot down hostile drones.

The study analyzed more than 200 drones available to buy on the high street or on the internet and warns many are capable of being converted to deliver an explosive payload.



It also warns that the dangerous capabilities of drones are increasing and yet they are already being used by terrorists and activists. “The technology of remote-control warfare is impossible to control,” the report says.

It notes: “Islamic State [Isis] is reportedly obsessed with launching a synchronised multi-drone attack on large numbers of people in order to recreate the horrors of 9/11.” The report points out that Isis is already using drones for reconnaissance in Iraq and Syria.

It also cites a number of recent examples of unauthorised use of drones that “suggest scenarios for future lone wolf attacks”. These include:

- Anti-nuclear activist landing a drone containing radioactive sand on the Japanese prime minister’s office in April 2015.
- Albanian activists disrupting an international football match against Serbia by flying a drone with an Albanian flag over the match.
- The Lebanese militant group Hezbollah violating Israeli airspace with drones, part of a fleet of an estimated 200 unmanned aerial vehicles.

Chris Abbott, the lead author of the report and visiting research fellow at Bradford University’s School of Social and International Studies, said: “The use of drones for surveillance and attack is no longer the purview of state militaries alone. A range of terrorist, insurgent, criminal, corporate and activist groups have already shown their desire and ability to use drones against British targets.” He added: “Drones are a game changer in the wrong hands. The government needs to take this threat seriously and commit to a range of countermeasures that still allow for legitimate commercial and personal use.”

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www.openbriefing.org

Israel’ security agencies take gloves off in dealing with Jewish terrorists

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160112-israel-security-agencies-take-gloves-off-in-dealing-with-jewish-terrorists>

Jan 12 – The killing last summer of a Palestinian family by Jewish fanatics forced the Israeli security agencies to rethink their approach to the growing threat of violence posed by Jewish religious radicals. These religious extremists, raised in Israeli settlements built in the occupied the Palestinian territories, are small in number, but they enjoy the tacit support of many settlers,

and, as importantly, the blessings of a few extremist but influential rabbis.

The *New York Times* reports that the Israeli security services became aware of the existence of the extremist network, which calls itself the Revolt, about six months ago, after several suspects were arrested in connection of the



killing by arson of the Palestinian family in the village of Duma.

The arrests themselves were not unusually – suspects in Jewish terrorism against Palestinians were detained before, but since Jewish terrorists were not subject to the “enhanced interrogation” techniques the Israeli security services use on Palestinian terrorism suspects, these Jewish suspects just kept mum and were let go by the courts for lack of evidence.

After Duma, the Shin Bet took off the gloves – and interrogated the Jewish terrorism suspects in the same way the Shin Bet interrogates Palestinian suspects (people in the know say that it would not only be

an exaggeration to say that the Jewish suspects were subject to the same interrogation techniques as Palestinian suspects; it would an exaggeration to say they were subject to 10 percent of what Palestinian suspects are routinely subjected to).

The suspects talked, and the scope of the violent network became clearer.

Shin Bet says the group poses a continuing danger of violence not only in the immediate sense of succeeding in their attempts to kill Palestinian Muslims and Christians – and perhaps even Israeli Arabs. The deeper fear is that these racist and deluded Jewish fanatics may somehow succeed in damaging the Al Aqsa mosque (for example, by firing a should-fired rocket at it), thus succeeding in their goal of igniting an all-out religious war between Muslims and Jews.

The Revolt network is not only about forcibly expelling all Muslims and Christians from the Holy Land and destroying Churches and Mosques – they have a larger goal. The Revolt extremists’ manifesto declares that they seek the collapse of the state of Israel, with its democratic government and legal system, and the creation of a Jewish kingdom in its place, a kingdom ruled by religious law.

Shin Bet has made public a manual that it said was written by another activist, Moshe Orbach, with instructions on how to set fire to mosques and Palestinian houses.

The *Times* notes that the Revolt is a more extreme heir to an older generation of youths in the illegal settlements in the West Ban, youth who followed a doctrine known as the “Price Tag.” The doctrine adherents attacked Palestinians in the West Bank and Israeli Arabs in Israel proper. They also confronted the Israeli military and police in order to deter the security forces from dismantling illegal settlements or impose any kind of law on the lawless settlers.

Shin Bet dates the beginning of the Revolt to the fall of 2013, when Jewish extremists began attacking Christian churches.



Price Tag itself followed an earlier generation of extremist settlers, the so-called Jewish Underground of the 1980s, which killed and maimed Palestinian mayors and students. Analysts note that whole the Jewish Underground was composed mainly of army veterans in their 30s, the current Revolt is largely composed of young high school dropouts.

Norway Ready to Rid Itself of Radical Mullah Krekar

By Stephen Schwartz

Source: <http://www.meforum.org/5782/norway-krekar>



Jan 11 – It seems time is running out for the main protagonist in a quarter-century-long saga involving radical Islam and hyper-humanitarianism, extending from Iraqi Kurdistan to Norway. A U.S.-designated terrorist group, Ansar al-Islam (Volunteers of Islam) is prominent in the Syria and Iraq fighting, reportedly with Saudi backing, as an opponent of both the Bashar al-Assad regime and the so-called "Islamic State" (ISIS). Ansar al-Islam has been led by a figure notorious in Iraqi Kurdistan, Mullah Krekar, whose real name seems to be Najmuddin Faraj Ahmad, and whose current age is 59.

An exponent of extreme Wahhabism, Mullah Krekar appeared in Iraqi Kurdistan in the late 1980s, before the autonomous zone was under Western protection. Unable to reestablish control over the restive region, dictator Saddam Hussein supported Mullah Krekar and a band of Saudi-funded radicals in terrorizing Kurds, especially traditional Sunnis and spiritual Sufis, who dominate among them. Krekar himself cleared out of Iraq in 1991, applying for refuge in Norway.

While his accomplices continued a bloody series of atrocities in Iraq, Krekar was treated with extraordinary sensitivity for 25 years by the Oslo authorities. The Norwegians wanted to expel him after he was accused of terrorism in 2003 but were thwarted from extraditing him to Iraqi Kurdistan because the latter may apply the death penalty. Although most such sentences have been commuted in the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), the Iraqi Kurds hanged 11 accused Ansar al-Islam members in 2006. Norway, in line with EU policy on capital punishment, would therefore not consent to any such handover. After his flight to Norway and grant of residence there, Krekar was said to have visited Iraq to lead terrorist attacks.

In November 2015, in a raid coordinated by Italian police, 17 terror suspects were arrested across Europe. Italy detained six, the UK three, Norway three, including Krekar himself, and Finland one. *BBC News* noted that Krekar's activities while he was in Norway had resulted in several local jail terms. He was arrested in 2012 for death threats against Norwegian government officials. Krekar was locked up again for praising last year's murderous assault on the staff of *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris. Throughout his sojourn in (and out of) Norway

he has played to the media, boasting of his power. One of the men held in Britain in November, Zana Rahim, 32, was identified by the *Guardian* as the son-in-law of Mullah Krekar and effective leader of his network while the jihadi leader sits in prison.

As described by the *New York Times*, Krekar had created a new offshoot of Ansar al-Islam, Rawti Shax ("New Course" or "Toward the Mountain"), aligned with ISIS. The recent police action by Italian officials and EU antiterrorism investigators allegedly broke up a conspiracy by Rawti Shax to get Krekar out of detention in Norway. Krekar's disciples are charged with planning attacks on political and media figures and kidnappings of Norwegian and British diplomats as hostages for his release.

According to Norwegian media, Mullah Krekar should have little time to remain in their country before he is shipped to Italy for trial. In December, Italy delivered a formal extradition order to Oslo for Krekar and Kamil Jalil Fatah, a 42-year old Iraqi suspect also living in Norway. On December 10 the respected Norwegian daily *Aftenposten* said Krekar and his accomplice would be handed over to Rome as soon as the Norwegians are assured that Italy will not send him on for trial in Iraq.

A Norwegian lawyer representing Krekar, Brynjar Meling, asserted his client's innocence and warned that appeals could take "between two and three years." But Norwegian Minister of Justice Anders Anundsen commented, "I have no second thoughts about extraditing a person who is not a citizen of Norway to Italy." Mullah Krekar's activities are diverse, although all fit the pattern of violent jihadism. He claimed to have abandoned Ansar al-Islam in 2003, but the organization continues, gravitating between past associations with al-Qaida, and current involvements with ISIS and the Wahhabi group Jabhat al-Nusra, according to the recent European indictments. And there remain unclarified questions about his former and probably current relations with representatives of the former Saddam Hussein regime.

Iraqi Kurds, like their co-ethnics in Turkey and Syria, hate ISIS and are not necessarily eager to see Mullah Krekar return to their territory, even for trial. Last year, a Kurdish commentator, Osamah Golpy, wrote in the Kurdish newspaper *Rudaw (Events)* under the headline "Kurdistan is better off



without Mullah Krekar," calling on the Norwegians to keep him under watch. Golpy wrote that "support for any Islamic group or political party is at its lowest level in the Kurdistan Region, especially since ISIS [shocks] the public with most barbaric acts against humanity."

Still, the Kurdish writer warned,

Lack of the death penalty in the [KRG]—except for very rare cases—and the credibility the Kurdish authorities have gained in the fight against ISIS, make the possibility of Krekar's return more likely. As far as the Norwegians are concerned, the farther he is the better. But for the Kurdistan Region, allowing him back would be a fatal mistake. There are only two scenarios for his return: either he will be deported to Kurdistan and will be tried for

terrorism charges for his involvement in founding Ansar al-Islam, or the charges will be dropped and he will walk a free man. . . . Krekar does have some support. For that reason, should the KRG jail him upon his return, it will have to deal with a significant number of Krekar sympathizers, large enough to cause trouble.

Golpy concluded, "The Kurds say they are fighting the Islamic State on behalf of the free world. On that note, the Kurds should ask the Norwegian authorities to do their part in this particular case: please keep him in Norway. We have had enough of him."

Responsibility for bringing Mullah Krekar justice will likely, as indicated, end up in the hands of the Italians—who, like the Norwegians, do not have a death penalty.

Stephen Schwartz is executive director of the Center for Islamic Pluralism in Washington, DC, and a fellow at the Middle East Forum.

Oregon siege continues...





ISIS executes 5 civilians by crushing them under bulldozer in central Mosul

Source: <http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/source-isis-executes-5-civilians-crushing-bulldozer-central-mosul/>



Jan 11 – A local source in Nineveh province said on Sunday, that the ISIS militants executed 5 civilians by crushing them under a bulldozer in central Mosul.

The source reported for IraqiNews.com, “Today, ISIS militants executed five civilians by crushing them under a huge bulldozer after handcuffed them in the area of al-Faisaliyah,” noting that, “The organization transferred the bodies and threw at al-Khasa area located west of the city.”

The source, who requested anonymity, added, “The organization accused the five civilians of apostasy, violation of its teachings and cooperation with the government authorities.”



Burkina Faso attack: Hostages freed from Ouagadougou hotel

Source: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-35330169>

Jan 16 – **About 30 hostages have been freed after an attack by militants on a hotel in Burkina Faso's Ouagadougou that**



reportedly killed at least 25 people (including 18 Westerners).

Four turban-wearing attackers from al-Qaeda's West African affiliate stormed the Splendid Hotel, taking hostages, after car bombs went off outside, eyewitnesses said. Three terrorists died at the first hotel, the Burkinabe authorities said, and a fourth was chased into the nearby Hotel Yibi which became the subject of a second security alert as dawn broke before they too were neutralised.

Communications Minister Remis Dandjinou tweeted that some 30 hostages had been liberated and that a military operation to secure the site was ongoing.

He said Minister of Public Works Clement Sawadogo was among those freed.

Thirty-three people were in hospital receiving treatment, he added. It is not known if any hostages remain inside the hotel, but witnesses reported heavy gunfire from the top floors at around 05:00 local time (same as GMT).

French Special Forces and Burkinabe troops were involved in rescuing hostages from the hotel used by UN staff and Westerners, Mr Dandjinou said.

He said that the total number of those who lost their lives was not yet known.

Hospital chief Robert Sangare quoted survivors as saying at least 20 people had died in the initial attack, before the security forces began their assault on the hotel.

Later, Interior Minister Simon Compaore said 10 bodies had been found on the terrace of the nearby Cappuccino cafe, which was also attacked by the militants.

One group that monitors jihadist networks said al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb claimed it was behind the attack on the four-star hotel alongside members of the al-Murabitoun Islamist group.

Who are al-Murabitoun?

Witnesses said the gunmen had initially entered the Cappuccino cafe. One employee at the cafe told Agence France Presse that "several people" had been

killed there.

Eyewitnesses reported hearing exchanges of gunfire between the men and security forces, as well as sporadic gunfire from inside the hotel, which is close to the country's international airport.

Who is the group responsible?

The SITE monitoring group, which analyses jihadist networks, said al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) claimed it was behind the attack.

The monitoring group specifically stated that those responsible were the al-Murabitoun group, which is based in the Sahara desert in northern Mali and contains fighters loyal to the



veteran Algerian militant Mokhtar Belmokhtar.

Last month, the group announced it had merged with AQIM. Belmokhtar, a one-eyed commander who fought Soviet forces in Afghanistan in the 1980s, was once a member of AQIM but left after a falling-out with its leadership.

Belmokhtar has been declared dead many times, the latest by a US air strike on 14 June last year in Libya - according to Libyan authorities -



but his death has not been formally confirmed. AQIM and al-Murabitoun said they were behind an attack on a hotel in Burkina Faso's neighbour Mali in November that left 20 people dead.

Burkina Faso had recently held its first presidential election since a coup earlier last year.

That coup toppled long-time leader Blaise Compaore, who had governed for 27 years.

"We are still in a context of political fragility, so I think the timing of this attack is meaningful," Cynthia Ohayon, an analyst with the International Crisis Group, told the BBC from Ouagadougou.

"The country has long borders with Mali and Niger, and we know there are armed groups present on the border, so this was probably something we had coming."

The Islamic State: How Viable Is It?

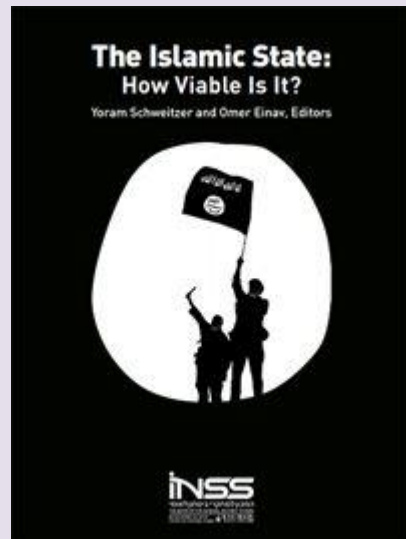
[Download PDF Print](#)

Tel Aviv: Institute for National Security Studies, 2016

Editors: Yoram Schweitzer and Omer Einav

Source: <http://www.inss.org.il/index.aspx?id=4538&articleid=11112>

The Islamic State burst onto the Middle East scene as an entity whose conduct and very essence challenge the existing regional order. With its military conquests in Iraq and Syria, its establishment of branches elsewhere in the Middle East and beyond, its state-like governance in the areas under its control, and the cruelty it typically exhibits, the Islamic State has become the focus of regional and international interest and concern. The articles compiled in this volume examine ways of dealing with one of the most salient military, sociopolitical, cultural, and intellectual challenges on today's global agenda.



There are many question marks surrounding the future of the Islamic State. Relating to historical, religious, military, economic, social, cultural, and geopolitical aspects, the articles in this volume address many of the questions prompted by the dramatic emergence of the Islamic State and examine ideas on how to grapple with this phenomenon. Taken together, they paint a portrait of the complex reality that has evolved in the Middle East in recent years, and attempt to outline future trends. In addition to this multi-disciplinary interpretation of the Islamic

State and its related challenges, the collection presents insights that can assist in formulating policies to cope with this challenging situation.

More Islamic State Terrorism in Jakarta, Indonesia? Who is pulling the Strings?

By Joachim Hagopian

Source: <http://www.globalresearch.ca/more-islamic-state-terrorism-in-jakarta-indonesia-who-is-pulling-the-strings/5501407>

"The truth is, there is no Islamic army or terrorist group called Al-Qaeda, and any informed intelligence officer knows this. But, there is a propaganda campaign to make the public believe in the presence of an intensified entity representing the 'devil' only in order to drive TV watchers to accept a unified international leadership for a war against terrorism. The country behind this propaganda is the United States." – Former British Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook



Since the deadliest terrorist attack in Asia on October 12th, 2002 at two Bali resort nightclubs killed 202 people targeting mostly Western tourists (88 Australians and seven Americans died) followed three years later by the October 2005 Bali suicide bombings killing 23 more innocent victims at three restaurants, Indonesia has largely managed to avoid major deadly outbreaks of terrorism on its own soil. The 19th largest geographical nation in the world comprised of more than 17,000 archipelago islands in Southeast Asia contains the planet's fourth largest population of over a quarter billion people behind only China, India and the United States. Its current fast rising census to date is 265,278,532. With 86% of its residents identifying themselves as Muslim, Indonesia is the home of more Muslims than any other nation on earth.

More than 500 known Indonesian citizens have fought as Islamic State jihadists in Iraq and Syria. In the face of growing terrorism around the world where typically Islamic extremists are the purported suspects, Indonesia's national government has received international praise for its diligent efforts over the years to combat terrorism. This latest terrorist attack follows on the two-day heels of yet another ISIS terrorist act in Istanbul.

The relative calm in recent years was suddenly broken late Thursday morning when terrorist attacks in multiple locations rocked the capital city Jakarta where more than ten million Indonesians reside, marking the worst act of terrorism in Jakarta since the July 2009 bombings that killed seven people and injured fifty inside the two Western chain hotel lobbies of the Ritz Carlton and Marriot Hotels. But on Thursday the dreaded inevitability of yet more Islamic State terrorists shattered the peace carrying out a number of grenade explosions and gunfire in several locations within a busy Jakarta district.

National police spokesman General Anton Charilyan stated the overwhelming likelihood that the suspects were ISIS militants based on the simultaneously coordinated blasts being similar to last November's Friday the 13th attacks in Paris. He also alluded to Islamic State's warning in late November that "there will be a concert" in Indonesia foreshadowing more ISIS attacks to come. Additionally, in December multiple Indonesian arrests were made thwarting terrorist plots two of which

involved ISIS planned for the New Year's festivities. In all 150,000 soldiers and police were on duty during the new year holiday guarding churches, airports and other public places, 9000 in Bali alone.

The Telegraph stated that a suicide bomber exploded his device at a Starbucks café in Central Jakarta shattering glass and injuring customers. This particular area of the city includes many Western chain businesses surrounded by downtown office buildings. Another blast took place outside a movie theater shopping mall. Indonesia's Istana Negara presidential palace is but one mile down the road from where the explosions occurred with the US Embassy also nearby. There was also gunfire reported in a number of locations between the suspects and police quickly converging on the scene. It was eventually determined that five separate blasts struck busy downtown central Jakarta Thursday morning. The city was on immediate lockdown for the next several hours. An hour and a half after the first bomb went off, gunfire in the area could still be heard.

Islamic State jihadists believed responsible for today's series of attacks made recent threats through social media to expand its worldwide terrorism campaign to include not only the usual soft target civilian population often aimed at popular Western tourist locations but also targeting airports and specifically security forces. Not surprisingly then, today's initial blast reported by *CNN* took place at a police outpost where one police officer is said to have died. *CNN* earlier released information that the one police officer, five civilians and at least four terrorists were confirmed dead in the brazen attacks but that was subsequently changed as more information came in.

When it was all said and done, Jakarta police claimed that all five attackers were killed by antiterrorism police, two being suicide bombers and three gunmen. The police also maintain that the only other dead in the attacks were one Dutch citizen and one Indonesian citizen with an additional ten others injured (though *CNN* states 19 were wounded). Jakarta police spokesperson Col. Muhammad Iqbal concluded, "We believe there are no more attackers around Sarinah. We have taken control." Despite Iqbal's confident claim designed to quell public concern,



various media outlets report that it's still unclear if any further suspects remain at large. What is most important in this very early aftermath is that virtually every act of terrorism committed in modern history is state sponsored by the Western intelligence community. It's worth mentioning that the reign of terror in Indonesia brought on by the 1965 coup that overthrew then President Sukarno leading to the murderous ethnic cleansing over a half million Indonesians was the result of the CIA and America's state sponsored terrorism. So the far bigger picture and pattern to understand here is the Hegelian do-loop of the state created crises, deep state's reaction framed as the proposed solution that then promotes further draconian tyrannical control under the false pretense of national security and counterterrorism.

Though the actual people pulling the triggers in these terror acts may be Islamic extremists, in every case there are invisible imperialistic government forces from the West that are pulling the strings from behind the scenes, most often CIA handlers who coordinate state sponsored covert operations working directly

with the alleged terrorist patsies, financing, arming and training them. Former career military intelligence and CIA officer and whistleblower Robert David Steele said:

Most terrorists are false flag terrorists, or are created by our own security services. In the United States, every single terrorist incident we have had has been a false flag, or has been an informant pushed on by the FBI. In fact, we now have citizens taking out restraining orders against FBI informants that are trying to incite terrorism. We've become a lunatic asylum.

Though Thursday's terrorism in Jakarta right now is too fresh to broadcast any overtly emerging anomalies that invariably surface soon after such events, if it's like every other major act of terrorism this century, it will not be long before they do. The global pattern of terrorist attacks particularly in recent years maintains a constant thread of continuity that smacks of New World Disorder's increasing reign of terror designed only to further consolidate and centralize the ruling elite's power and control over every corner of the globe to in turn further enslave the entire human population.

Joachim Hagopian is a West Point graduate and former US Army officer. He has written a manuscript based on his unique military experience entitled "Don't Let The Bastards Getcha Down." It examines and focuses on US international relations, leadership and national security issues. After the military, Joachim earned a master's degree in Clinical Psychology and worked as a licensed therapist in the mental health field with abused youth and adolescents for more than a quarter century. In recent years he has focused on his writing, becoming an alternative media journalist.

U.S. air strike on ISIS vault destroys "millions of dollars"

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160118-u-s-air-strike-on-isis-vault-destroys-millions-of-dollars>

Jan 18 – The Pentagon has released footage of an airstrike against an ISIS bank in Mosul, Iraq. The strike destroyed millions of dollars the Islamist organization kept at the bank's vaults. The attack took place on 11 January.

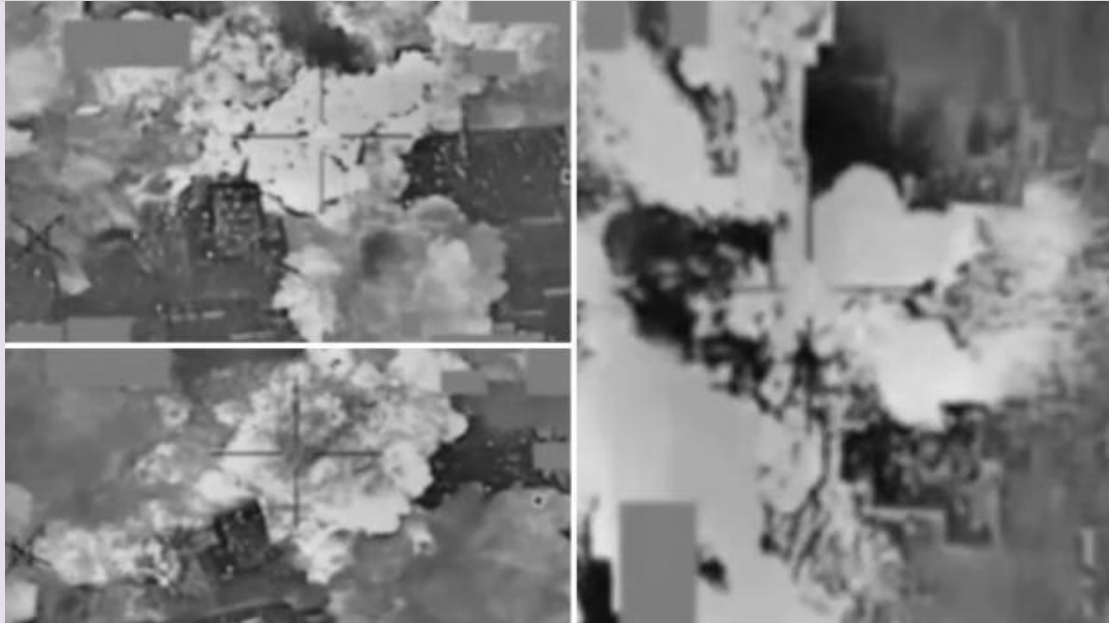
Gizmodo reports that video footage shows large plumes of smoke emerging above the building after it was destroyed by two 2,000 pound bombs, followed by clouds of currency bills drifting above the explosion.

Analysts say that the attack on the bank was part of the new phase of U.S. strategy against ISIS, a phase which will emphasize crippling ISIS finances. The U.S. government will likely continue to target ISIS's financial and other economic assets.

Gen. Lloyd Austin, head of U.S. Central Command, told CNN: "It was a good strike. And we estimate that it served to deprive ISIL of millions of dollars.

"And combined with all of the other strikes that we've done on ISIL's gas and oil production and distribution capabilities and strikes against his economic infrastructure and the various sources of revenue, you can bet that (it) is feeling the strain on his chequebook.





"ISIL needs those funds to pay their fighters, to recruit new fighters and to conduct their various malign activities," he added.

"You know, we said from the outset of this campaign that to defeat ISIL, we're going to have to take away its ability to resource itself."

Boston Bomber ordered to pay \$101 million to victims

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160118-boston-bomber-ordered-to-pay-101-million-to-victims>

Jan 18 – **Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, 22, the Boston Marathon bomber, has been ordered to pay more than \$101 million to his victims.**

In June, Tsarnaev was sentenced to death for his role in the 2013 bomb attack. The attack killed three



people and injured more than 260. Tsarnaev carried out the attack with his brother Tamerlan, who died as police were closing in on him.

The *Boston Globe* reports that at a hearing Friday, the judge rejected Tsarnaev's request for a retrial. Tsarnaev's lawyers argued that he had not received a fair trial due to the publicity surrounding the case. The judge said that this was not a valid argument.

Judge George O'Toole said: "There is no reason to think that if the trial had been moved to another district, the local media in that district

would not have given it attentive coverage."

The *Globe* notes that the \$101 million compensation "was based on a consultant's report of the cost of the injuries suffered by victims and the financial toll the injuries will take on the rest of their lives."

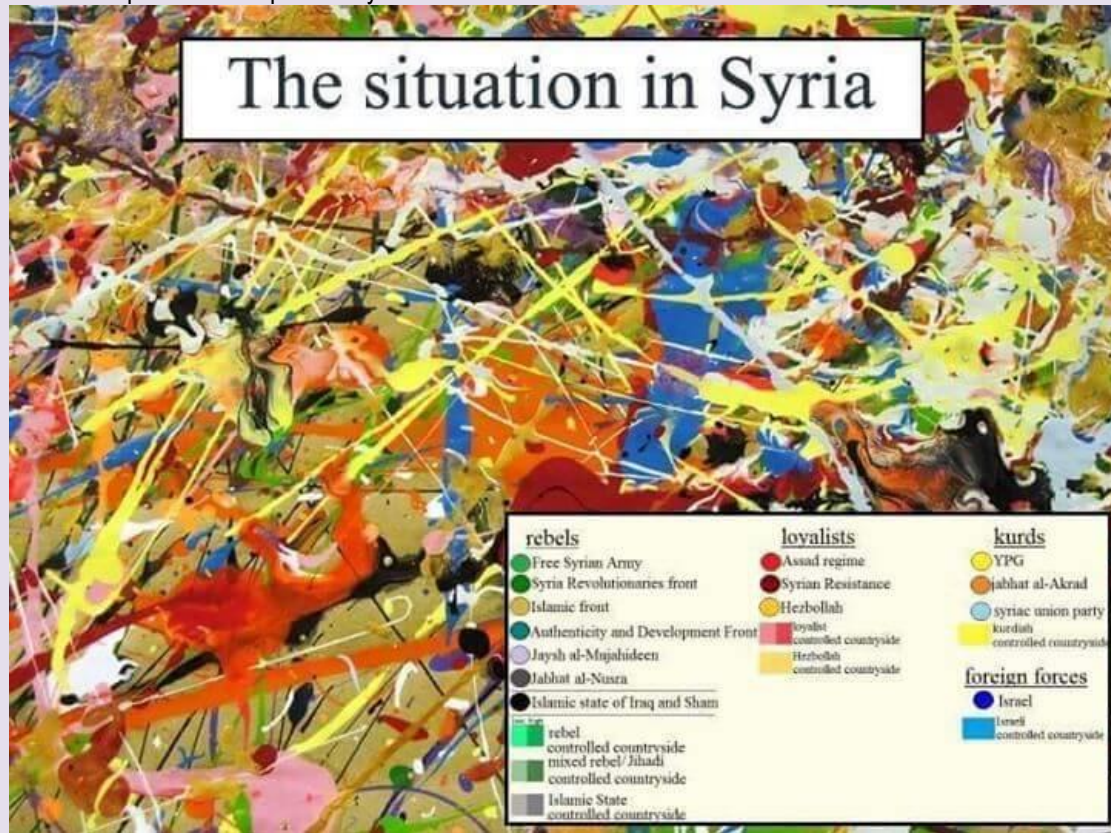
It is not expected that victims will ever see any of the money: "Tsarnaev will have no ability to pay the restitution while he remains in prison appealing a death sentence, making the order a symbolic gesture," the *Globe* notes.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: A "symbolic" gesture? Symbolizing what??? It is rather a bad joke! If lawyers continue to use the legal system to buy them time then the trial itself might cost \$101 mil...

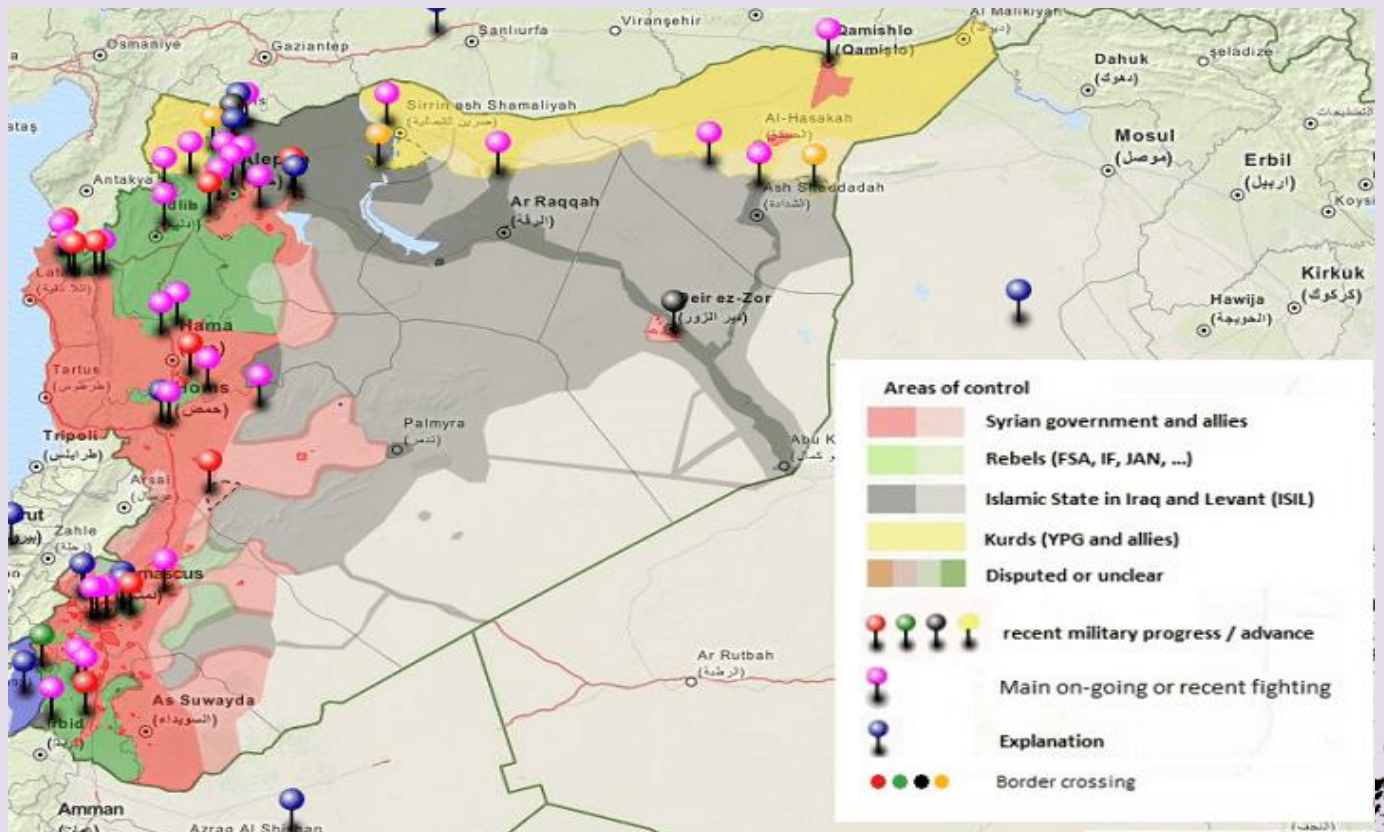


The Situation in Syria

Source: <http://brilliantmaps.com/syria-situation/>



or this one if the above map is not clear enough!



ISIS seizes £4bn drug ring from the Mafia to fund its brutal terror campaign

Source: <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/isis-seizes-4bn-drug-ring-7191800>

Jan 17 – **Jihadists are flooding Britain with cannabis from the Albanian drug farm as intelligence experts warn that Islamist extremism is taking hold in Europe**

In Albania Islamic State is raising cash for its terror campaign by running cannabis farms and shipping the drug to Britain.

The evil caliphate has seized control of a \$4billion Mafia marijuana growing operation in the rural mountains of Albania – giving it a foothold in Europe.

Private jets and ships take the £4billion-a-year harvest to Mafia bosses in Italy, who distribute it, the Sunday People reports.

ISIS moved into the lucrative trade after security services fought their way into an Albanian Mafia HQ in the hill village of Lazarat.

Far from putting paid to cannabis farming, the 2014 raid cleared the way for extremists to take over by removing the Mafia.

ISIS now recruit in the area – often from the Mafia itself.



Crop: Cannabis grows near Lazarat

Dr Vladimir Pivovarov, a former military intelligence officer, said: "It is well known that Albania and other countries in the region have citizens joining ISIS.

"Western intelligence identified Balkan countries as the most active in providing - recruits for jihad.

"There is no doubt that the best recruits for the jihadists are those that were in the Mafia. Already schooled in violence, they even pay their own way because the dirty money that the jihadists then gain when they recruit Mafia

recruits helps to further swell the jihadist coffers. With new recruits and money, the Mafia in the region is exactly the reason why Muslim extremism is establishing itself in this part of Europe."

He is echoing what the People was told earlier by an unnamed senior government official, who said: "It wasn't as if the Mafia moved out and Jihadists moved in, what many people fail to understand is that the borders between Albanian Mafiosi and



ISIS militants are blurred. Even if the leadership is different, they often use the same people to supply them with illegal weapons, and use the same people for illegal activities whether it's drug running or indeed any of the other illicit activities.

"For the drugs Mafia there are not so many advantages to links with the extremists although in the past, it might have helped out with money laundering and the like, but the terrorists love to have drug dealers in their squads, and offer them everything that can to win them over. With their help, they are clearly muscling into the drugs world."

Lazarat came onto the radar of western drug officials in 2012 after two Dutch motorbike tourists travelling through Albania made the remarkable discovery of the village.

Being from Holland, where cannabis consumption is legal, the pair were no strangers to what cannabis plants look like. But even they were stunned to discover tens of thousands of the plants growing in the countryside around Lazarat.

In its 2015 report, the US government-funded NGO Freedom House noted that Lazarat was at the heart of producing marijuana in Europe, valued at 5.9 billion (4 billion GBP) in 2013 - then equivalent to nearly half of Albania's gross domestic product and making it Europe's biggest illegal cultivator of marijuana.

To protect their turf, narcotics barons had turned the area around Lazarat into a no-go zone, brooking no outside interference. Armed with rocket-propelled grenades and armour-piercing shells - and with millions available to grease the right pockets - the region was generating hundreds of tonnes of marijuana annually with residents even using private planes to distribute their drugs.

And the police stayed away. Or at least they stayed away until June 2014 when the Tirana authorities decided on a shock-and-awe display of force intended to reclaim the area for the state.

A new Socialist party government had taken office at the end of 2013 and pledged to combat corruption and organised crime – and



Seized: Cannabis at a port in Albania

A video they made of the trip showed cannabis plants stretching away alongside the road for mile after mile. Their video went viral showing how the druglords in Albania produced weed to fuel the bars and cafes, the nightclubs and the homes of Western Europe.

to claim a place in the EU club of nations.

They decided to hit Lazarat hard, and backed up by helicopters and armoured personnel carriers, 800 heavily-armed police officers marched into the region. Against them the gangsters deployed their fearsome arsenal and unleashed shells, grenades,



RPGs and machine guns on the forces of law and order.

Police occupied the town after fierce fighting, seizing 102 tonnes of marijuana and destroying 530,000 marijuana plants. The cannabis they torched left a cloud of smoke so thick it obscured even the local mosque. In the process they seized grenades, mortars and machine guns.

Albanian security forces are now battling the jihadists and weapons seizures have been made.



When the Sunday People visited Lazarat, 140 miles from the Albanian capital of Tirana, locals said their lives are made hell by extremist thugs who recruit local men.

In the capital Tirana, officials confidently told the EU that Lazarat was pacified. The EU's delight at the action was clear, and as news of the decimation of the criminal gangs was revealed, it was also revealed that after rejecting Albania's membership three times previously, as a reward for the Lazarat raids that same month, the EU officially designated Albania as a candidate for membership.

But while the Albanian Mafia were forced into the defensive, across the country new drug fields were taking root, run this time run not only by the druglords, but also increasingly by an entirely different criminal organisation, and the Albanian Mafia position as the number one producer has slowly but surely passed into the hands of Jihadists.

While the money was flowing into the traditional Albanian Mafia clans the Jihadists had little opportunity to recruit locals. Most were not religious and many of those in Albania growing the crops were from the local dervish Bektashi religion, practitioners of a mild form of

Islam who have little problem with other religions.

But when the money stopped flowing, and men and older children started being arrested or shot, the Jihadists' promises started to fall on fertile ground among their children and junior disaffected members of the crime syndicates.

When the Sunday People became the first Western media organisation to visit Lazarat since the bloodbath in 2014 in which over 50 people were killed, locals said their lives were made hell by extremist thugs who recruit local men.

One who remained was an old man who said he had little left to worry about from talking to strangers. His wife, he explained, had cancer, and his son was one of those taken in the fighting for Lazarat.

"Here," he said pointing his finger in the corner of the street. "Here on that spot my son was arrested."

"We are not criminals, everyone around here knows that the state was involved in what we were doing, it was the state that brought us the cannabis seeds. This village has 600 houses. We were all paid to grow cannabis and make hashish."

But he said that income had now dried up for Lazarat, and the business had moved elsewhere: "Now many of the fields are now in Tepelene and Lushnje and they also make business with cocaine and heroin."

"What happened to Lazarat is even worse than the genocide that Serbia did in Kosovo. Our houses were raided, everything was confiscated. Even our clothes, our shoes, our jewellery, wedding rings and necklaces torn from the necks of our wives'."

Claims of abuse like this are exactly why the Jihadists' promises are falling on fertile ground. The old man acts as a guide for the reporters, introducing them to others as they turn up at the cafe who confirm what he is saying.

As more old men joined the table nodding at his words, he continued, saying: "The radical Muslim groups are trying to get our children. They are promising money and education in the Arab countries and promising them a better future. Some of the kids believe them and they are taking them to Syria and other countries like that."

On the outskirts of Lazaret is a military-style training camp, hidden in the surrounding



mountains and created by the drug dealers to train their foot soldiers, but which is now being used by those signing up with the militants.

Proof of the extremists' presence in Lazarat was exhibited after the 2014 raids when Ibrahim Basha, an Albanian NATO Special Forces soldier who had served five tours in the



Middle East for NATO was lured into a trap and killed with three of his colleagues badly injured. After the murder, the police arrested Xhuliano Malo, 17, who was driving a vehicle in which both firearms and cocaine were found.



He made a full confession, and described how the officers tasked with keeping up pressure on drug smugglers had been deliberately lured into a trap. But more significantly, he named three other young men from his village as being involved, also young men like himself, with one aged 19 and two aged 20. On their social media accounts, all of them made it clear of their support for the Jihadists.

The fact that the drug smuggling is continuing was admitted by Albania's Interior Minister Saimir Tahiri in July last year when he gave the country's parliamentary National Security Commission an update on the situation in Lazarat.

He said: "Criminality created over the years in Lazarat cannot be defeated in a year, regardless of the achievements of the successful operation last year.

"A massive criminal enterprise was created in Lazarat. Last year, police ended wide-scale drug cultivation there, the value of which was in

the billions of euros. But the fact is that the state, police and the justice system were corrupted with drug money."

When the People visited Lazarat police who were part of an operation codenamed "Kadij" were still finding and destroying cannabis plants, even though the season finished a long time ago. The plants were being grown in huge greenhouses in the village of Kadij about 5 kilometres from the city of Lushnje. More than 12,470 cannabis plants were destroyed, and six people arrested.



At the same time, police arrested five employees at the port of Durres on suspicion that they had allowed over 1.6 tonnes of cannabis to be smuggled out, which had been seized in the Italian port of Bari a few days ago. The truth is that drug production has continued at almost the same levels as before in Albania, and the shortfall, if there was any, has not affected the supply of cannabis to the West, instead it has just resulted in more being produced in neighbouring Kosovo, if anything even more in the grip of the Muslim extremists. As the Interior Minister admits, and the police operations show, Albania is still pumping billions of pounds worth of cannabis around Europe, together with vast amounts of cocaine and heroin, but now with different people in charge.

The latest CIA intelligence on Albania confirms that it is an "increasingly active transshipment point for Southwest Asian opiates, hashish, and cannabis transiting the Balkan route and - to a lesser extent - cocaine from South America destined for Western Europe."

It said that cannabis production is still expanding; and that ethnic Albanian narco-trafficking organisations are "active and expanding in Europe; vulnerable to money laundering associated with regional trafficking in narcotics, arms, contraband, and illegal aliens."



Mentor Vrajolli, a senior researcher in Kosovo's Centre For Security Studies, said: "The Police raids in the last years in Albania did not have the desired effect. The phenomenon was not eliminated. Cannabis production didn't stop. And what is worst, because of the action in Albania, as a result of the police raids, there is increased cannabis production in Kosovo now." He added the most of the money being made from the drugs trade seemed to end up leaving the country and that previously that was to the Albanian Mafia. With the structures in place for laundering money, where that cash was now going was anybody's guess.

He also confirmed that the terrorists were moving into the traditional Mafia business areas saying: "Organisations like ISIS are selecting some isolated gang members and bringing them over to radical Islam. Or they are selecting people with some criminal background and are then "rehabilitating" them, convincing them that radical Islam is the way they will clear their souls.

"Drug dealers and manufacturers are often weapon smugglers, or human traffickers too."

The extremists may have a very different motivation to the Mafia gangs, but they have the same desire for Western luxuries and the fact that the drug trade is still continuing is evidenced by the top-line vehicles like Hummers and BMWs which litter the streets between the humble whitewashed walls of ordinary locals in areas where cannabis production still continues.

Removing the drugs to remote locations makes it extremely difficult for police to track these down, although authorities claim to have found 216,000 marijuana plants in the first six months of this year, aided by aerial surveillance funded by Italian officials.

With Albanian migrants already running UK drug dealing operations, it means the cash is now going to the Jihadists.

Security expert Dr Marjan Nikolovski warned: "The UK is the main market for Albanian cannabis. ISIS is involved in production and smuggling. So anybody buying drugs in Britain is funding terrorists."

Bonded by a code of honour and blood, the Albanian Mafia traditionally exploited the UK's thriving vice trade.

Known as the Mafia Shqiptare, crime families from the Eastern European country arrived in the aftermath of the 1999 Kosovo war.

They identified Britain as fertile ground for their illegal immigration, drug trafficking and arms dealing operations.

And in the space of less than a year their grip on the UK's sex industry tightened.

A leaked Home Office report in 2001 found the Albanian mafia had seized control of the Soho vice trade, which had an estimated £40 million annual turnover from the sale of young girls.

Officials claimed the ruthless Eastern European crime network had moved into almost all of the saunas and massage parlours in the heart of Britain's vice trade.

But they also became major players in the distribution of drugs, enforcing deals by meting out extreme violence.

In 2014 Albanian gang members set up a cocaine hotline for drug addicts, earning more than £4million from 100,000 calls in just one year.

The unprecedented operation, dubbed 'Mario Line' by police, ran a round-the-clock service for callers desperate for the class A drug, sold at £40-£50 a gram.

And just months later a gang from the Eastern European country was jailed for a total of 157 years after attempting to flood London and the south of England with £40m of cocaine and heroin.

The Government has launched an investigation into foreign funding of jihadist groups in Britain. Lib Dem peer Paddy Ashdown claimed last year that outside links to home-grown extremists were not properly checked due to the Conservative Party's "closeness" to rich Gulf Arabs.

Now Home Secretary Theresa May confirmed that the Extremism Analysis Unit will carry out a probe.

Lib Dems want a full public report into how cash is provided to radicalise British young people.

MP Alistair Carmichael said: "Funding of extremist organisations from states like Saudi Arabia needs to be cracked down on."

Prof. Dr. Marjan Nikolovski from the respected Faculty of Security in Skopje at the St Kliment Ohridski University said that cash spent in the UK on drugs was now funding jihadists: "Isis is financing itself mostly from the same places as organised crime, and one of the most profitable forms of organised crime is the illicit drug trade.



"The fact that the UK is the number one market for Albanian cannabis and that Isis is involved in the production of cannabis and the smuggling of other drugs either directly or indirectly, it leads to the inevitable conclusion that anybody buying and consuming illegal drugs in the UK and other EU countries is helping to fund terrorist activities worldwide."

In Albania, plane loads of cannabis are still being flown in private aircraft across to Italy, where they are handed over to the Italian Mafia, which was long ago infiltrated by Albanian mobsters, to be sold on the streets of Rome, London, Paris and Munich.

With the vast sums from the Lazarat drug network, it provides plenty of cash for new recruits.

The most favoured are offered the chance to prove their loyalty by going to fight in Syria, and

when they return are rewarded with senior positions and all the perks that money can buy. It is believed their activities are being coordinated from Syria by Lavdrim Muhaxhiri, originally from Kosovo, who has responsibility for the region, and who has also been recruiting armies of loyal Muslim IT professionals from the region to help in the ISIS global social media campaign.

And they are not the only ones interested in glamorising what is happening in Albania.

A Hollywood production company is due to begin filming the bizarre story of Lazarat soon - although there will not be any on-site scenes for the reported A-list of actors turning the tragedy of Lazarat into a box office spectacular, because the place is simply deemed too dangerous for outsiders to enter.

Iraq: Staggering death toll, sexual enslavement, killing of child soldiers

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160119-iraq-staggering-death-toll-sexual-enslavement-killing-of-child-soldiers-un-report>

Jan 19 – A UN report released earlier today details the severe and extensive impact on civilians of the ongoing conflict in Iraq, with at least 18,802 civilians killed and another 36,245 wounded between 1 January 2014 and 31 October 2015. Another 3.2 million people have become internally displaced since January 2014, including more than a million children of school age.

Of the total number of casualties, at least 3,855 civilians were killed and 7,056 wounded between 1 May and 31 October last year — the period covered by the report, although the actual figures could be much higher than those documented. About half of these deaths took place in Baghdad.

The UN says that the report, compiled by the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), is

based largely on testimony obtained directly from the victims, survivors, or witnesses of violations of international human rights or international humanitarian law, including interviews with internally displaced people.

"The violence suffered by civilians in Iraq remains staggering. The so-called 'Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant' (ISIL) continues to commit systematic and widespread violence and abuses of international human rights law and humanitarian law.

These acts may, in some instances, amount to war crimes, crimes

against humanity, and

possibly genocide," the

report states.

"During the reporting period, ISIL killed and abducted scores of civilians, often in a targeted



manner. Victims include those perceived to be opposed to ISIL ideology and rule; persons affiliated with the government, such as former Iraqi security forces (ISF), police officers, former public officials and electoral workers; professionals, such as doctors and lawyers; journalists; and tribal and religious leaders.

Security Forces and associated forces, including militia and tribal forces, popular mobilization units, and Peshmerga.

Concerning reports have been received of unlawful killings and abductions perpetrated by some elements associated with pro-government forces. “Some of these incidents



Others have been abducted and/or killed on the pretext of aiding or providing information to government security forces. Many have been subjected to adjudication by ISIL self-appointed courts which, in addition to ordering the murder of countless people, have imposed grim punishments such as stoning and amputations.”

The report details numerous examples of killings by ISIL in gruesome public spectacles, including by shooting, beheading, bulldozing, burning alive, and throwing off the top of buildings. There are also reports of the murder of child soldiers who fled fighting on the frontlines in Anbar. Information received and verified suggests that between 800 and 900 children in Mosul had been abducted by ISIL for religious education and military training.

“ISIL continued to subject women and children to sexual violence, particularly in the form of sexual slavery,” the report states.

The report also documented alleged violations and abuses of international human rights and international humanitarian law by the Iraqi

may have been reprisals against persons perceived to support or be associated with ISIL,” the report states. “Moreover, as civilians move around the country, fleeing violence, they have continued to face government restrictions on their ability to access safe areas. Once they reach such areas, some have experienced arbitrary arrest in raids by security forces and others have been forcibly expelled. The conduct of pro-government forces’ operations raises concern that they are carried out without taking all feasible precautions to protect the civilian population and civilian objects.”

The discovery of a number of mass graves is documented in the report, including in areas regained by the government from ISIL control, as well as mass graves from the time of Saddam Hussein. One of the mass graves uncovered reportedly contains 377 corpses, including women and children apparently killed during the 1991 Shi’a uprisings against Saddam Hussein in the east of Basra.



The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Iraq, Ján Kubiš, said “despite their steady losses to pro government forces, the scourge of ISIL continues to kill, maim and displace Iraqi civilians in the thousands and to cause untold suffering. I strongly reiterate my call to all parties to the conflict to ensure the protection of civilians from the effects of violence.”

“I also call on the international community to enhance its support to the government of Iraq’s humanitarian, stabilization and reconstruction efforts in areas liberated from ISIL, so that all Iraqis displaced by violence can return to their homes in safety and in dignity and that affected communities can be reestablished in their places of origin,” he said.

“I urge the government to use all means to ensure law and order, necessary for the voluntary return of IDPs to their place of origin — a task of primary importance given the recent wave of violence and killings, often of sectarian nature, notably in Diyala and Baghdad,” SRSG Kubiš said.

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein warned that the civilian death toll may be considerably higher, and called for urgent action to rein in the impunity enjoyed by the vast majority of the perpetrators of violence.

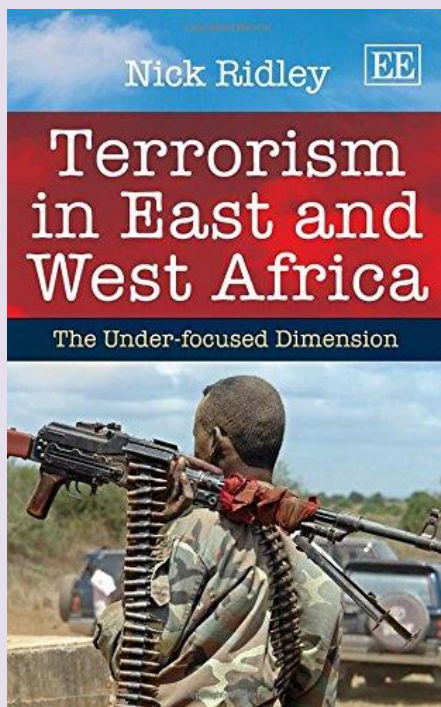
“Even the obscene casualty figures fail to accurately reflect exactly how terribly civilians are suffering in Iraq. The figures capture those who were killed or maimed by overt violence, but countless others have died from the lack of access to basic food, water or medical care,” High Commissioner Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein said.

“This report lays bare the enduring suffering of civilians in Iraq and starkly illustrates what Iraqi refugees are attempting to escape when they flee to Europe and other regions. This is the horror they face in their homelands.”

The High Commissioner also appealed to the government to undertake legislative amendments to grant Iraqi courts jurisdiction over international crimes and to become party to the Rome Statute.

— *Read more in [Report on the Protection of Civilians in the Armed Conflict in Iraq: 1 May – 1 October 2015](#) (UN Assistance Mission for Iraq and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 19 January 2016).*

EDITOR’S COMMENT: Another “nice” report... When UNITED NATIONS (all of us) will do something more than nice reports?



Terrorism in East and West Africa: The Under-focused Dimension

By Nick Ridley (Author – Dec 2014)

Source: <http://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/1783470518/>

Since 9/11, despite extensive international efforts against global terrorism, there has been a worrying lack of focus on terrorist activity in Africa. Terrorism in East and West Africa: The Under-focused Axis addresses this strategic deficit by drawing together and analysing the various domestic and international counter-terrorist measures that have been carried out in East-West Africa since this infamous attack. In his analysis Professor Ridley emphasises the need to avoid apportioning blame, preferring instead to conduct a thorough examination of counter-terrorist financing measures in certain African countries, as well as looking at the problems associated with their implementation. In this context, the author explains how Western impositions, guidance, and assistance have compounded the



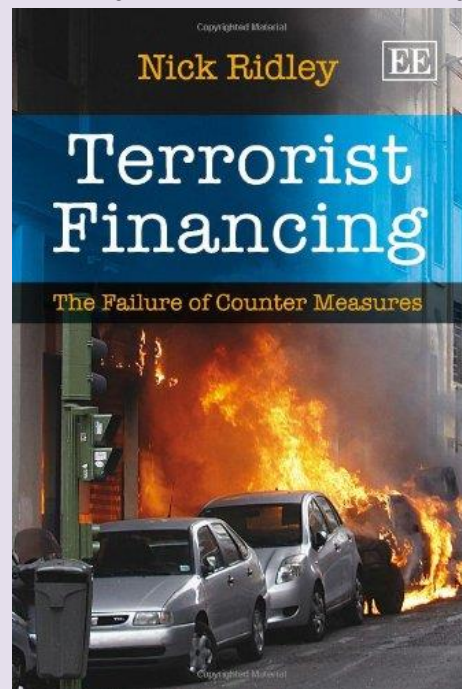
ineffectiveness of such measures. This timely book draws upon the author's experience as a former intelligence analyst, to give an account of terrorism in East and West Africa in the first two decades after the 9/11 attacks. Throughout the book there is a questioning of why there has been, and continues to be, an incorrect strategic approach to this threat. This book explores counter-terrorism measures in East and West Africa from an original perspective and delivers an important resource for scholars of terrorism laws, strategies, and politics.

Terrorist Financing: The Failure of Counter Measures

By Nick Ridley (Author – Oct 2012)

Source: <http://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/0857939459>

This authoritative book provides a holistic overview of terrorist groups and finances, including consideration of the necessity and differing financial needs of different groups. For over a decade international efforts by law enforcement, government and financial regulatory authorities have been deployed in combatting terrorist financing, in good faith and with dedication beyond reproach. This book surveys the methods of financing of numerous terrorist groups and organisations - including the Chinese and Asian dimension - and considers why ultimately international efforts to combat the financing of terror are failing. Nick Ridley expertly illustrates the scale of the problem by first outlining the strategies of anti terrorist financing, the pre and post 9/11 differences in scope and extent of terrorist attacks, the financial support and the national and international efforts to implement and carry out countermeasures. He then goes on to set out a detailed analysis of the apparent failure of such counter measures to date. Including operational case studies and details from the authors own experience, studies and access to law enforcement and private sector sources, this book will prove insightful for undergraduate and postgraduate students studying criminology, history and law disciplines. Those in the legal profession will also find plenty of useful information in this topical compendium.



UN urges France to protect fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160120-un-urges-france-to-protect-fundamental-freedoms-while-countering-terrorism>



Jan 20 – The current state of emergency in France and the law on surveillance of electronic communications impose excessive and disproportionate restrictions on fundamental freedoms, a group of United Nations human rights experts warned yesterday.

In a [list of concerns](#) shared with the French government, the independent experts stressed the lack of clarity and precision of several

provisions of the state of emergency and surveillance laws, related to the nature and scope of restrictions to the legitimate exercise of right to freedom of expression, freedom of peaceful assembly and association and the right to privacy.

In order to guarantee the rule of law and prevent arbitrary procedures, the experts recommend the adoption of prior judicial controls over anti-



terrorism measures. The state of emergency law in force since the recent terrorist attacks in France, which temporarily expands the powers of the executive in the fight against terrorism, only allows judicial review a posteriori.

The UN [says](#) that the experts also noted that the law on surveillance of international electronic communications, adopted in November 2015, expands the power of the executive over the collection, analysis and storage of communications content or metadata, without requiring prior authorization or judicial review.

In their communication with the French authorities, the UN experts expressed alarm that environmental activists have been under house arrest in connection with the state of emergency invoked following the November attacks. “These measures do not seem to adjust to the fundamental principles of necessity and proportionality,” they said

highlighting the risks faced by fundamental freedoms in the fight against terrorism.

The independent experts expressed their solidarity and deepest sympathy to the victims of the terrorist attacks committed in France and many other places in the world.

The UN notes that the Special Rapporteurs are part of what is known as the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council. Special Procedures, the largest body of independent experts in the UN Human Rights system, is the general name of the Council’s independent fact-finding and monitoring mechanisms that address either specific country situations or thematic issues in all parts of the world. Special Procedures’ experts work on a voluntary basis; they are not UN staff and do not receive a salary for their work. They are independent from any government or organization and serve in their individual capacity.

— *Read more in [Déclaration publique sur la loi relative à l'état d'urgence et sur la loi relative à la surveillance des communications électroniques internationales \(UNCHR, 19 January 2016\)](#).*

EDITOR’S COMMENT: “Fundamental freedoms” of whome exactly? Lawful citizens?

ISIS Is Not the Main Problem in the Middle East

By Jonathan Spyer

Source: <http://www.meforum.org/5801/isis-is-not-the-main-problem-in-mideast>



Jan 19 – **On a recent reporting trip to Iraq and northern Syria, two things were made apparent to me -- one of them relatively encouraging, the other far less so. The encouraging news is that ISIS is currently in**

a state of retreat. Not headlong rout, but contraction.

The bad news? Our single-minded focus on ISIS as if it were the main or sole source of regional dysfunction is the result of faulty analysis, which in turn is producing flawed policy.

Regarding the first issue, 2015 was not a particularly good year for ISIS. In the course of it, the jihadis lost

Kobani and then a large area to its east, bringing the Syrian Kurdish fighters of the YPG and their allies to within 30 km of the Caliphate’s “capital” in Raqqa city.



In late December, the jihadis lost the last bridge over the Euphrates that they controlled, at the Tishreen Dam. This matters because it isolates Raqqa, making it difficult for the Islamic State to rush reinforcements from Aleppo province to the city in the event of an attack. Similarly, the Kurdish YPG advanced south of the town of al-Hawl to Raqqa's east.

In Iraq, the Iraqi Shia militias and government forces have now recaptured Ramadi city (lost earlier in 2015) following the expulsion of ISIS from Tikrit and Baiji. The Kurdish Pesh Merga, meanwhile, have revenged the humiliation they suffered at the hands of ISIS in the summer of 2014. The Kurds have now driven the jihadis back across the plain between Erbil and Mosul, bringing them to the banks of the Tigris River. They have also liberated the town of Sinjar.

The city of Mosul nestles on the western side of the river. It remains ISIS's most substantial conquest. Its recapture does not appear immediately imminent, yet the general trend has been clear. The main slogan of ISIS is "*Baqiya wa'tatamaddad*," "Remaining and Expanding." At the present time, however, the Islamic State may be said to be remaining, but retreating.

This situation is reflected in the confidence of the fighters facing ISIS along the long front line. In interviews as I traversed the lines, I heard the same details again and again regarding changing ISIS tactics, all clearly designed to preserve manpower.

This stalling of the Islamic State is the background to its turn towards international terror, which was also a notable element of the latter half of 2015. The downing of the Russian airliner in October, the events in Paris in November, and the series of suicide bombings in Turkey since July attest to a need that the Islamic State has for achievement and for action. They need to keep the flow of recruits coming and to maintain the image of victory essential to it.

Regarding the second issue: seen from close up, the Islamic State is very obviously only a part, and not necessarily the main part, of a much larger problem. When talking both with those fighting with ISIS and with those who sympathize with it in the region, this observation stands out as a stark difference in perception between the Middle Eastern view of ISIS and the view of it presented in Western media. The latter tends to present ISIS as a

strange and unique development, a dreadfully evil organization of unclear origins, which is the natural enemy of all mainstream forces in the Middle East.

From closer up, the situation looks rather different.

ISIS has the same ideological roots and similar practices as other Salafi jihadi organizations active in the Syrian arena.

ISIS treats non-Muslims brutally in the areas it controls, and adheres to a rigid and fanatical ideology based on a literalist interpretation and application of religious texts. But this description also applies to Jabhat al-Nusra, the al-Qaeda franchise in Syria.

Nusra opposes ISIS, and is part of a rebel alliance supported by Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Turkey. In March 2015, when Nusra captured Idleb City in northern Syria, the city's 150 Christian families were forced to flee to Turkey. Nusra has also forcibly converted a small Druze community in Idleb. The alliance Nusra was a part of also included Muslim Brotherhood-oriented groups, such as the Faylaq al-Sham militia, which apparently had no problem operating alongside the jihadis.

ISIS is not a unique organization; rather, it exists at one of the most extreme points along a continuum of movements committed to Sunni political Islam.

Meanwhile, the inchoate mass of Sunni Islamist groups -- of which ISIS constitutes a single component -- is engaged in a region-wide struggle with a much more centralized bloc of states and movements organized around the Islamic Republic of Iran, which is committed to a Shia version of political Islam.

The Middle East -- in Yemen, Iraq, Syria, and to a lesser extent Lebanon, all along the sectarian faultline of the region -- is witnessing a clash between rival models of political Islam, of which ISIS is but a single manifestation.

The local players find sponsorship and support from powerful regional states, themselves committed to various different versions of political Islam: Iran for the Shias; Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Muslim Brotherhood-supporting Qatar for the Sunnis.

The long awakening of political Islam as the dominant form of popular politics in the Middle East started decades ago. But the eclipse of the political order in the region, and of the nationalist dictatorships in



Iraq, Syria, Egypt (temporarily), Tunisia, and Yemen in recent years, has brought it to a new level of intensity.

States, indifferent to any norms and rules, using terror and subversion to advance their interests, jihadi armed groups, and the refugee

crises and disorder that result from all this are the practical manifestations of it.

This, and not the fate of a single, fairly ramshackle jihadi entity in the badlands of eastern Syria and western Iraq, is the matter at hand in the Middle East.

Jonathan Spyer is director of the Rubin Center for Research in International Affairs and a fellow at the Middle East Forum.

Islamic State's Dabiq magazine identifies two Stade de France suicide bombers as Iraqis

Source: <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/paris-attacks-islamic-states-dabiq-magazine-identifies-two-stade-de-france-suicide-bombers-1538995>

Jan 20 – **The Islamic State's propaganda magazine Dabiq #13 has identified two of the Paris suicide bombers as Iraqis or fighters of Iraqi origin.** The militant

organisation has published previously-unseen images of nine of the Paris attackers in the 13th instalment of its propaganda magazine.

The Dabiq poster sheds more light on the identities of two of the attackers, who are believed to have posed as Syrian refugees to gain entry to Europe and about whom little is known.

Militants identified by Isis (Daesh) as 'Ukasah al-Iraqi' and 'Ali

Iraqi' (none of the attackers are given their real names) bear resemblances to pictures of individuals identified in investigations as 'Ahmed al-Mohammed' and 'M al-Mahmod'.

Using police photos and cross-referencing the images with the perpetrators' nationalities, as indicated by their noms de guerres, six of the attackers of French and Belgian origin can be identified in the propaganda image.

They include Abdelhamid Abaaoud, the Belgian national who orchestrated the attacks, and recently identified Chakib Akrouh, a 25-year-old Belgian-Moroccan who was killed during a police raid at a Saint-Denis flat in the aftermath of the Paris slayings.

A Syrian passport was discovered alongside the body of the first Stade de France attacker

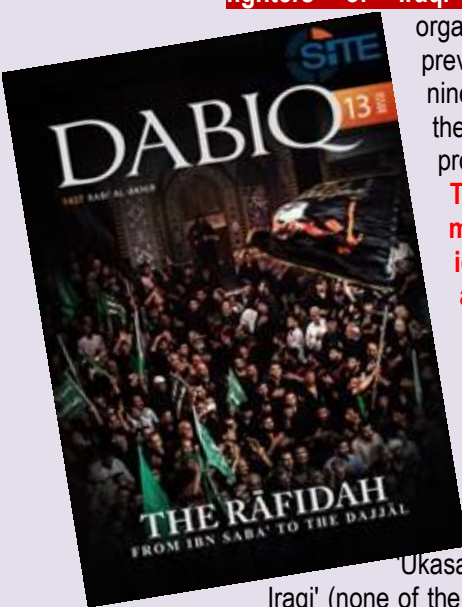
'Ahmed al-Mohammed' or 'Ukasah al-Iraqi' which was later identified as a forgery. It was initially thought to be that of a 25-year-old Syrian from the city of Idlib.

The third attacker at the Stade de France 'M al-Mahmod' or 'Ali al-Iraqi' was identified through a BBC investigation, which matched a police handout with Greek immigration records on the Island of Leros. 'Ahmed al-Mohammed'



is believed to have travelled with him.

Conspicuously absent from the IS (Daesh) poster is Salah Abdeslam, the so-called eighth Paris attacker and the subject of an international manhunt. The decision not to lionise him in the propaganda image would appear to further



confirm that Abdslam fled the French capital on the night of 13 November 2015 because he lost his nerve. Analysts have speculated that Abdslam is now wanted by the Islamic State as well as international police agencies.

The propaganda image features the title 'Just Terror' and seems to make fairly transparent

gestures to Star Wars branding. An awning over an attacked café is illuminated in blue, as too, bizarrely, is Abdelhamid Abaaoud's automatic rifle. The Isis fighters also appear to be organised by size as principles and supporting characters, another motif employed by the Disney film franchise.

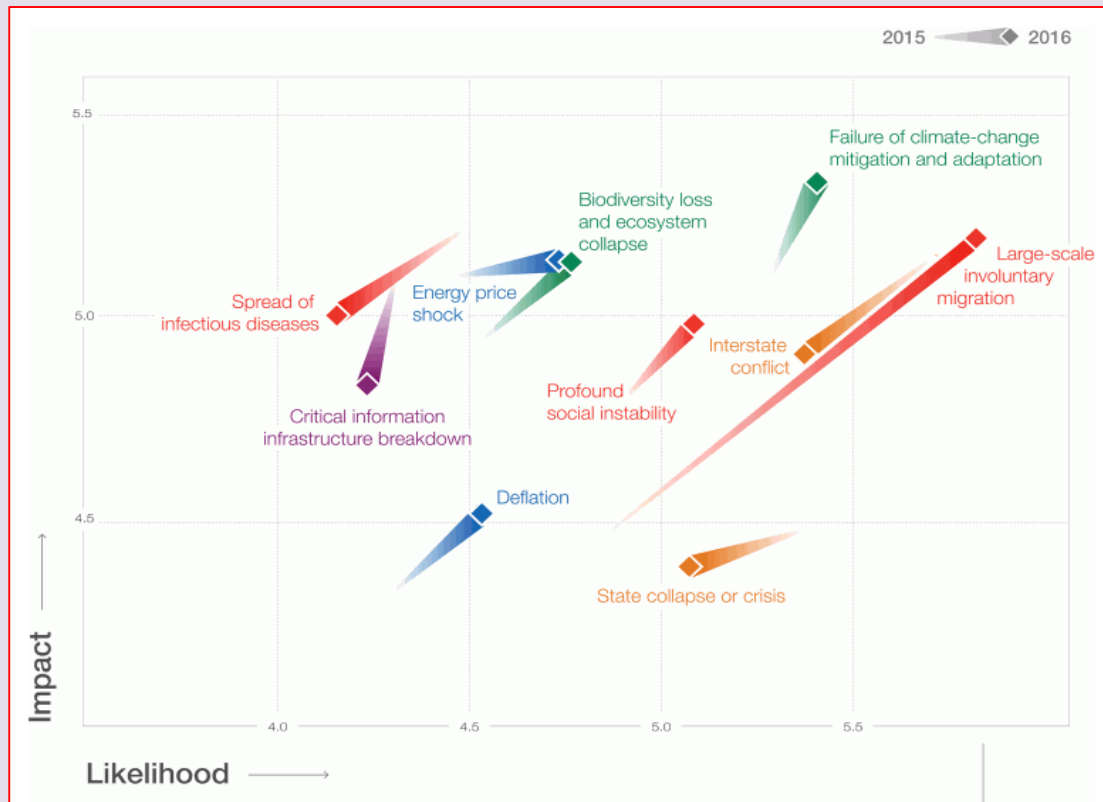


Global Risks Report 2016

Source: <http://reports.weforum.org/global-risks-2016/>



Now in its 11th edition, The Global Risks Report 2016 completes more than a decade of highlighting the most significant long-term risks worldwide, drawing on the perspectives of experts and global decision-makers.



ISIS confirms death of 'Jihadi John'

Source: <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/01/19/middleeast/jihadi-john-dead/index.html>

Jan 20 – **ISIS has confirmed the death of "Jihadi John" -- aka Mohammed Emwazi, aka Abu Muharib al-Muhajir -- in the latest issue of its Dabiq magazine.**

U.S. officials said in November that they were reasonably certain the English-speaking voice of the terror group had been killed in a targeted drone strike in Raqqa, Syria, ISIS' de facto capital.

The confirmation in Dabiq was the first time ISIS addressed the militant's death. The magazine told the story of his journey into ISIS in a two-page article and reported that he was killed instantly by the drone strike.

As the masked face of ISIS, Jihadi John was featured in a series of hostage videos, dressed head-to-toe in black -- his eyes and voice his lone revealing features -- and holding a knife.



CBRNE-TERRORISM NEWSLETTER – January 2016

Earlier this month, a British-sounding militant appeared in a chilling propaganda video from ISIS. The speaker's accent and dress brought to mind Jihadi John, and the latter's absence lent credence to Western intelligence agencies' belief that he was indeed dead.



Joined ISIS in 2012

By his own account, Emwazi was born in Kuwait, and it is believed he moved to London as a child. Friends say they think he started down the road to radicalization when he traveled to Tanzania in 2009, The Washington Post reported this year.

He was supposed to be going on safari in the East African nation, but he was reportedly detained on arrival, held overnight and then deported. He was also detained by counterterrorism officials in Britain in 2010, The Post said. Authorities have not disclosed the reasons for those reported detentions.

Emwazi is believed to have traveled to Syria in 2012 and joined ISIS there. He soon became a regular in hostage videos and participated in beheadings.

For some periods in 2015, Emwazi was not seen in videos, though U.S. officials told CNN in July they had learned he was alive and hiding near Raqqa. He may have been lying low for fear of being targeted, though the U.S. government believes he remained involved in kidnapping and killing cells.

Analysts describe him as grotesque and fond of sadistic torture techniques, with one former hostage recounting in October how his captor made him dance the tango with him.

"Suddenly, he changed and just pushed me down," Daniel Rye, a 26-year-old

It reported he was originally from the northeast of the Arabian Peninsula, and that he traveled at a young age with his family to London, a place he "grew to hate."

Dabiq said he was shot in the back during one battle in Syria.

photographer, recalled to Danish broadcaster DR. "They kicked and hit me. They finished by threatening to cut my nose off with pliers and things like that."

There was no evidence suggesting Jihadi John was an important spiritual leader of the group, as ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi is, nor is there any evidence he played any kind of important military role for ISIS.

But he was a celebrity within the terror



organization.

He was first seen in a video posted on YouTube in August 2014 that showed him holding a knife and



threatening U.S. journalist James Foley. The video ends by showing Foley's decapitated body.

Emwazi also is believed to have played a role in the beheadings of American journalist

Steven Sotloff, British aid worker David Haines, British volunteer Alan Henning, U.S. aid worker Abdul-Rahman Kassig, and Japanese journalist Kenji Goto.

Sweden: State-funded Muslim “Sniper” Training

Source: <http://newobserveronline.com/sweden-state-funded-muslim-sniper-training/>

Jan 15 – **The Swedish state is funding a “sniper” training course for recently-arrived Third World “refugees” as part of their “integration program”—despite the ever-growing refugee-terrorist attacks across Europe.**



The almost unbelievable plunge into insanity—started two years ago already—was reported—in a positive pro-refugee light—by the [Allehanda newspaper in Sweden, under the title “Fired up for Sniping.”](#) (*Laddade för prickskytte*, literally “Charged up for



Sniping”) and shows a large number of Third Worlders being taught how to target shoot with “sniper” target rifles on a formal shooting ground in Sollefteå, central Sweden.

The *Allehanda* informs its readers that the “sniping course” began on a “small scale in the Fall,” but then for reasons which are obvious,

but which the Swedish newspaper ignores, “interest exploded” among the nonwhite invaders to take the course.

When the *Allehanda* visited the shooting range, “more than 50 immigrant youths were on the course,” honing their shooting skills.



Even more incredibly, the sniping course is being paid for by Sweden's state-funded Migration Agency as an “integration” program into Swedish society.

“Young people from all over the world—Syria, Afghanistan, Africa, [and] South America” are taking sniping lessons, the *Allehanda* said, and



some of them are “interested and very talented,” the paper quoted course supervisor Birgit Höglin as saying.

The program is offered as part of the language course at the local upper secondary school, Höglin said, saying that the benefits of the program are “much more” than just teaching the invaders how to use sniping rifles.



“Here they talk Swedish in other social contexts, meet new people, and hang out. It is especially good for their vocabulary,” Höglin said.

It seems of no concern to these liberals that every single terrorist attack on Europe in 2015 was carried out by “refugees.”

State-funded sniper training for “young immigrants” seems so out of place that such an undertaking is firmly in the realm of the insane, and would, if not actually happening, be the subject of some bizarre joke.

Unfortunately, it is not.

Clarifications regarding cited "sniper training" article

Source: <http://www.allehanda.se/angermanland/solleftea/clarifications-regarding-cited-sniper-training-article>

Jan 18 – Because of the recent international citations of the 2013 Allehanda article "[Laddad för prickskytte](#)", I as News Editor feel that a few clarifications are in order. Several websites refers to the immigration project in Sollefteå as "sniper training". This is not a correct description. The word sniper training implies military combat education which is something completely different from this. Although the refugees in the pictures can be seen holding what looks like sniper rifles, **it is in fact biathlon sports equipment**. Biathlon is since the 1960s recognised as an Olympic discipline, and the Sollefteå Ski High School runs an international upper secondary school programme for elite competitors. This is where the refugees were invited to try rifle shooting, the only element of biathlon possible in the summer. It was done by the authorities as part of their work with local immigration. I hope this clarifies the circumstances surrounding this article.

Erik Sjölander

**AGAINST
STUPIDITY;
GOD HIMSELF
IS HELPLESS**

EDITOR'S COMMENT: This (first) article is a proof that what you read on the Internet is not always accurate or true since most often the title and some photos is all that matters to attract attention. On the other hand we must all admit that this program is one of most stupid ever imposed by a country – globally. Depending on their background and educational status why don't they train them in farming, building or other works that will benefit the host country best? Some of the immigrants might have good studies done and can be incorporated in the scientific community if they fill the standards required. So why biathlon training? Maybe because stupidity have no borders!

Lessons in Protective Intelligence

By Scott Stewart

Source: <https://www.stratfor.com/weekly/lessons-protective-intelligence>

Jan 21 – Three separate terrorist attacks last week were conducted by various types of actors from the jihadist movement. In the **first** attack, a suicide bomber targeted a group of tourists Jan. 12 in the heart of Istanbul's Sultanahmet district, killing 11. The **second** attack, on Jan. 14 in the center of the Indonesian capital of Jakarta, occurred when four men armed with pistols and pipe bombs attacked a police checkpoint and an adjacent

Starbucks. Four civilians and all four attackers were killed. In the **third** attack, on Jan. 15 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, three gunmen attacked a local cafe, killing 30, before turning their attention to a hotel across the street. An examination of the three attacks and their perpetrators highlights how they fit into Stratfor's analytical narratives relating to jihadist terrorism.



Equipped by the Pros

We begin with the suicide bombing in **Istanbul**. Although no group has claimed credit for the attack, it is generally accepted that the **Islamic State** conducted it. Despite the fact that the Islamic State is normally quick to claim responsibility for attacks — even those carried out by grassroots operatives not directly connected to the organization — the group has **consistently remained silent about its attacks in Turkey**, such as the October 2015 double suicide bombing at a Kurdish rally in Ankara that killed 102 and the suicide bombing in July 2015 directed at a cultural center in Suruc, near the Syrian border, that killed 33.

The Istanbul bomber, Nabil Fadli, was born in Saudi Arabia and raised in Manbij in northern Syria. He reportedly crossed into Turkey as a refugee a few days before the attack. According to reports, he fought with the Free Syrian Army before joining the Islamic State. As is the case with most Islamic State suicide bombers in Iraq and Syria, there is little to suggest that Fadli had received training in terrorist tradecraft. Instead, he was handled, armed and equipped by professional Islamic State cadres who planned the attack and viewed him merely as a sort of smart bomb.

There is a noted variance of ability among the Islamic State's bombmakers in different locations, but the core group's bombmakers in Iraq and Syria — where they have access to military-grade high explosives and bomb components — are normally able to construct effective devices, as we saw in Istanbul. According to Turkish authorities, Fadli's suicide vest was made with a combination of TNT and RDX, common military high explosives. The vest was likely built by Islamic State bombmakers in Syria, smuggled over Turkey's border and united with the bomber.

Amateur Hour

The attackers in **Jakarta** could only wish for the help of Islamic State master bombmakers with access to military-grade ordnance. Instead, **they were left to fend for themselves and do their best**. Between the four attackers, they were able to muster only two pistols and a handful of crude pipe bombs filled with something like black powder or a perchlorate mixture. From videos of the attack it is apparent that the attackers were not trained marksmen, and indeed there were only

four victims despite the fact that the attack occurred in the middle of a busy and congested city. Two of the attackers died in an explosion, but it is unclear whether it was an act of suicide or whether a device detonated prematurely. Either instance denotes poor execution, especially considering that the detonation happened when the two were alone, not when they were in the midst of a crowd.

Two of the deceased attackers were identified as known jihadists who had done stints in prison, which highlights the fact that although they claimed the attack in the name of the Islamic State, they were Indonesian jihadists who had assumed the Islamic State brand and not members of a new terrorist entity. Abu Bakar Bashir, the former leader of the now-defunct Jemaah Islamiyah, declared allegiance to the Islamic State, but Bashir is in prison and marginalized, and there was no recognition of the pledge by the Islamic State to indicate that it views the Indonesian jihadists as a formal *wilayat*, or province, as it has other groups such as the group formerly known as Boko Haram in Nigeria.

There have been similar pledges of allegiance by factions of Malaysian jihadists and Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines, but so far the Islamic State has not formally recognized any of them — although the Islamic State core group did quickly claim credit for the Jakarta attack through its social media outlets.

The Jakarta attack makes it clear that after many years of heavy losses, the Indonesian jihadists sorely miss leaders such as Noordin Mohammad Top, Riduan Isamuddin (also known as Hambali), Umar Patek and Dulmatin, who possessed the type of sophisticated terrorist tradecraft that helped them plan and execute large-scale terrorist attacks in Bali and Jakarta. Jihadists in Indonesia will continue to plot attacks, but they will be simple attacks against soft targets.

Sustainable Franchise Operations

Finally, as we look at the attack in **Ouagadougou** we see the operation of an experienced al Qaeda franchise group with a reach that spans Africa's Sahel region. Some have characterized the Ouagadougou attack as sophisticated, but a careful examination shows that the three young gunmen — armed with AK-



47 rifles and hand grenades — **used only basic insurgent skills; no real terrorist tradecraft was required.** However, they were members of a group led by a very seasoned jihadist, Mokhtar Belmokhtar, and the attack was certainly well planned. And unlike in Jakarta, the young attackers in Ouagadougou were prepared and equipped to succeed with their armed assault.

The Ouagadougou attack was tactically similar to the Nov. 20, 2015, attack against the Radisson Blu hotel in Bamako, Mali, that killed 20. This type of armed assault is well within the capabilities and reach of Belmokhtar's group, which is known to venture across the Sahel region, from Libya to Mauritania, to conduct kidnappings and armed assaults. And this is not the group's first foray into Burkina Faso: It is thought to have been involved in the kidnapping of a Romanian security officer from a mine in the northern part of the state in April 2015. The group is reportedly also responsible for the Jan. 15 kidnapping of Dr. Ken Elliot and his wife, Jocelyn, from Djibo, Burkina Faso.

Belmokhtar has long been known for kidnapping Westerners to fund his group's operations. He has also been involved in other illegal activity such as the cigarette smuggling operation that earned him the nickname Mr. Marlboro. It is easy to acquire arms and pay fighters with the money his group nets from smuggling and kidnapping operations. In contrast to the January 2013 raid on the Tigantourine natural gas facility that left 29 militants dead and three more in detention, high-profile operations such as those in Bamako and Ouagadougou that involve only two or three young suicide operatives every couple of months are fairly sustainable for Belmokhtar and his organization.

By attacking international hotels in capital cities that cater to Western business travelers, diplomats, intelligence officers and journalists, attackers can ensure that they gain significant international media attention without having to attack a tougher target such as a modern embassy. The Ouagadougou attack was all about publicity, as al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb was uncharacteristically busy on the public relations front during the attack, even claiming to have spoken with one of the attackers during the assault. The group also prepared a publicity plan for the attack, taking names and photos of the attackers to release in a statement claiming responsibility. **Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb wanted to avoid a repeat of the confusion that followed the Bamako attack, which was claimed by multiple groups.**

Both the attack and the press statements served as reminders that the Islamic State does not have a monopoly on jihadist violence, and they will help al Qaeda in its efforts to recruit fighters and raise money. The millions of dollars that the group will make from its kidnapping operations also will not hurt those efforts.

When it comes to terrorism, location matters. Jihadists who are able to hook up with core groups — such as the Islamic State in Syria or an experienced franchise group such as al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb — tend to pose a much larger threat than grassroots operatives working individually and in hostile locations, as we saw in the Jakarta attack. However, we are certain to see more attacks from the core groups, franchise groups and the jihadist grassroots alike.

Scott Stewart supervises Stratfor's analysis of terrorism and security issues. Before joining Stratfor, he was a special agent with the U.S. State Department for 10 years and was involved in hundreds of terrorism investigations. Stewart was the lead State Department investigator assigned the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and the follow-up New York City bomb plot. He also led a team of American agents assisting the Argentine investigation of the 1992 bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires and was involved in investigations following a series of attacks and attempted attacks by the Iraqi intelligence service during the first Gulf War. Stewart was deputy regional security officer in Guatemala City and was responsible for embassy and diplomatic security at that post as well as in Belize City. As protective intelligence coordinator for Dell, he served as a member of Michael Dell's executive protective team. He also has consulted on terrorism issues for the Texas Department of Public Safety.





The Maldives: Losing a Tourist Paradise to Terrorism

Terrorism Monitor Volume: 14 Issue: 2 (January 22, 2016)

By **Sudha Ramachandran**

Source: [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/tm/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=45009&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=26&cHash=58349b6fb2aac945e6e3fc34f8bff85d#.VqJkH1LKqHt](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/tm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=45009&tx_ttnews[backPid]=26&cHash=58349b6fb2aac945e6e3fc34f8bff85d#.VqJkH1LKqHt)

Renowned for pristine beaches and crystal blue waters, the Maldives is rapidly gaining prominence as a haven for jihadist recruitment. Maldivian men - reportedly 200 of them – have been streaming to Iraq and Syria to join the ranks of the Islamic State (IS) militant group, the al-Qaeda-affiliated Jabhat al-Nusra organization, as well as other radical organizations. This is a large number considering the Indian Ocean archipelago of around 1,200 islands has a population of roughly 359,000 people (*Indian Express*, April 15, 2015). Not only does the Maldives thus have the world's largest number of jihadists per capita active in Iraq and Syria, but it also accounts for the biggest number of jihadists from any South Asian country fighting in these countries. Several jihadists have taken their wives and children to the Middle East battle zones with them (Haveeru Online, February 5, 2015; Maldives Independent, Sept 21, 2015 and Dhivehi Sitee, December 2, 2015).

► Read the rest of this full paper at source's URL.

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Unwanted Ally: Hezbollah's War against the Islamic State

By **Andrew McGregor**

Source: [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/tm/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=45011&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=26&cHash=1926455f0f36cbf245f324eb05b3dbee#.VqJIAFLKqHt](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/tm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=45011&tx_ttnews[backPid]=26&cHash=1926455f0f36cbf245f324eb05b3dbee#.VqJIAFLKqHt)

"There is no future for ISIS. Not in war and not in peace." These words were spoken not by Barack Obama or Vladimir Putin, but rather by Hezbollah leader Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah, whose Lebanese Shia supporters are engaged in a growing battle against the Sunni militants inside Syria (Press TV [Tehran], November 14, 2015). Despite this, few analysts have considered how Hezbollah's commitment to defeating Sunni extremists in Syria would fit into a larger Western and/or Russian-directed military intervention to destroy the Islamic State organization, especially when the Hezbollah movement is itself considered a terrorist organization by many Western states.

Nasrallah insists his movement is conducting pre-emptive military operations designed at preventing Sunni extremists from entering Lebanon, but many Lebanese (including some Shia) accuse Hezbollah of drawing the Islamic State's attention to Lebanese targets by acting at the command of the movement's Iranian sponsors (Reuters, September 6, 2013; *Jerusalem Post*, September 6, 2013).

Hezbollah ("the Party of God") addresses these accusations in two ways: by stating that the Syrian intervention is intended to defend all Lebanese, and by describing both al-



Qaeda affiliated al-Nusra Front and the Islamic State as tools Israel uses to destroy regional opposition, thus bringing the intervention within the larger anti-Israel “Resistance” agenda that has formed the movement’s core ethos since its formation (Reuters, August 15, 2014).

► Read the rest of this full paper at source’s URL.

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Turkey’s Dance with the Islamic State

By Nihat Ali Ozcan

Source:[http://www.jamestown.org/programs/tm/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=45010&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=26&cHash=160cc88e8fd0c4b8d5eec3d30f6b46e5#.VqJlnlLKqHt](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/tm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=45010&tx_ttnews[backPid]=26&cHash=160cc88e8fd0c4b8d5eec3d30f6b46e5#.VqJlnlLKqHt)

Turkey’s relationship with terrorism is entrenched with history. The country fell victim to the actions of different terrorist groups with different motivations. The most popular terrorist organization in Turkey’s history is the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), which has been active for almost 40 years. Another notable terrorist organization is the Revolutionary People’s Liberation Party/Front, an outcome of the Cold War legacy. Turkey has also been faced with the presence of radical Islamist Kurdish Hezbollah, which was active during the 1990s.

While the Turkish government and its security forces were fighting against the PKK in the south-eastern part of the country earlier this month, another terrorist attack was carried out by suicide bomb in Istanbul’s most popular touristic and historical district, Sultanahmet. The bomber detonated himself next to a tourist group on January 12, killing 10 Germans and wounding another 15.

Shortly after the attack, police made a statement claiming, “The suicide bomber was an ISIL member and a Syrian citizen” (Reuters, January 13). The suicide bomber had crossed the Turkish border as a refugee few days before the attack, similar to 2,750,000 other refugees over the past four years. The identity, target and the methods of the terrorist indicated a new wave of terrorism for Turkey.

Turkey has become a target of Islamic State activity, as its geopolitical position, motility of its ethnic and sectarian fault lines, its cosmopolitan demographics, its annual influx of 35 million tourists, and the presence of many western companies on its soil have all come into play. On the other hand, the politicians, public and security institutions do not appear prepared to face a terrorist group with such brutal, multinational and religious foundations and practices. The reason for the Islamic State targeting Turkey puts on display the organization’s changing attitude towards the country. Recent developments depict that the Islamic State has the potential as well as the motivation to pose a security threat to Turkey.

► Read the rest of this full paper at source’s URL.

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