Editor's Corner

CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter – 2012©

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- Level A PPE is for operations only; not for mass media attraction!
  - ↳ Participate in this report with your own opinion

Special Issue

Cover Photo

Source: http://www.keesler.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123271001

9/8/2011 - Firefighters Aric Schneeberger, left, and Rusty Bell suit up in protective gear enter Matero Hall during a bioterrorism exercise Aug. 31. In the scenario, a package was delivered containing a suspicious white power substance was delivered. Two "victims" required medical treatment and 60 occupants of the building were evacuated and underwent decontamination as a precaution. (U.S. Air Force photo by Kemberly Groue)

Reading Audience

CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter is:

- Read by First Responders in more than 60 countries around the globe;

- Distributed to more than 700 institutions, organizations, state agencies, think tanks, defense companies, institutions and universities.

Editor's Corner

Editorial
BG (ret'd) Ioannis Galatas, MD, MA, MC

Editor-in-Chief
CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter

Dear Colleagues,

Newsletter is now reaching CBRNE-CT First Responders in more than 60 countries around the globe! The Editorial Team would like to thank you all for your enthusiastic comments and beneficial suggestions that will surely be taken under consideration.

London 2012 Olympiad was the main summer event and it was conducted without any serious security-related events. It was the most militarized event in the long history of the Olympic Games and it makes me to wonder "what is the point of the continuation of the Games under these circumstances?" Especially when the main idea behind the Olympic Games that is the Olympic Truce was not even considered to apply in sufferingl areas of the world i.e. Syria. What is the point of all that money, all this moving of people for an event that is not athletic anymore but pure business and public relations at national level? Olympic Games should either return to their roots in Ancient Olympia (Hellas) or cancelled at all.

Politico-social turmoil in Hellas is getting worse day after day. The melting point is now visible and no one can predict the final outcome. What is for sure is that it will not be a nice one! Financial terrorism should be included in the new emerging threats along with CBRNE threats and cyber-warfare! We have our share of responsibility that let it grow but our allies are equally responsible for not foreseeing the coming threat that will storm our European way of life. No nation is alone in this world and all nations should cooperate and assist each other for the common good of their citizens and the prosperity of the West civilization that is under attack. Due to the overall adverse situation I am not sure if I will be able to continue editing the Newsletter in 2013... Uncertainty of tomorrow leads to major cuts in many "luxuries" and Internet is becoming one of them. It will be a pity an effort started in November 2005 to end like this but currently I have to think of how to support my family and preserve my property or what it has been left from it. After 35yrs in military service, I have to look for a second career abroad at least for the coming 5 yrs or even to relocate abroad. Hope is the last thing to die but as a medical doctor I am afraid that hope is severely ill if not clinically dead...

Last two months were quite productive for the Newsletter. We signed an MOU with Mediterranean Council for Intelligence Studies (MCIS) based in Rome, Italy and we set the basis for some very interesting projects for the coming future. Also the Editor of the Newsletter has been elected as Senior Fellow at the New Westminster College (Province of British Columbia, Canada), a new academic institution focusing in leadership and diplomacy. Assistant Editor Panos Stavrakakis got his PhD degree as well! We consider these activities as very promising and we are looking forward to a fruitful cooperation with colleagues in common fields of interest.

Enjoy the CBRNE-Terrorism Newsletter and if you really like it, please feel free to pass it over to colleagues in your networks!

The Editor

Belief in hell associated with reduced crime

Source:http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/srlet20120619-belief-in-hell-associated-with-reduced-crime

Religions are thought to serve as bulwarks against unethical behaviors. When it comes to predicting criminal behavior, however, the specific religious beliefs one holds is the determining factor, says a University of Oregon psychologist.

twenty-six years of data involving 143,197 people in sixty-seven countries.

"The key finding is that, controlling for each other, a nation's rate of belief in hell predicts lower crime rates, but the nation's rate of belief in heaven predicts higher crime rates, and
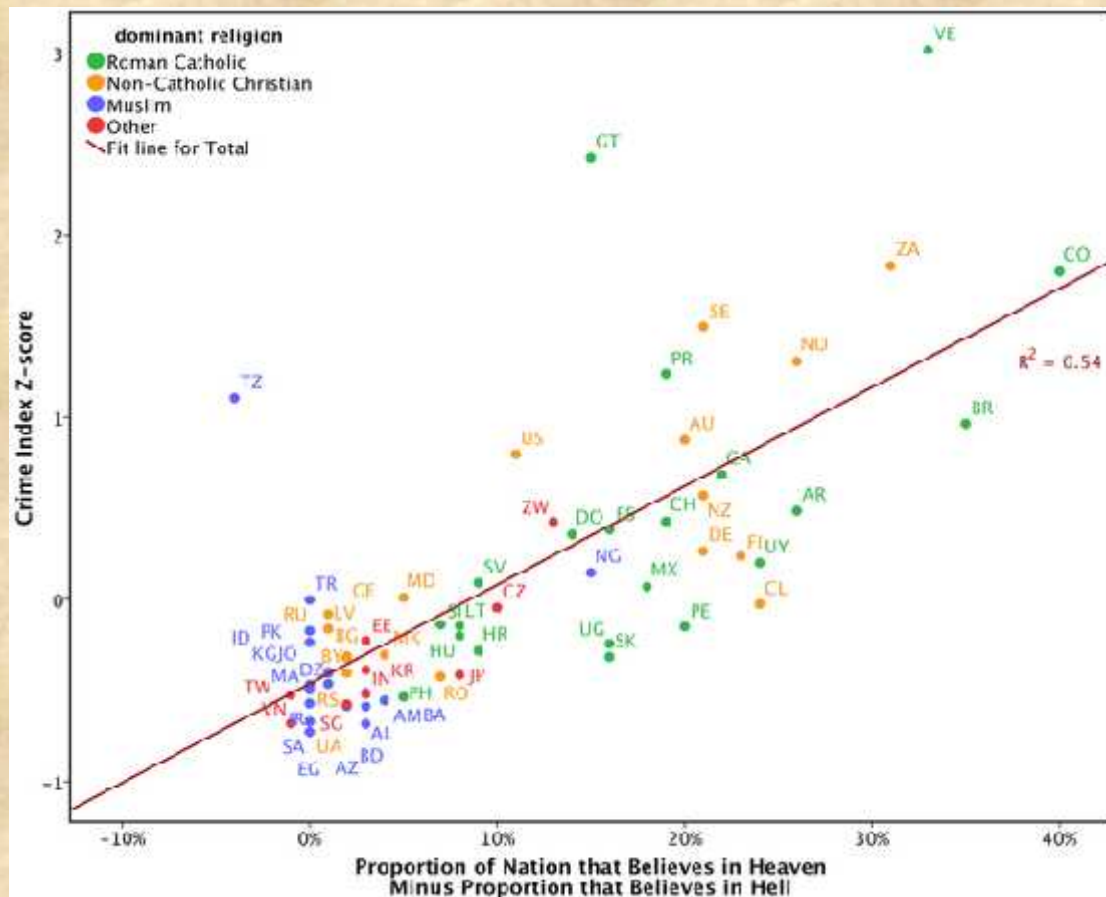
Crime rate z-scores as a function of how much higher the proportion of a nation that believes in heaven is compared to the proportion that believes in hell. R^2 = .54.

The study, appearing in the journal *PLoS ONE*, found that criminal activity is higher in societies in which people's religious beliefs contain a strong punitive component than in places where religious beliefs are more benevolent. A country where many more people believe in heaven than in hell, for example, is likely to have a much higher crime rate than one where these beliefs are about equal. A University of Oregon release reports that the finding surfaced from a comprehensive analysis of

these are strong effects," said Azim F. Shariff, professor of psychology and director of the Culture and Morality Lab at the UO. "I think it's an important clue about the differential effects of supernatural punishment and supernatural benevolence. The finding is consistent with controlled research we've done in the lab, but here shows a powerful 'real world' effect on something that really affects people —crime."
Last year, in the *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, Shariff reported that undergraduate students were more likely to cheat when they believe in a forgiving God than a punishing God.

Religious belief generally has been viewed as "a monolithic construct," Shariff said. "Once you split religion into different constructs, you begin to see different relationships. In this study, we found two differences that go in opposite directions. If you look at overall religious

belief, these separate directions are washed out and you don't see anything. There's no hint of a relationship."

The new findings, he added, fit into a growing body of evidence that supernatural punishment had emerged as a very effective cultural innovation to get people to act more ethically with each other. In 2003, he said, Harvard University researchers Robert J. Barro and Rachel M. McCleary had found that gross domestic product was higher in developed countries when people believed in hell more than they did in heaven.

"Supernatural punishment across nations seems to predict lower crime rates," Shariff said. "At this stage, we can only speculate about mechanisms, but it's possible that people who don't believe in the possibility of punishment in the afterlife feel like they can get away with unethical behavior. There is less of a divine deterrent."

He added, however, that these are correlational data, and so caution should be taken with the conclusions. The release notes that though Shariff and study co-author Mijke Rhemtulla of the Center for Research Methods and Data Analysis at the University of Kansas tried to account for obvious alternative explanations, more research is needed to explore other interpretations for the findings.

"This research provides new insights into the potential influences of cultural and religious beliefs on key outcomes at a societal level," said Kimberly Andrews Espy, vice president for research and innovation. "Although these findings may be controversial, dissecting the associations between specific belief systems and epidemiologic behaviors is an important first step for social scientists to disentangle the complex web of factors that motivate human behavior."

— Read more in Azim F. Shariff and Mijke Rhemtulla, "Divergent Effects of Beliefs in Heaven and Hell on National Crime Rates," PLoS ONE 7, no. 6 (18 June 2012): e39048 (doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0039048) ; and Azim F. Shariffa and Ara Norenzay, "Mean Gods Make Good People: Different Views of God Predict Cheating Behavior," International Journal for the Psychology of Religion 21, no. 2 (19 April 2011)

Eating tomatoes is a sin!

Source: http://nowlebanon.com/BlogDetails.aspx?TID=2451&FID=6

A Salafist group called the Popular Egyptian Islamic Association has come under fire after sending out a warning on Facebook urging its followers not to eat tomatoes because the vegetable (or fruit) is a Christian food.

The group posted a photo on its page of a tomato - which appears to reveal the shape of a cross after being cut in half – along with the message: "Eating tomatoes is forbidden because they are Christian. [The tomato] praises the cross instead of Allah and says that Allah is three (a reference to the Trinity).

[God help us]. I implore you to spread this photo because there is a sister from Palestine who saw the prophet of Allah [Mohammad] in a vision and he was crying, warning his nation against eating them [tomatoes]. If you don't spread this [message], know that it is the devil who stopped you."

Predictably, Facebook users expressed outrage over the post, which prompted the group to clarify its stance on the controversy with the update, "We didn't say you can't eat tomatoes. We said don't cut it in [such a way that reveals] the cross shape."

Kabul hotel attack

Source: http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/06/22/us-afghanistan-hotel-idUSBRE85K1S920120622

Elite Afghan police backed by NATO forces ended a 12-hour siege on Friday at a popular lakeside hotel outside Kabul, leaving at least 20 dead after Taliban gunmen stormed the lakeside building, bursting into a party and seizing dozens of hostages.

The night-time assault on the hotel with rocket-propelled grenades, suicide vests and machine guns again proved how potent the Islamist insurgency remains after a decade of war.

The commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan said the attack bore the signature of the Taliban-linked Haqqani group that he said continued to operate from Pakistan, a charge that could further escalate tensions with Islamabad.

bears the signature of the Haqqani network, which continues to target and kill innocent Afghans and blatantly violate Afghan sovereignty from the safety of Pakistan," General Allen said in a statement.

Blood was splattered over the hotel floor and

General John Allen's comments come days after U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said Washington was at the limits of its patience with Pakistan over the existence of militant networks including the Haqqanis.

Pakistan says it is doing everything it can to fight militants on its side of the border and accuses Afghanistan of trying to shift the blame for its failure to combat the insurgency.

At the hotel, terrified guests jumped into the lake in the darkness to escape the carnage, Afghan officials and residents said. Up to 300 people had been inside the hotel when the attack began.

Afghan interior ministry spokesman Sediq Sediqqi said 12 to 15 civilians, two hotel guards and a policeman were killed in the gunbattle at the Spozhmai hotel, overlooking Qargha Lake. Five attackers were also killed.

The attack, quickly claimed by the Afghan Taliban, again showed the ability of insurgents to stage high-profile raids even as NATO nations prepare to withdraw most of their combat troops by the end of 2014 and leave Afghans to lead the fight.

"Afghan National Security Forces and coalition military sources acknowledge that this attack

the crumpled body of a man lay in the garden. Women and children were among the wounded.

"We heard a heavy explosion from a rocket-propelled grenade. We tried to escape, but we were surrounded by suicide bombers. We hid ourselves behind a tree until morning. God protected us," said Abdullah Samadi, 24.

The gunmen, Samadi said, had been closely watching their prisoners and searching for illegal stocks of wine.

"Around dawn they came closer to us and we had to jump in the water. We were there until 9 a.m. and then the situation got better and we slowly, slowly swam toward security forces," he said.

Sediqqi said the Taliban were using civilians as human shields to defend themselves and held about 50 people hostage late into Friday morning.

Elite Afghan quick-response police backed by NATO troops freed at least 35 hostages in an operation that only began in earnest after sunrise to help security forces avoid civilian deaths in night-time confusion.

The Taliban complained wealthy Afghans and foreigners used the hotel, about 10 km (6 miles) from the center of Kabul, for "prostitution" and "wild parties" ahead of the Friday religious day holiday.

Launching their annual offensive this spring, the Taliban threatened to attack more government officials and rich Afghans, but the

hotel assault was one of few in which multiple hostages were taken since the start of the war, now in its 11th year.

President Hamid Karzai said attacking a place where people went for picnics was a sign of defeat for the enemies of Afghanistan.

"This is a crime against humanity because they targeted children, women and civilians picnicking at the lake. There wasn't even a single soldier around there," said General Mohammad Zahir, head of the Kabul police investigation unit.

Television pictures showed several people wading out of the lake onto a balcony and clambering over a wall to safety.

NATO attack helicopters could be seen over the single-storey hotel building and a balcony popular with guests for its sunset views, while a pall of smoke rose into the air.

New face of insurgency?

Soldiers and police fanned out around the hotel at dawn, arriving in cars and armored Humvee vehicles and taking cover behind trees flanking the lake and a nearby golf course.

Qargha Lake is one of Kabul's few options for weekend getaways. Restaurants and hotels that dot the shore are popular with Afghan government officials and businessmen, particularly on Thursday nights.

Guests at the Spozhmai must pass through security checks before entering the hotel, where tables with umbrellas overlook the water, but security is relatively light for a city vulnerable to militant attacks.

Violence across Afghanistan has surged in recent days, with three U.S. soldiers and more than a dozen civilians killed in successive attacks, mostly in the country's east, where NATO-led forces have focused their efforts during the summer fighting months.

NATO commanders, halfway into the process of transferring security responsibility to Afghan forces, are racing through training for the Afghan army and police, including holding basic literacy classes for recruits.

Well-planned assaults in Kabul in the past year have raised questions about whether the Taliban and their al Qaeda-linked Haqqani network allies have shifted tactics to embrace attacks on landmarks, foreigners and Afghanistan's elite, extending a guerrilla war once primarily waged in the countryside.

This Rock Could Spy on You for Decades

Source: http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2012/05/spy-rock/?pid=1206

America is supposed to wind down its war in Afghanistan by 2014. But U.S. forces may continue to track Afghans for years after the conflict is officially done. Palm-sized sensors, developed for the American military, will remain littered across the Afghan countryside — detecting anyone who moves nearby and reporting their locations back to a remote headquarters. Some of these

surveillance tools could be buried in the ground, all-but-unnoticeable by passersby. Others might be disguised as rocks, with wafer-sized, solar-rechargeable batteries that could enable the sensors' operation for perhaps as long as two decades, if their makers are to be believed.

Traditionally, when armies clash, they leave behind a horrific legacy: leftover mines which can blow civilians apart long after the shooting war is over. These "unattended ground sensors," or UGSs, won't do that kind of damage. But they could give the Pentagon an enduring ability to monitor a one-time battlefield long, long after regular American forces are supposed to have returned home.

"We're going to leave behind a lot of special operators in Afghanistan. And they need the kind of capability that's easy to put out so they can monitor a village without a lot of overt U.S.-made material on pathways and roadways," says Matt Plyburn, an executive at Lockheed Martin, the world's largest defense contractor.

The U.S. military has used unattended ground sensors in one form or another since 1966, when American forces dropped acoustic monitors on the Ho Chi Minh trail. Tens of thousands of UGSs have been emplaced around Afghanistan and Iraq, forming electronic perimeters around combat outposts and keeping tabs on remote locations. It's a way to monitor the largest possible area with the smallest number of troops.

"You use them to cover up your dead space — the areas you're concerned about but can't

cover with other ISR [intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance] assets," says Lt. Col. Matt Russell, an Army program manager overseeing the deployment of unattended sensors.

But earlier UGSs — even ones of the recent past — were relatively large and clunky, prone to false alarms, and had lifespans measurable in days or weeks. "What we found in the field was significant under-usage," Russell tells Danger Room. Plans to incorporate them into every combat brigade fizzled as the Army's proposed $200 billion revamp, Future Combat Systems, went south.

The new models are dramatically smaller and consume far less power, enabling them to operate for months — maybe even years — at a time with only the slimmest chance of being detected. Lockheed calls them "field and forget" systems for "persistent surveillance."

And they won't just be used overseas. U.S. Customs and Border Patrol today employs more than 7,500 UGSs on the Mexican border to spot illegal migrants. Defense contractors believe one of the biggest markets for the next generation of the sensors will be here at home.

"They could be used for border security or even around corporate headquarters," Plyburn tells Danger Room.

In early 2011, commanders in Afghanistan issued an "urgent operational needs statement" for better sensors. In response, the Army shipped a new line of about 1,500 "expendable" UGSs to the warzone. The size of a few stacked hockey pucks with a four-inch antenna, these sensors are easily hidden, and can "pick up wheels or footprints" for up to three months at a time, Russell says. It's a perfect surveillance tool for the remote valleys of eastern Afghanistan.

Soon, when one of the sensors picks up a signal, it'll queue a spy blimp to focus in on the spot. "That's a capability coming to a theater near you soon," he adds.

Even more sophisticated are the UGSs being tested northeast of Norfolk, Virginia, at a Lockheed proving ground. Arrays of up to 50 palm-sized acoustic and seismic sensors form a mesh network. When one sensor detects a

sensor's battery could keep the machine operational for nearly twenty-two years.

Russell is skeptical of these assertions of longevity. "I'm sure there are a lot of claims by contractors," he says. "My experience is: the longer the lifespan, the bigger the battery."

Nor does Lockheed currently have a contract with Defense Department to mass-produce the

person or a vehicle passing by, it uses unlicensed radio frequency bands to pass an alert from one node to the next. The alert finally hits a communications gateway, which can send the signal via satellite, tactical radio network, or Wi-Fi to a command and control center. That signal can tip off additional sensors — or it can send a Twitter-like message to an intelligence officer's phone or tablet.

When they're not picking up signals or passing along messages, the sensors are all-but-shut-down, barely consuming any power. That allows them to last for weeks, buried underground. Or the sensors can be encased in hollow "rocks" equipped with miniature solar panels. A quick recharge from the sun will allow the sensor to "get through the night anywhere on Earth that U.S. forces operate," says Plyburn.

Plyburn claims that the sensor's battery, about the size of a postage stamp, has been able to go through 80,000 recharges, compared to a few hundred cycles for a typical lithium-ion battery. Even if he's off by a factor of 10, the

sensors. But Plyburn says there has been interest around the armed forces, especially since the system is relatively cheap. Plyburn says each sensor could cost as little as $1,000 each — practically expendable for a military paying $80,000 for a single guided artillery round.

Lockheed isn't the only company claiming that its sensors can operate for years on end. U.S. Special Operations Command has handed out at least $12 million in UGS contracts to tiny Camgian Microsystems, based out of Starksville, Mississippi. Company CEO Gary Butler, who spent years developing ultra-low power integrated circuits for Darpa, was awarded in March a patent for such a next-gen unattended sensor suite.

Rather than relaying alerts from node to node, each of Butler's sensors is designed to send signals directly to a satellite — speeding up notifications, and cutting down on power consumed. Rather than a simple acoustic or seismic detector, the sensor relies a steerable, phased-array radar and moving-target indicator algorithms. That could

give it a much greater ability to detect people and vehicles on the run. High-powered solar cells provide will enable up to "500,000 recharge cycles" could give the sensor a "10-20 year life," according to the patent.

Butler won't say how U.S. special operators are using his research, if at all. But when I ask him about the possibility of leaving UGS networks behind after American troops have officially left, Butler calls that "plausible. Very Plausible."

Camgian's patent claims that the sensor's ease-of-use and small size means it "is easily emplaced in difficult areas, using airborne assets such as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles." Edward Carapezza, who has been overseeing UGS research for more than two decades, says drones are already dropping unattended sensors into hostile locations.

"In certain areas, we certainly are using unmanned vehicles and unattended sensors together," says Carapezza, who now works at the defense contractor General Atomics. He declined to name where these operations were being conducted. He simply gave the rationale for the missions. "Instead of sending patrols of our guys in, we send in drones and unattended sensors — dropping arrays, locating bad guys, and then putting weapons on target."

The "MicroObserver" UGS from defense contractor Textron has been in the field since 2008. The U.S. Army is currently using the sensors in Afghanistan. "Another customer — we're not allowed to say who or where — used it as part of a comprehensive border security program in a Middle Eastern country," says Patty Shafer, a Textron executive.

Textron's seismic sensors come in two varieties. The smaller, three inch-long model, weighing 1.4 pounds, will last about a month. The bigger system, a 4.4 pound spike, can be buried in the ground and gather intelligence for more than two years. It can detect and characterize people from 100 meters away, and vehicles from three times that distance, Shafer says. A conformal antenna allows it to communicate with a gateway five kilometers away.

Northrop Grumman employs a family of sensors for its Scorpion surveillance network.

"Seismic sensors work well detecting vehicles on bumpy roads, but lose range as the road becomes smoother, or the vehicle lighter. Typically, magnetic sensors sense only large vehicles at fairly short distances. The range of acoustic sensors depends upon environmental conditions such as humidity and surroundings. Most sense engine exhaust noise or other periodic pulse trains and measure the period to determine numbers of cylinders and classify the source," explains a Northrop presentation to an academic conference on unattended sensors.

The Army has purchased over a thousand of the original versions, with an average of four sensors, each. The vast majority have been sent to Iraq and Afghanistan. Another 20 Scorpion II systems were recently bought by the Army Research Lab. The sensors can today spot people from 800 meters away, and vehicles from 2,100 meters. The sensors' batteries wear out after a month.

These might have been eye-popping results, not long ago. But the U.S. military now has plans to keep its network of tiny, hidden spies going for much longer than that.

Crowd dynamics explains disaster at cultural, sports events

Source: http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20120627-crowd-dynamics-explains-disaster-at-cultural-sports-events

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Physicists investigating a recent crowd disaster in Germany found that one of the key causes was that at some point the crowd dynamics turned turbulent, akin to behavior found in unstable fluid flows. The study, led by Dirk Helbing from the Risk Center at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology ETH Zurich, Switzerland, is published in *EPJ Data Science*.

A Springer release reports that this is the first time that crowd disasters have been studied by relying on a qualitative analysis of large public data sets. These include media and public authority reports, YouTube videos, Google Earth maps, 360° photographs, and other Internet sources. Based on this approach, the authors shed new light on the crowd disaster that occurred at the Love Parade in Duisburg, Germany, in July 2010, leaving twenty-one dead and more than 500 injured.

The study focuses on the dynamics occurring when the density of people becomes very high. Physical interactions then inadvertently transfer forces from one body to another, similar to the pressure in dense granular materials. Under such conditions, Helbing and his colleague found that forces in the crowd add up and vary greatly. This makes it hard to avoid a domino effect when people fall.

The forces are so high they can become life-threatening. They cannot be controlled by external police efforts. A collective dynamic called "crowd turbulence" is created.

Contrary to previous thinking, crowd disasters are not always due to crowds becoming uncontrollable because individuals panic. Instead, the authors conclude that amplifying feedback and cascading effects lead to instability in the crowd. This results in a failure of crowd management and control attempts.

The authors also introduce a new scale to assess the criticality of conditions in the crowd designed to help implement preventative measures before the crowd reaches a critical state.

— Read more in D. Helbing and P. Mukerji, "Crowd Disasters as Systemic Failures: Analysis of the Love Parade Disaster," EPJ Data Science 1, no. 7 (25 June 2012)

Abstract

Each year, crowd disasters happen in different areas of the world. How and why do such disasters happen?

Are the fatalities caused by relentless behavior of people or a psychological state of panic that makes the crowd 'go mad'? Or are they a tragic consequence of a breakdown of coordination? These and other questions are addressed, based on a qualitative analysis of publicly available videos and materials, which document the planning and organization of the Love Parade in Duisburg, Germany, and the crowd disaster on July 24, 2010. Our analysis reveals a number of misunderstandings that have widely spread. We also provide a new perspective on concepts such as 'intentional pushing', 'mass panic', 'stampede', and 'crowd crushs'. The focus of our analysis is on the contributing causal factors and their mutual interdependencies, not on legal issues or the judgment of personal or institutional responsibilities. Video recordings show that people stumbled and piled up due to a 'domino effect', resulting from a phenomenon called 'crowd turbulence' or 'crowd quake'. This was the consequence of amplifying feedback and cascading effects, which are typical for systemic instabilities. Hence, things can go terribly wrong in spite of no bad intentions from anyone. Comparing the incident in Duisburg with others, we give recommendations to help prevent future crowd disasters. In particular, we introduce a new scale to assess the criticality of conditions in the crowd. This may allow preventative measures to be taken earlier on. Furthermore, we discuss the merits and limitations of citizen science for public investigation, considering that today, almost every event is recorded and reflected in the World Wide Web.

Syrian Rebels Ransack Christian Churches

Source: http://www.prisonplanet.com/syrian-rebels-ransack-christian-churches.html

Shocking images have emerged which show the aftermath of Christian churches ransacked by NATO-backed Syrian rebels, illustrating once again how western powers are supporting Muslim extremists in their bid to achieve regime change in the middle east.

A photograph provided to us by a Christian woman in Homs, scene of some of the bloodiest clashes of the conflict, shows a member of the Free Syrian Army posing with a looted Catholic cross in one hand and a gun in the other while wearing a priest's robe.

"Everyone knows simply removing these garments from the church is a sin. The priest is the only one who wears them too. They even pray before putting them on. Him posing in front of the funeral car as well is disgusting to the max," our source told us.

"They destroyed the church and went in to film it. I know this for a fact."

"The Robes can only be worn by Deacons or Priests or Sub-Deacons, and they a Christian man wouldn't hold a Cross in one hand and a gun in another," the woman adds

Another image shows a ransacked church in Bustan al-Diwan (Old Homs).

While Syrian rebels busy themselves ransacking Christian churches, they also rallying around the Al-

Qaeda flag just as their counterparts did in Libya.

This video shows Syrian "activists" flying the Al-Qaeda flag during an anti-Assad protest in the northern

Syrian town of Binnish.

In another clip, armed Syrian rebels address the camera standing behind a table draped with the black Al-Qaeda flag.

Last month we highlighted a photo published by French news agency AFP shows a Syrian rebel wearing the Al-Qaeda flag on his arm accompanying UN observers in the village of Azzara.

Why are western governments who are supposed to be engaged in a 'war on terror' against radical Muslim terrorists handing those very same terrorists control over entire countries?

A third image sent by our source shows another place of worship, Church Um Al Zinar, with part of its roof missing thanks to Syrian rebels who have been portrayed by the international media as saints despite their involvement in terrorist bombings and massacres.

The latest terror attack carried out by rebels occurred earlier today when gunmen stormed a pro-government TV station, bombing buildings and shooting dead three employees.

The sight of NATO-backed rebels desecrating Christian places of worship is becoming a recurring theme.

Back in March we reported on shocking video footage which showed Libyan rebels desecrating Christian and Jewish graves at a cemetery.

The clip shows Libyan rebels breaking apart headstones while shouting "Allahu Akbar".

The men later try to smash up a large Christian cross statue with sledgehammers.

WATCH THE VIDEO: http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=fZr1OMtQUeM#at=194

2012 Colorado wild fires

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Perhaps authorities should examine the possibility of pyroterrorism as well in combination with what was written in one of the latest al Qaeda's "Inspire" magazine considering wildfires as means of terrorism.

Guardian of patrols: Afghan dog fights like Marine

By Jeff Drew, 2nd Marine Division
Source:http://www.marines.com/news/-/news-story/detail/NEWS_21DEC2011_AFGHANDOG_
MARINESMAG

Willy Pete constantly looks out for the Marines of Company D, even while they regroup and recharge.

FORWARD OPERATING BASE PAYNE, HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan (December 19, 2011) — He defends Marines and sailors with love and tenacity, protecting them as any Marine would protect a brother-in-arms. He is the epitome of man's best friend,

shielding service members from the enemy while providing companionship and camaraderie. His name is Willy Pete, and he's a warrior, a protector, a friend. He's also a dog.

Company D, 2nd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, 2nd Marine Division (Forward), arrived in the Khan Neshin District in the summer of 2009 for a seven-month deployment and established a coalition presence in the Southwest part of Afghanistan. The LAR Marines pushed west to gain a firm position in a town called Qal'ah-ye Now, where they found two dogs in a compound that they began using as a patrol base.

Before the Marines arrived, the dogs had been beaten and were malnourished. One of the dogs was pregnant and the Marines named her Sandy; the other dog was small and frail, and the Marines fittingly named him Scraggles. The two adopted dogs accepted the Marines as family. Sandy soon had her litter of puppies, one was given the name Willy Pete – military jargon for white phosphorous, an incendiary material used in various types of ammunition.All the puppies were given to local residents to protect farms and herd livestock, but Willy had a different opportunity – he joined the Marines of Company D as their companion.

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Scraggles and Sandy grew fond of the Marines in Qal'ah-ye Now and began to protect the patrol base, keeping unwanted dogs and suspicious people away. Willy soon began to demonstrate the same protective traits of his mother. He also learned how to patrol with the

unit that has taken charge of the area in the past two years.

The veteran dog usually takes the lead when the Marines go on patrol now. He stays in front until the Marines pass through the bazaar outside the combat outpost. Local residents

Marines, what a patrol formation was, and how to react when the patrol came in contact with

often look up in recognition of the dog, who seems to fancy himself a Marine. Willy

the enemy. Since accompanying his first patrol, Willy has been a welcome family member for three complete combat rotations of each LAR

relocates to a new position once he establishes a clear path for the Marines and begins moving from

one side of the patrol to the other, warning Marines of anyone's approach with a quick bark or a low growl.

The many stray dogs in the area tend to be very aggressive and travel in packs. Willy is routinely spotted scrapping with a pack of wild dogs that approach his fellow Marines.

"I had my squad on a local security patrol in Kala Shureh – we refer to the town as 'Dog Town' because of the large amount of wild dogs in the area,"said Sgt. Joshua Davis, a squad leader with Weapons Platoon, 2nd LAR.Willy Pete single- handedly fought off five wild dogs to protect the patrol. After Willy engaged the dogs, my squad was able to push through the village to complete our patrol."

Willy also remains an integral part of security when the Marines and sailors return to the patrol base.He tours the grounds with the sergeant of the guard, chasing stray dogs out of friendly lines and warning the watchstanders if anyone approaches the outpost.

The Marines said they appreciate Willy's dedication, as he provides them companionship and demonstrates his loyalty each day by returning to the fight.

"Willy never walks in the other direction or tries to hide when he sees a squad heading out for a patrol,"said Lance Cpl. Philip Bulford, a mortar gunner with the company. "I believe that Willy believes it's his duty and an honor to protect us from what may lie ahead."

Willy bears the scars from the explosion of an improvised explosive device and a gunshot wound from an enemy insurgent due to his persistent enthusiasm and unyielding vigor to protect the Marines. Still, his loyalty to the Marines is unrelenting.

"He is a proven veteran and a wounded warrior,"said Staff Sgt. Anthony J. Eichler, the platoon sergeant for Weapons Platoon. "Willy is always tirelessly watching over what I would assume he considers 'his' Marines. He is a friend of all Marines, and he works hard every day on patrol and for the security of the outpost.He's been knocked down a few times, but continues on with the mission just like any Marine would be expected to do."

MARINES MAG is the Marine Corps' Official Magazine and is maintained by Marine Corps News at the Defense Media Activity Marine Corps Element.

Muslim Brotherhood's Long Tentacles Reach to American Gov.
By Ryan Mauro
Source: http://www.radicalislam.org/analysis/muslim-brotherhoods-long-tenacles-reach-american-gov

In what could prove to be a watershed moment in the fight against radical Islam, five prominent members of Congress wrote letters on June 13 to the Inspector Generals of the Departments of State, Justice, Defense, Homeland Security and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence requesting investigations into the influence of Muslim Brotherhood-tied groups and individuals.

Rep. Michele Bachmann The letters were signed by Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-MN), Rep. Tom Rooney (R-FL) and Rep. Lynn Westmoreland (R-GA) of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence; Rep. Trent Franks (R-AZ) of the House Armed Services Committee and Rep. Louie Gohmert (R-TX), the Vice Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security.

The letters refer to a 10-part, freely-available online course created by the Center for Security Policy titled, "Muslim Brotherhood in America." Each letter mentions incidents where the respective departments worked with entities or individuals tied to the Muslim Brotherhood.

A secret document by the American branch of the Muslim Brotherhood from 1991 states that its "work in America is a kind of grand jihad in eliminating and destroying Western civilization from within." The Brotherhood's documents also identify many of its fronts in the U.S., such as the Islamic Society of North America, the Islamic Circle of North America, the North American Islamic Trust, the Muslim Students Association, the International Institute of Islamic Thought and the Islamic Association for Palestine, from which the Council on American-Islamic Relations was birthed.

Overseas, the Muslim Brotherhood strategy of "civilization jihad" is referred to as "gradualism," a doctrine I discussed at length here. "Gradualism," often called "stealth jihad" in the West, refers to an incremental, phased approach towards advancing the

Islamist cause that includes a cost-benefit analysis. Western observers often misinterpret the Muslim Brotherhood's restraint as proof that it is moderate. In reality, this judgment is an intelligence failure. Israeli officials say the Muslim Brotherhood leadership in Egypt ordered Hamas to fire rockets at Israel just this past weekend. Hamas' founding charter says it is a wing of the Brotherhood and the terrorist group changed its official name in December to reflect this.

There is a wealth of information showing why the investigations called for by the members of Congress is necessary. The impact of the Muslim Brotherhood-tied groups and other Islamists on the current and past administrations, both political parties and the law enforcement and intelligence communities is disturbing. Their agendas are aided by a media eager to defame their critics and businesses, officials and religious organizations embracing them in the name of interfaith relations.

The Center for Security Policy's course calls out several serving members of the current administration for having close ties to Muslim Brotherhood affiliates. These include:

- Rashad Hussain (photo), the current Special Envoy to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. He previously was a Deputy Associate Council in the White House involved in national security policy and Muslim outreach.
- Dalia Mogahed (photo), a close associate of John Esposito, one of the foremost defenders of the Muslim Brotherhood and its affiliates. She is in the White House's Office of Faith-Based Neighborhood Partnerships and is credited as the person who most influenced President Obama's 2009 speech in Cairo. She is a member of the Department of Homeland Security's Countering Violent Extremism Working Group.
- Huma Abedein, Deputy Chief of Staff to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and wife of former Rep. Anthony Weiner (D-NY). Several of her relatives have ties to the Muslim

Brotherhood, especially her mother who belongs to the Muslim Sisterhood.
- Mohamed Elibiary, who serves on the Homeland Security Advisory Committee and reportedly tried to leak documents to the press to paint Texas Governor Rick Perry as having an anti-Muslim bias. He is a member of the Department of Homeland Security's Countering Violent Extremism Working Group.
- Imam Mohamed Magid, President of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), who has close ties with administration officials and is a member of the Department of Homeland Security's Countering Violent Extremism Working Group.

These individuals represent the tip of the iceberg – there are many, many more in high influential places in the American government.

Moreover, these individuals and organizations are responsible for the administration's belief that the Muslim Brotherhood is genuinely moderate, non-violent and a force we can work with. This opinion was on full display when Director of National Intelligence James Clapper testified before Congress that the Muslim Brotherhood is "secular." He portrayed the Brotherhood in a positive light and continues to do so to this day. A National Security Council spokesperson did the same when asked about the White House's meetings with Brotherhood officials from Egypt. The director of the State Department's Special Coordinator of the Office of Middle East Transitions, William Taylor, is similarly positive towards the Brotherhood. His office even gave election training to Islamists in Egypt.

The five members of Congress who wrote these letters are going to be vilified, cast as "Islamophobes" buying into a wild conspiracy theory. The Islamists' allies in the media and government will repeat their talking points, ever so eager to pride themselves as the defenders of an attacked minority.

I personally experienced this when I tried to speak out at a planning board hearing about a

pro-Hamas imam in my area and a local reporter said I wanted to "make comments about Muslims" even though she had no way of knowing what my intention was because I wasn't permitted to speak and she never talked to me before writing her report.

These investigations must happen. The information in this article and in the "Muslim Brotherhood in America" course only comes from publicly-available information. What is happening behind closed doors in a comforting atmosphere of secrecy?

This article was sponsored by the Institute on Religion and Democracy.

Ryan Mauro is RadicalIslam.org's National Security Analyst and a fellow with the Clarion Fund. He is the founder of WorldThreats.com and is frequently interviewed on Fox News.

The U.K. August 2011 riots could have been predicted

Source: http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20120705-the-u-k-august-2011-riots-could-have-been-predicted

A University of Manchester team researching urban violence has developed a new method which can help city authorities to assess the conditions where conflict could potentially tip into violence.

Participatory Violence Appraisal (PVA), used in Kenya and Chile, could have helped to anticipate the tipping points that led to last

summer's riots in cities across the United Kingdom, say the team based at the University's Global Urban Research Center (GURC) .

The project challenges stereotypes of causes of violence, such as poverty, youth bulges and political exclusion, finding that it often arises through sudden, discontinuous tipping points, sometimes building into "chains."

A University of Manchester release reports that standard data usually focus on crime but do not address gender-based violence — which is often invisible — or ethnic, political, and economic violence which are often accepted as "normal."

A common set of factors, the researchers also say, identify when otherwise well run civil mechanisms, which manage day to day conflict, cannot cope and different forms of violence emerge.

GURC director Professor Caroline Moser, who led the study, said: "Urban violence is an increasingly significant but much misunderstood global phenomenon. But there are no blueprints for when conflict tips into violence; each situation has different underlying causes and our research is about trying to understand them.

Burned-out hulk of stores and apartments after night of rioting // Source: wikipedia.org

"Participatory Violence Appraisal helps us to more fully understand the circumstances where conflict can tip over into generalized violence — and could actually make us reassess what constitutes a violent city.

"PVA samples the views of focus group participants and reveals that much violence is missed by city authorities because it is hidden or part of acceptable behavior.

"It allows poor groups to identify the extent to which violence-related problems affect their well-being, as well as assessing the cause and consequences of violence.

"It's likely the method would have helped us understand what was going on before conflict tipped into violence in some U.K. cities last August."

The project, funded jointly by the Economic and Social Research Council and the government's Department for International Development, focused on four cities known for violent conflict. The teams in Santiago, Chile and Nairobi, Kenya used PVA, while the other two were Dili, Timor and Patna, India, using

different techniques.

- In Santiago they found that violence is not confined to poor areas
- In Patna, women were identified as the principle victims of violence, with alcohol consumption identified as the principle cause of violence
- In Dili, social jealousy and historical problems among the political elite was the most important cause
- In Nairobi, political violence predominated. Tipping points from conflict to violence included political campaigns, evictions, rent rises, abusive language by politicians and police and election rigging.

Moser added: "One type of violence can often lead to another so our research is also about understanding how to these break chains. In the August riots, the rapid intervention of civil society, the police and local government meant that the chain appeared to be broken early on — though without carrying out PVA, we can't know if any further types of violence, such as economic or gender-based violence resulted."

The teams in each of the cities made recommendations based on the data they collected, which they presented to international agencies such as WHO and UNICEF and a range of donors in Geneva last week.

Their project was described as "being close to the perfect research project" by Dr. Duncan Green, Head of Research at Oxfam GB.

Violent cities

In Dili, more than 100 buildings were destroyed, an estimated 21,000 Dili residents fled the city, and five people were killed in 2006. In 2008 an unspecified number of people were beaten and hacked to death with machetes in Nairobi following Kenya's disputed election. Santiago has seen a radical rise in reported instances of violence against women and Patna has reportedly witnessed a major decline in violence during the past half decade, following fifteen years of lawlessness.

Common factors identified by the team

Factors identifying when otherwise well run civil mechanisms, which manage day to day conflict, cannot cope and different forms of violence emerge:

- Lack of public space where different social groups can interact leads to 'hotspots'
- Dysfunctional land tenure systems and land sub-markets closely associated with violence
- Multiple and competing forms of authority within a city.
- Exclusionary forms of neo-liberal governance creates city where particular social groups lose out

The case of Nairobi

The project studied the conditions of three slums in Nairobi: Kawangware, Kibera, and Mukuru using PVA. Though political violence in Nairobi, for example, was the dominant form at 26 percent of the total, domestic violence — which is often invisible — was the second most common at 19 percent.

Ethnic and economic violence, both accepted by the community as "normal," each constituted 18 percent of the total. These are all significant and previously unrealized figures.

Calls by Islamists to Destroy Egyptian Pyramids Begin

By Raymond Ibrahim

Source: http://www.radicalislam.org/analysis/calls-islamists-destroy-egyptian-pyramids-begin

According to several reports in the Arabic media, prominent Muslim clerics have begun to

call for the demolition of Egypt's Great Pyramids—or, in the words of Saudi Sheikh Ali bin Said al-Rabi'i, those "symbols of paganism," which Egypt's Salafi party has long planned to cover with wax. Most recently, Bahrain's "Sheikh of Sunni Sheikhs" and President of National Unity, Abd al-Latif al-Mahmoud, called on Egypt's new president, Muhammad Morsi, to "destroy the Pyramids and accomplish what the Sahabi Amr bin al-As could not."

This is a reference to the Muslim Prophet Muhammad's companion, Amr bin al-As and his Arabian tribesmen, who invaded and conquered Egypt circa 641. Under al-As and subsequent Muslim rule, many Egyptian antiquities were destroyed as relics of infidelity. While most Western academics argue otherwise, according to early Muslim writers, the great Library of Alexandria itself—deemed a repository of pagan knowledge contradicting the Koran—was destroyed under bin al-As's reign and in compliance with Caliph Omar's command.

However, while book-burning was an easy activity in the 7th century, destroying the

mountain-like pyramids and their guardian Sphinx was not—even if Egypt's Medieval Mamluk rulers "de-nosed" the latter during target practice (though popular legend still attributes it to a Westerner, Napoleon).

Now, however, as Bahrain's "Sheikh of Sheikhs" observes, and thanks to modern technology, the pyramids can be destroyed. The only question left is whether the Muslim Brotherhood president of Egypt is "pious" enough—if he is willing to complete the Islamization process that started under the hands of Egypt's first Islamic conqueror.

Nor is such a course of action implausible. History is laden with examples of Muslims destroying their own pre-Islamic heritage—starting with Islam's prophet Muhammad himself, who destroyed Arabia's Ka'ba temple, transforming it into a mosque.

Asking "What is it about Islam that so often turns its adherents against their own patrimony?" Daniel Pipes provides several examples, from Medieval Muslims in India destroying their forefathers' temples, to contemporary Muslims destroying their non-Islamic heritage in Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Malaysia, and Tunisia.

Currently, in what the International Criminal Court is describing as a possible "war crime," Islamic fanatics are destroying the ancient heritage of the city of Timbuktu in Mali—all to

the call to demolish the last of the Seven Wonders of the Word, also note that Egyptian Salafis are calling on Morsi to banish all Shias and Baha'is from Egypt.
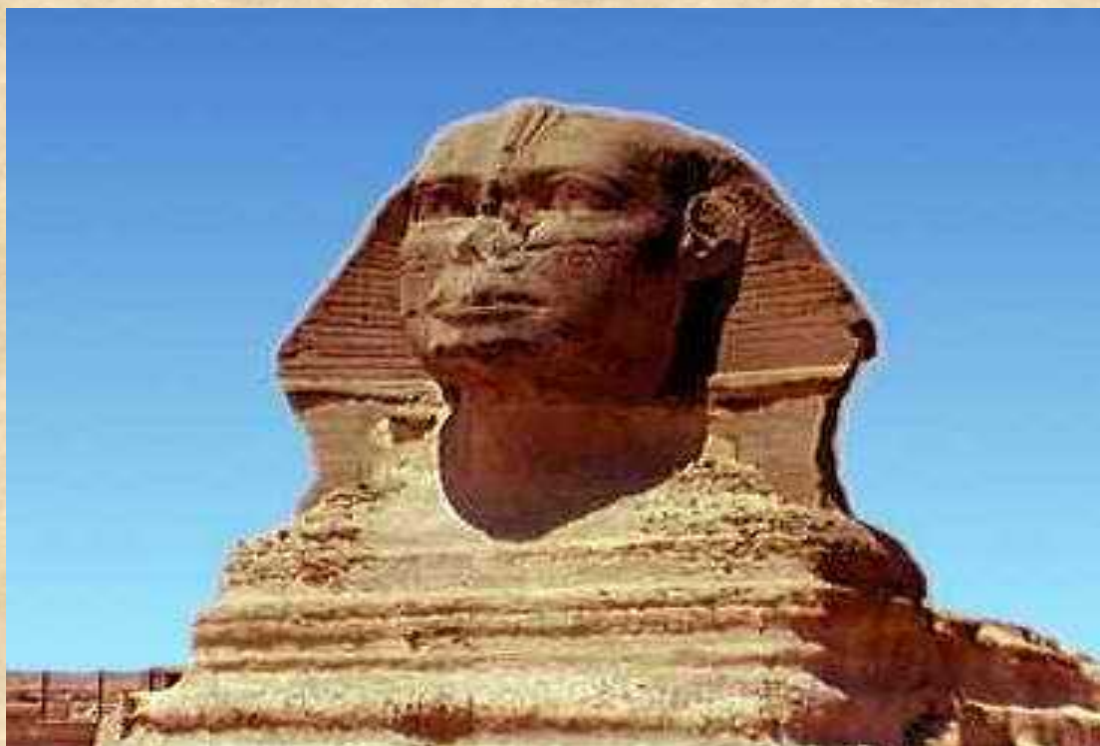
Islam's triumphant war cry, "Allahu Akbar!"

Much of this hate for their own pre-Islamic heritage is tied to the fact that, traditionally, Muslims do not identify with this or that nation, culture, heritage, or language, but only with the Islamic nation—the Umma.

Accordingly, while many Egyptians—Muslims and non-Muslims alike—see themselves as Egyptians, Islamists have no national identity, identifying only with Islam's "culture," based on the "sunna" of the prophet and Islam's language, Arabic. This sentiment was clearly reflected when the former Leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, Muhammad Akef, declared "the hell with Egypt," indicating that the interests of his country are secondary to Islam's.

It is further telling that such calls are being made now—immediately after a Muslim Brotherhood member became Egypt's president. In fact, the same reports discussing

In other words, Morsi's call to release the Blind Sheikh, a terrorist mastermind, may be the tip of the iceberg in coming audacity. From calls to legalize Islamic sex-slave marriage to calls to institute "morality police" to calls to destroy Egypt's mountain-like monuments, under Muslim Brotherhood tutelage, the bottle has been uncorked, and the genie unleashed in Egypt.

Will all those international institutions, which make it a point to look the other way whenever human rights abuses are committed by Muslims, lest they appear "Islamophobic," at least take note now that the Great Pyramids appear to be next on Islam's hit list, or will the fact that Muslims are involved silence them once again—even as those most ancient symbols of human civilization are pummeled to the ground?

Raymond Ibrahim, a Middle East and Islam specialist, is a Shillman Fellow at the David Horowitz Freedom Center and an Associate Fellow at the Middle East Forum. A widely published author, he is best known for his book, The Al Qaeda Reader . Mr. Ibrahim's dual-background—born and raised in the U.S. by Egyptian parents —has provided him with unique advantages to understanding of the Western and Middle Eastern mindsets.

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Far-right Violence in the United States: 1990-2010
Source: www.start.umd.edu

Following the 5 August 2012 shooting at a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, START researchers compiled background information from the United States Extremist Crime Database (ECDB) on ideologically motivated far-right violence in the United States, generally, and far-right extremist crimes related to religion and religious institutions, specifically. Although the ECDB includes crimes committed by individuals with varying ideologies, this report focuses exclusively on far-right violence and crime due to initial reporting that the alleged perpetrator in Oak Creek was motivated by either a racist skin-head or white supremacist ideology. Should additional information about the ideological motivation for the attack confirm the initial reporting, this factsheet may help contextualize the event.

START's Extremist Crime Database includes a systematic collection of open-source data on financial and violent criminal behavior in the United States associated with far-right extremists, far-left extremists, and al-Qaida-inspired and associated extremists.[1] The ECDB does not exclusively focus on terrorist attacks, rather it records criminal incidents committed by extremist groups or their supporters. These crimes range in important ways, such as the level of violence imposed on victims, number of suspects involved and the motivations underlying each incident. For example, extremist crimes include ideologically and non-ideologically motivated homicides, financial crimes and cases involving foiled plots. The conduct of a criminal act is an inclusion criterion in this dataset; individuals are not included in this dataset absent criminal activity. The use of broad ideological categories in this research does not suggest that an individual or group sharing one or more of these beliefs is likely to be an extremist criminal.

Ideologically Motivated Far-Right Homicides

Between 1990 and 2010 there were 145 ideologically motivated homicide incidents committed by far-right extremists in the United States. Of those incidents:

- Including the Oklahoma City Bombing, which killed 168 individuals, far-right extremists killed 348 individuals during ideologically motivated homicide events between 1990 and 2010. Excluding that attack, far-right extremists killed 180 individuals between 1990 and 2010.
- 58 percent of the victims of ideologically motivated far-right violence were killed by perpetrators using firearms.
- More than half of the victims of far-right violence were targeted because they were racial/ethnic minorities.
- 37 percent of these homicide incidents were perpetrated by a lone individual.
- 32 law enforcement officers were killed in the line of duty by far-right extremists during ideologically motivated attacks. In addition, corrections officers, private security guards, and a judge have been killed during ideologically motivated attacks.
- For 10 percent of perpetrators, there was evidence that they expected to be killed or captured while committing their crimes.
- Almost 5 percent of perpetrators were killed by law enforcement during the commission of their crimes.

Religious Institutions & Individuals Targeted by Far-Right Extremists
- In September and October of 2001 two men were killed in Texas because a white supremacist believed they were Muslim. One of the homicide victims was Muslim, and the second was Hindu.
- In July 2008, two individuals were shot and killed at a Unitarian Church in Knoxville, Tennessee. The church was a target of far-right violence because of its liberal ideology.
- Two homicide incidents were committed by far-right extremists at religious institutions, even though the victims were not targeted for their religious beliefs.

One was a July 1999 murder outside of a Korean Methodist church, while the other was inside a Reformation Lutheran church that occurred in May 2009.

- Three victims of far-right violence were killed because they were Jewish or perceived to be Jewish. In April 2000, a perpetrator murdered his neighbor in western Pennsylvania before driving to her synagogue and shooting at the building. A college student in the Northeast was targeted and killed in May 2009 because she was Jewish. In September 2002 a racist Skinhead killed a 46-year old man he mistakenly believed was Jewish.
- In June 2009 a security guard was murdered outside of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., which was targeted by an anti-Semitic, white supremacist.

About This Report

The data presented here are drawn from the Extremist Crime Database (ECDB). The ECDB is the first-of-its-kind database and is a valuable resource for policymakers and researchers.

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- William S. Parkin, Seattle University (wparkin@jjay.cuny.edu)

Reference

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*The **National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START)** is supported in part by the Science and Technology Directorate of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security through a Center of Excellence program based at the University of Maryland. START uses state-of-the-art theories, methods and data from the social and behavioral sciences to improve understanding of the origins, dynamics and social and psychological impacts of terrorism.*

NOTE: View this report online/download at:
http://www.start.umd.edu/start/publications/br/ECDB_FarRight_FactSheet.pdf.

Iran Courts Latin America

By Ilan Berman

Source: http://www.meforum.org/3297/iran-latin-america

In October 2011, U.S. attorney general Eric Holder and FBI director Robert Mueller revealed the thwarting of an elaborate plot by elements in Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) to assassinate the Saudi ambassador to Washington at a posh D.C. eatery, utilizing members of the Los Zetas Mexican drug cartel.[1]

The foiled terrorist plot, with its Latin American connections, focused new attention on what had until then been a largely overlooked political phenomenon: the intrusion of the Islamic Republic of Iran into the Western Hemisphere. An examination of Tehran's behavioral pattern in the region over the past several years reveals four distinct strategic objectives: loosening the U.S.-led international noose to prevent it from building nuclear weapons; obtaining vital resources for its nuclear project; creating informal networks for influence projection and sanctions evasion; and

Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (left) hosted an Iftar (fast breaking) ceremony on Ramadan in Tehran, September 3, 2009, which was attended by Bolivian president Evo Morales (right) during a two-day official visit. Tehran is now believed to be extracting uranium from as many as eleven different sites in Bolivia close to the country's industrial capital of Santa Cruz.

establishing a terror infrastructure that could target the U.S. homeland.

Building Western Hemisphere Alliances

Outreach to Latin America is seen by the Iranian regime first and foremost as a means to lessen its deepening international isolation. Since 2003, when its previously clandestine nuclear program became a pressing international issue, Tehran has sought to mitigate the mounting political and economic restrictions levied against it by the United States and its allies through intensified diplomatic outreach abroad.

Due to its favorable geopolitical climate—typified by vast ungoverned areas and widespread anti-Americanism—Latin America has become an important focus of this effort. Over the past decade, the regime has nearly

doubled the number of embassies in the region (from six in 2005 to ten in 2010) and has devoted considerable energy to forging economic bonds with sympathetic regional governments.[2]

Far and away the most prominent such partnership has been with Venezuela. Since Hugo Chavez became president in 1999, alignment with Tehran has emerged as a cardinal tenet of Caracas's foreign policy. The subsequent election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to the Iranian presidency in 2005 kicked cooperation into high gear with dramatic results. Today, the two countries enjoy an extensive and vibrant strategic partnership. Venezuela has emerged as an important source of material assistance for Tehran's sprawling nuclear program as well as a vocal diplomatic backer of its right to atomic power.[3] The Chavez regime also has become a safe haven and source of financial support for Hezbollah, Iran's most powerful terrorist proxy.[4] In turn, Tehran's feared Revolutionary Guard has become involved in training Venezuela's secret services and police.[5] Economic contacts between Caracas and Tehran likewise have exploded—expanding from virtually nil in the early 2000s to more than $20 billion in total trade and cooperation agreements today.[6]

Just as significantly, Venezuela has served as Iran's gateway for further economic and diplomatic expansion into the region. Aided by its partnership with Caracas and bolstered by a shared anti-American outlook, Tehran has succeeded in forging significant strategic, economic, and political links with the regime of Evo Morales in Bolivia and Rafael Correa in Ecuador. Even Iran's relations with Argentina, where Iranian-supported terrorists carried out major bombings in 1992 and 1994, have improved in recent times, as the government of President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner has hewed a more conciliatory line toward Tehran.[7]

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It would be a mistake, however, to view these contacts as simply pragmatic—or strictly defensive. The Iranian regime's sustained systematic outreach to regional states suggests that it sees the Western Hemisphere as a crucial strategic theater for expanding its own influence and reducing that of the United States. Indeed, a 2009 dossier prepared by Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs noted that "since Ahmadinejad's rise to power, Tehran has been promoting an aggressive policy aimed at bolstering its ties with Latin American countries with the declared goal of 'bringing America to its knees.'"[8] This view is increasingly shared by the U.S. military: In its 2010 report on Iranian military power, the Office of the Secretary of Defense noted that "Iran seeks to increase its stature by countering U.S. influence and expanding ties with regional actors" in Latin America.[9]

To this end, Tehran is ramping up its strategic messaging to the region. In late January, on the heels of Ahmadinejad's very public four-country tour of Latin America, the Iranian regime formally launched HispanTV, a Spanish-language analogue to its English-language Press TV channel.[10] The television outlet has been depicted by Ahmadinejad as part of his government's efforts to "limit the ground for supremacy of dominance seekers"—a thinly-veiled reference to U.S. influence in the Western Hemisphere.[11]

As Ahmadinejad's statement indicates, Tehran is pursuing a strategy that promotes its own ideology and influence in Latin America at Washington's expense. In this endeavor, it has been greatly aided by Chavez, who himself has worked diligently to diminish U.S. political and economic presence in the region under the banner of a new "Bolivarian" revolution.

Exploiting Resource Wealth

Since the start of the international crisis over Iran's nuclear ambitions nearly nine years ago, it has become an accepted belief that Tehran's atomic program is now largely self-sufficient and that its progress is, therefore, largely inexorable. This, however, is far from the truth; in fact, the Iranian regime currently runs a considerable, and growing, deficit of uranium ore, the critical raw material needed to fuel its atomic effort.

According to nonproliferation experts, Tehran's indigenous uranium ore reserves are known to be both "limited and mostly of poor quality."[12]

When Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi mapped out an ambitious national plan for nuclear power in the 1970s, his government was forced to procure significant quantities of the mineral from South Africa. Nearly four decades later, this aging stockpile has reportedly been mostly depleted.[13] As a result, in recent years, Tehran has embarked on a widening quest to acquire uranium ore from abroad. In 2009, for example, it is known to have attempted to purchase more than 1,000 tons of uranium ore from the Central Asian republic of Kazakhstan at a cost of nearly half-a-billion dollars.[14] In that particular case, deft diplomacy on the part of Washington and its European allies helped stymie Tehran's efforts—at least for the time being.

The Iranian quest, however, has not abated. In February 2011, an intelligence summary from a member state of the International Atomic Energy Agency reaffirmed the Islamic regime's continued search for new and stable sources of uranium to fuel its nuclear program.[15] This effort has recently focused on two principal geographic areas. The first is Africa where Tehran has made concerted efforts to engage a number of uranium producers such as Zimbabwe, Senegal, Nigeria, and the Democratic People's Republic of Congo.[16] The second is Latin America where Tehran now is exploring and developing a series of significant resource partnerships.

The best known of these partnerships is with Venezuela; cooperation on strategic resources has emerged as a defining feature of the alliance between the Islamic Republic and the Chavez regime. The Iranian regime is currently known to be mining in the Roraima Basin, adjacent to Venezuela's border with Guyana. Significantly, that geological area is believed to be analogous to Canada's Athabasca Basin, the world's largest deposit of uranium.[17]

Bolivia, too, is fast becoming a significant source of strategic resources for the Iranian regime. With the sanction of the Morales government, Tehran is now believed to be extracting uranium from as many as eleven different sites in Bolivia's east, proximate to the country's industrial capital of Santa Cruz.[18] Not coincidentally, it is rumored that the now-infamous Tehran-Caracas air route operated jointly by Conviasa, Venezuela's national airline, and Iran's state carrier, Iran Air, will be extended in the

near future to Santa Cruz.[19] Additionally, a series of cooperation agreements concluded in 2010 between La Paz and Tehran have made Iran a "partner" in the mining and exploitation of Bolivia's lithium, a key strategic mineral with applications for nuclear weapons development.[20]

Iran even appears to be eyeing Ecuador's uranium deposits. A $30 million joint mining deal concluded between Tehran and Quito back in 2009 has positioned the Correa regime to eventually become a supplier for the Islamic Republic.[21]

Regional experts note that Iran's mining and extraction efforts in Latin America are still comparatively modest in nature, constrained by competition from larger countries such as Canada and China and by Tehran's own available resources and know-how.[22] However, the region is unquestionably viewed as a target of opportunity in Iran's widening quest for strategic resources—both because of its favorable political operating environment and because states there (especially Bolivia) represent unknown quantities in terms of resource wealth. This raises the possibility that Latin America could emerge in the near future as a significant provider of strategic resources for the Iranian regime and a key source of sustenance for Iran's expanding nuclear program.

Establishing an Iranian Presence

Tehran's formal political and economic contacts with regional states are reinforced by a broad web of asymmetric activities throughout the Americas. Illicit financial transactions figure prominently in this regard. Over the past several years, Tehran's economic ties with Caracas have helped it skirt the sanctions being levied by the international community as well as to continue to operate in an increasingly inhospitable global financial system. It has done so through the establishment of joint companies and financial entities as well as the formation of wholly Iranian-owned financial entities in Venezuela and the entrenchment of Iranian commercial banks there.[23] Experts note that this financial activity exploits an existing loophole in the current sanctions regime against Tehran—one that leverages the freedom of action of Venezuelan banks to provide the Islamic Republic with "an ancillary avenue through which it can access the

international financial system despite Western pressure."[24]

Tehran is also known to be active in the region's ubiquitous gray and black markets as well as its free trade areas—operating both directly and via its terrorist proxy Hezbollah.[25] Most notoriously, these include the so-called "Triple Frontier" at the crossroads of Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil as well as Venezuela's Margarita Island.

The Iranians also boast an increasingly robust paramilitary presence in the region. The Pentagon, in its 2010 report to Congress on Iran's military power, noted that the Qods Force, the Revolutionary Guard's elite paramilitary unit, is now deeply involved in the Americas, stationing "operatives in foreign embassies, charities and religious/cultural institutions to foster relationships with people, often building on existing socioeconomic ties with the well-established Shia Diaspora" and even carrying out "paramilitary operations to support extremists and destabilize unfriendly regimes."[26]

This presence is most pronounced in Bolivia. Tehran has been intimately involved in the activities of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas (ALBA) since the formation of that Cuban- and Venezuelan-led geopolitical bloc—which also encompasses Ecuador, Bolivia, Nicaragua, and a number of other nations—in the early 2000s. As part of that relationship, Tehran reportedly provided at least some of the seed money for the establishment of the bloc's regional defense school situated outside Santa Cruz. Iranian defense minister Ahmad Vahidi reportedly presided over the school's inauguration in May 2011, and Iran—an ALBA observer nation—is now said to be playing a role in training and indoctrination at the facility.[27] Regional officials currently estimate between fifty and three hundred Iranian trainers to be present in Bolivia.[28] Notably, however, a personal visit to the facility by this author in January 2012 found it to be largely unattended.

A Base for Attack?

Conventional wisdom in Washington has long held that Tehran's activism in the Americas is opportunistic—rather than operational. Yet Iran's growing asymmetric capabilities throughout the region have the potential to be directed against the U.S. homeland. This was hammered home by the

foiled October 2011 plot, an attack which—had it been successful—would potentially have killed scores of U.S. citizens in the nation's capital in the most significant terrorist event since 9/11.

The incident represents a seismic shift in Tehran's strategic calculations. As Director of National Intelligence James Clapper observed in his January 2012 testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, in response to mounting international pressure and asymmetric activity against Tehran's nuclear program, it appears that "Iranian officials—probably including Supreme Leader Ali Khamene'i—have changed their calculus and are now willing to conduct an attack in the United States."[29]

Latin America figures prominently in this equation. The foiled October 2011 plot suggests that Tehran increasingly deems the region an advantageous operational theater. Moreover, as its influence and activities there intensify, the Iranian regime will be able to field a progressively more robust operational presence in the Americas. Clapper concluded his Senate testimony with an ominous warning: "The Iranian regime has formed alliances with Chavez, Ortega, Castro, and Correa that many believe can destabilize the hemisphere," he noted. "These alliances can pose an immediate threat by giving Iran—directly through the IRGC, the Qods force, or its proxies like Hezbollah—a platform in the region to carry out attacks against the United States, our interests, and allies."[30]

Obstacles Facing Iran

Understanding these motivations is essential to assessing the significance of Latin America in Tehran's strategic calculus and to determining whether its efforts there are successful.

For the moment, Iranian regional inroads represent a work in progress. The Islamist regime has demonstrated a clear interest in Latin America over the past decade and is now striving to expand its influence there. As of yet, however, it has not succeeded in solidifying this presence—or in fully operationalizing its regional relationships and institutionalizing its influence. As experts have noted, despite Tehran's generous promises of economic

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engagement with regional states, precious little of this aid has actually materialized, save in the case of Venezuela.[31] Moreover, despite increasingly robust cooperation with regional states on mining and extraction, there is as yet no indication that Latin America by itself can serve as the answer for Iran's strategic resource needs.

Furthermore, an expansion of Tehran's footprint in the region is not necessarily inevitable. Over the past year, the health of the Islamic Republic's foremost regional ally, Hugo Chavez, has become increasingly critical, and the Venezuelan strongman is now believed to be in the terminal stages of cancer. Significant ambiguity abounds over Venezuela's future direction and, as a result, about the durability of the partnership forged between Caracas and Tehran under Chavez.

Tehran's expanding regional activism, therefore, can be understood at least in part as contingency planning of sorts: an effort to broaden contacts and ensure the continuance of its regional influence in a post-Chavez environment. In this context, the regimes of Evo Morales in Bolivia and Rafael Correa in Ecuador are significant with Correa in particular increasingly considered a potential successor to Chavez as a standard bearer of the new "Bolivarianism"—and an inheritor of cooperation with Iran.[32] Tehran's future progress in solidifying and expanding those partnerships will serve as an important barometer of the long-term survival of its bonds to the region as a whole.

For their part, since October 2011, policymakers in Washington have begun to pay serious attention to Tehran's activities in the Western Hemisphere. Yet they have done little concrete to respond to it, at least so far. Despite heartening early steps (including new legislation now under consideration by Congress),[33] a comprehensive strategy to contest and dilute Iranian influence in the Americas remains absent.

Unless and until such a strategy does emerge, Tehran's Latin American efforts—and the threats posed by them to American interests and the U.S. homeland—will only continue to expand

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Mapping Cultures

Source: http://www.strategypage.com/htmw/htterr/articles/20120811.aspx

The United States has a very important intelligence effort going on in Afghanistan that is little reported. This work is called **human topography** and collects large quantities of tribe, family, and economic data. Put into databases and analyzed with powerful software, otherwise hidden relationships are discovered. The more data you gather, the more insights you get. In effect, this would give American commanders more knowledge of what is going on inside Afghanistan than national, or even local, Afghan politicians and government officials. This kind of

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knowledge is necessary if you want to make long-term changes in Afghan society (like eliminating blood feuds and the violence in general). These techniques can also generate predictive analysis, which is basically generating a good estimate of when someone will do something.

Forces and the CIA) during World War II. There they learned how critical what we now call human topography was. The World War II vets also learned how powerful media (mainly radio and well-crafted rumors back then) could be.

Until about a decade ago the Small Wars Manual and the OSS experience was largely
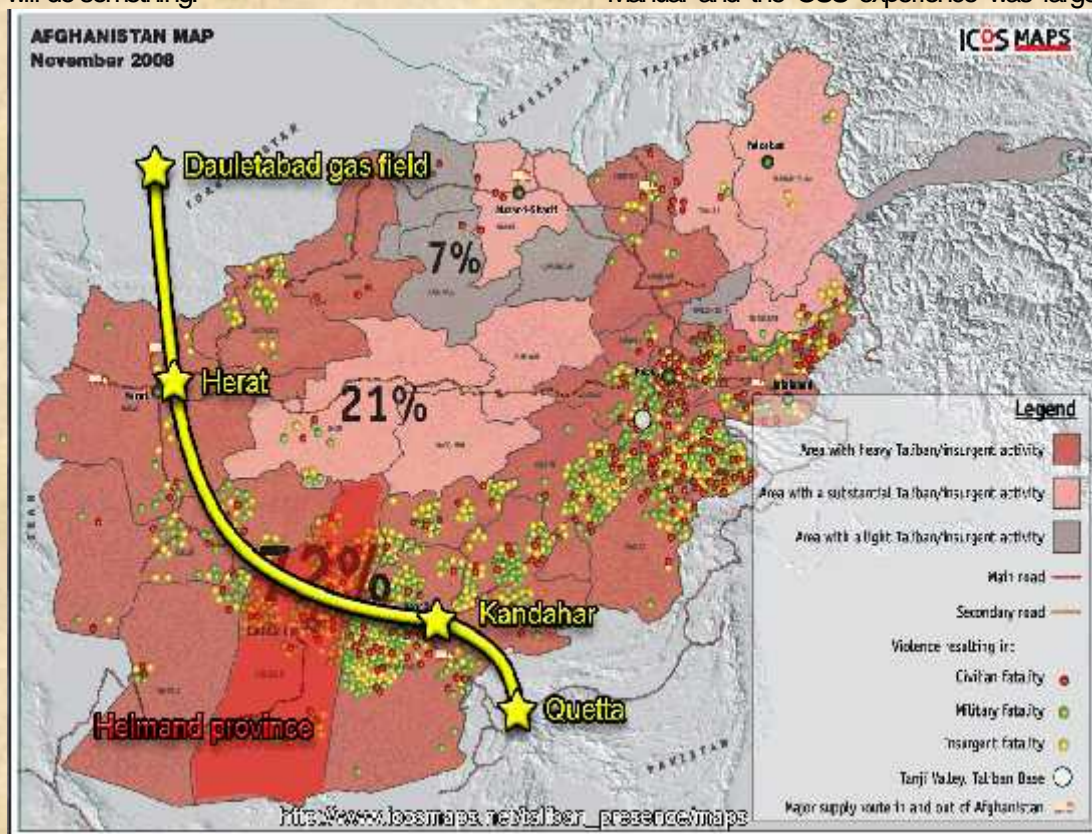
Gaining a better understanding of the culture and local politics makes it possible to gain allies and make negotiating peace deals without a lot of violence easier. For over two centuries the U.S. military (and colonial militias before that) have understood that knowledge of your opponent is the first step to victory. This sort of thing was never considered important enough (until recently) to be made part of the official military doctrine (books of details on "how to fight" and such). One exception was the "Small Wars Manual", written by some U.S. Marine Corps officers just before the U.S. entered World War II.

The Small Wars Manual was never really forgotten inside the military. When the U.S. Army Special Forces was established in 1952 many of the key players were men who had served in the OSS (Office of Strategic Services, the predecessor of the Special

forgotten (or ignored) in the U.S. Army and the American military in general. But the Special Forces and some in the CIA remembered and were ready to move after September 11, 2001. It's taken the last decade for most of the U.S. military leadership to appreciate human topography and what is now called Information War (developing media messages and outlets to gain the support of local social movements).

Just knowing of these tools and their importance is only half the job. Obtaining accurate and useful human topography and then using that to fashion an effective Information War campaign is essential. In the last decade a lot of new techniques were developed for collecting and sorting out all this data. Part of that was technology, but a lot of it was the realization that this sort of thing has worked for centuries and still does.

Risk Intelligence, the Art of Uncertainty, and the Flawed Psychology of Airport Security

Source: http://www.brainpickings.org/index.php/2012/08/16/risk-intelligence-dylan-evans/

In *Risk Intelligence: How to Live with Uncertainty* (*public library*), **Dylan Evans** explores the psychology, sociology, and politics of uncertainty through what he calls "risk intelligence" — the essential skill of learning the boundaries of our knowledge and using that insight in honing our humanly flawed decision-making.

> At the heart of risk intelligence lies the ability to gauge the limits of your own knowledge — to be cautious when you don't know much, and to be confident when, by contrast, you know a lot. People with high risk intelligence tend to be on the button in doing this.
> [...]
> This is a vital skill to develop, as our ability to cope with uncertainty is one of the most important requirements for success in life, yet also one of the most neglected. We may not appreciate just how often we're required to exercise it, and how much impact our ability to do so can have on our lives, and even on the whole of society.

As a frequent traveler who resents the tedium, frustration, and time-sink of airport procedures — so much so that I've begun turning down speaking appearances solely on the basis of travel time involved — I found particularly fascinating Evans's exploration of risk intelligence through the lens of airport security:

> The security expert Bruce Schneier has dubbed many of the [airport security] measures "security theater" on the grounds that they serve merely to create an appearance that the authorities are doing something but do nothing to reduce the actual risk of a terrorist attack. Indeed, it is intelligence tip-offs, not airport checkpoints, that have foiled the vast majority of attempted attacks on aircraft.
> Schneier may be right that many of the new airport security procedures are purely theatrical, but that begs the question as to

> why they are such good theater. In other words, it is not enough to point out the mismatch between feeling safe and being safe; if we want to understand this blind spot in our risk intelligence, we need to know why things such as taking one's shoes off and walking through a body scanner are so effective in creating such (objectively unreliable) feelings of safety. It probably has something to do with their visibility; intelligence gathering may be more effective at reducing the risk of a terrorist attack, but it is by its very nature invisible to the general public. The illusion of control may be another factor; when we do something active such as taking our shoes off, we tend to feel more in control of the situation, but when we sit back and let others (such as spies gathering intelligence) do all the work, we feel passive and impotent. Maybe there's a ritual aspect here, too, as in the joke "Something must be done. This is something. Therefore, we must do it." The default assumption is that the "something" is good, and we feel better. Psychologists have long known that the illusion of control is a key factor in risk perception; it is probably one of the main reasons why people feel safer driving than when flying, even though driving is more dangerous.

Politicians, Evans points out, have a vested interest in putting on this security theater, which lets them get credit for taking action. But current security measures are
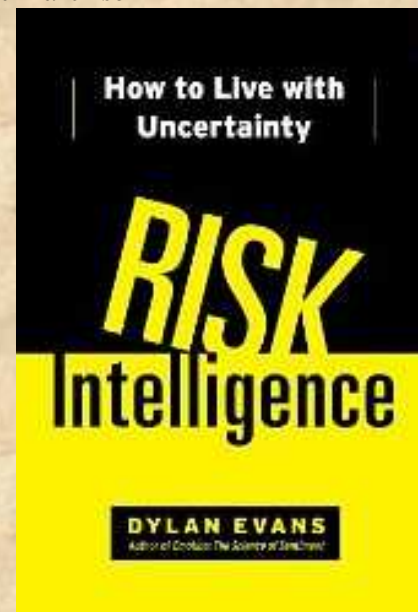
orchestrated on the presumption that every single person is equally likely to be a perpetrator, which is statistically inaccurate, can be avoided with better pre-screening measures, and proves highly costly on many levels:

> *To gauge the true cost of screening passengers at airports in the United States, it is not enough to look at the TSA's operating budget; we should also take into account the extra time passengers have spent waiting in line, taking their shoes off, and so on. Robert Poole , a member of the National Aviation Studies Advisory Panel in the Government Accountability Office, has calculated that the additional time spent waiting at airports since 9/11 has cost the nation about $8 billion a year . It is by no means clear that this was the wisest use of the security budget. Every dollar spent on one security measure is a dollar that can't be spent on an alternative one. The costs of the new security procedures do not end there. Long lines at airports have prompted more people to drive rather than fly, and that has cost lives because driving is so much more dangerous than flying. The economist Garrick Blalock estimated that from September*

> *2001 to October 2003, enhanced airport security measures led to 2,300 more road fatalities than would otherwise have occurred. Those deaths represent a victory for Al Qaeda.*

> *One of the principal goals of terrorism is to provoke overreactions that damage the target far more than the terrorist acts themselves, but such knee-jerk responses also depend on our unwillingness to think things through carefully. As long as we react fearfully to each new mode of attack, democratic governments are likely to continue to implement security theater to appease our fears. Indeed, this is the Achilles' heel of democracy that terrorists exploit. One thing we could all do to help combat terrorism is to protect this Achilles' heel by developing our risk intelligence.*

The rest of **Risk Intelligence** goes on to explore everything from the mechanisms of climate change misinformation to how "the CSI effect" makes jurors in real-life criminal trials hold evidence to the impossible standards of fictionalized TV dramas. Underpinning these broader insights is a practical toolkit for enhancing our own risk intelligence in a way that translates into better, smarter everyday decision-making.

Spatial Terra and Silent Weapons
By Dr. Terry Tucker
Source: http://ideasthatshape.com/archives/1426

Increasingly, the tone, texture and tempo of unrest grows. There is global discontent and grievances mount; Arab Spring, Occupy, Eurozone, unemployment, Syria, Iran and US-Pakistani relations are a few of the events and places that are prominent in the news. The risk from one of these events would be severe, from a confluence of several, legion. The themes of discontent resonate, there are multiple simultaneous revolutions in social media, politics, economics and cultures. Seemingly, for every problem identified there seems to have been a solution, so why then the constant rumble of instability?

The silent weapons of globalization have several converging elements

- Globalization is not the same as a World Economy
- Ideologies offer attractive, but unworkable solutions to cultural dynamics
- Economic dislocation, or a global financial crisis is not a traditional (security?) problem.

Current dominant economic activities do not all mesh with social or political activities. Some of these activities are eroding, others emerging, and a need to bridge strategic plans with tactical unification at the local level

requires the integration of three distinct realms into strategy planning:

- Social structure
- Political system
- Culture

The US Army, along with NATO and Coalition Partners, appears to be the Global First Responder and has recently declared the squad as the foundation for decisive force, yet NATO calls for developing the true "civ-mil soldier;" Is this a doctrinal divergence; a difference of terms? Understanding needed capabilities is important. Understanding where is also important. Training those capabilities to mesh with these merging dynamics is a critical silent weapon crucial to present and future success.

Understanding the human environment has been a military quest in Afghanistan and Iraq. The creation of special teams such as, Cultural Support Teams (CST's), Female Engagement Teams (FET), and Human Terrain Teams (HTT) is organizational proof for the need for this capability. Although much discussion still centers on definitions there is a clear divergence and [the] definition established by NATO was sufficiently broad in scope to accommodate the various perspectives presented. However, this was also part of the challenge, with the established definition being so broad that the discussions often lacked the focus necessary to develop the foundations for a narrative that supported the intent of effecting institutional change. The US Army appears to be headed in the same ambiguous direction as it emphasizes the "Pacific-pivot" and transition to stability operations in the CENTCOM Area of Operations (Horn of Africa and Afghanistan primarily).

Clearly, the strategic plan requires tactical unification and training the linkage with multiple skill sets to enhance the totality of "Knowledge Sets" to implement this unification. Will the move towards developing the squad as the decisive force, or the true civ-mil soldier, be capable of operating within these converging elements, and across and within the distinct realms of planning?

Organizations understand how to use the technology and all the tools of digital influence; do they understand the data to information to knowledge linkage? How to transform data and information to a "skill" and capability? Will the modern global first responders be able to synthesize the silent weapons for success?

Can we develop the critical cognitive kills necessary for success?

A recent MSNBC report on academic attrition of veterans would appear to indicate that although we have the technology, there has been a significant atrophy of critical cognitive skills. The military is not an academic institution, yet if the numbers in the article are representative of the military population, then the gap between military and civilian education is widening. This also appears to be the case as reported in the Decade of War lessons learned study by JCOA. Perhaps not so for senior levels of Professional Military Education (PME), but, its soldiers, NCO's and Jr Officers that do most of the "interacting."

There have also been a number of articles lately on disruptive thinking over at the Small Wars Journal. Many of these articles look at this as a "gap" that needs to be narrowed in academic, business and military organizations. They pronounce that this knowledge and skill set will enable organizations to greater heights. But will this build agility? Resilience in your networks? Will it build the cognitive skills to operate across these multiple dynamics and multiple realms

Looking at the trends of change, this disruptive thinking that wrenches organizations to new innovation occurs on the "fringe" of your networks, of your "Spatialterra," and not in your headquarters. The gap between process, innovation, and decision making starts with identifying training in the interdependence of multiple "knowledge sets," and not just the tools of technology.

Corporate success is truly an effect-based approach. Percentage of market share and profit are the dominant metrics used to assess performance. Yet, many directives and policy appear to use pattern and trend analysis to produce either impressionistic or deterministic understandings; understandings that are linked up to the strategic vision but not linked down with tactical unification. Linking strategic vision with operational unification and objectives with tactical tasks is more than the difference between competitive intelligence and a business plan assessment. The eleven overarching lessons in the decade of war study clearly demonstrate this lack of tactical unification, and as importantly, the lack of training in these interdependencies.

This is not just a military problem, but a problem in civilian industry as well

Assessments should inform and influence in both directions. Tactical unification requires a degree of flexible decentralization. Your operations, like your dynamic pricing and marketing campaign, is a mosaic of a strategic vision that is regionalized, even localized, to meet the specific nuances of your operating environment. It means having a layered contextual analysis. It means that your outliers, your "fringe," is probably on the cutting edge of what is locally, or regionally "disruptive" thinking and innovation.

For example, why do your tactical subordinates appear to argue that their personal analysis is more than just whim or opinion? Why do we use the data to question the theory, business plan, or perceived market reality? Should we instead, question the data or information? Social media, and social and digital influence is the norm. Like the Occupy Movement, it is here to stay. Narrowing the gap, and building a true civ-mil soldier means training interdependencies between tools, technology and human environment skills to obtain a "cognitive dominance." Narrowing the "gap" between organizations and institutions requires many levels of Ouroboros; the ability to re-generate and adapt to the new, it is what all organizations say they strive for.

This gap, like social media rests on three elements. Reach, Relevance and Resonance. For an analogy, think "Occupy" Reaching your objective and narrowing the gaps requires multiple parallel steps. The CEOs reach is a different "reach" and "resonance" than the local program manager.

"…there is no mention of tools in these pillars (Reach, Relevance and Resonance). This is because, tools and platforms do not dictate what the pillars are and are only helpful in supporting the intent of an outcome. Measuring influence… is always a means to an end and never an end itself."

Global interconnectivity means local-local relationships directly affect strategic direction. It is not enough to develop strategic policy as an instrument of top down change. Appreciating the nuance of the local environment, and developing the mechanics to influence and steer the social environment with tools capable of measuring impact and change, is an essential capability in the current operating environments. Social movements are no longer driven primarily by ideology, but are instead driven by the emotional reaction to information via social media exchange.

Big companies are treated differently from smaller companies

Generally speaking, if a person wants resources and stability they seek a large organization. If they seek innovation and entrepreneurship they look to small and private organizations in the Silicon Valley. Applying the elements of social and digital influence above, market segmentation/micro-segmentation is understood from this perspective:

- Market segmentation on a global level that can be maximized offers the potential to expand influence and outreach capabilities into previously non-aligned or identified areas. Local-local relationships and influence on this level becomes a strategic concern/ outcome. To apply this to product sales, for example, being able to sell to a digital social network of 10 participants has little impact on sales. However, being able to develop an understanding of the social entry points and influencers as well as the common entry points and influencers, to a point where 1000 digital social network sites of ten people is now connected to a common product, local-local becomes strategically significant.

- Market segmentation is a defining concept of the social narrative terrain. However, that does not necessary demand complex market segment analysis. Basic needs in emerging cultures are key points of entry and by themselves can address the basic criteria of market segment analysis: homogeneity (common needs within segment), distinction (unique from other groups), and reaction (similar response to market). Fundamental needs such as clean water, electricity, and food, can eclipse the analytical conventions of market segment analysis. A center point of influence is often achieved by addressing these most fundamental needs.

- This enables a staff and local managers to analyze and produce assessments and make decisions that directly impact vision and design, but just as importantly, emphasizes tactical execution

in context with the local operating environment.

The cost of failure for the military, business and academia is different, but arguably they are connected. Especially for the advocates of Unrestricted Warfare/Asymmetrical Warfare. Additionally, the goal is not to make each organization mirror each other but to synthesize and integrate strategy with tactical unification in a meaningful way.

Linking this vision with execution is embracing concepts you are already familiar with. It means planning to organize, organizing to compete, organizing to lead, and shaping the internal and external environment. It means that the CEO and the local crew is a "weapon system" and has the power to shape success or failure in everything they do. Additionally, it means that each one of these assets, and everything in between, has inherent limitations and strengths. It means that the weapon system you employ is an acknowledgement of some element of the economic-political terrain that requires shaping. The political terrain takes on gross dimensions when it involves not just managing local actors, but internationally competing governments and multi-national businesses. Geo-politics, the tactical implications of geo-politics, and how those assessments translate to operational and tactical execution can no longer be ignored.

The traditional methods of a hostile takeover, or corporate raid remain essential tools in the kit bag, but increasingly, the existential risk and threat to profit and loss comes from this widening gap between education, institutions, tools, technologies and the interdependencies in this "spatialterra."

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Aviation: Do We Do Security … or Do We Just Plug Holes?

By Capt. Craig Hall
Source: http://ideasthatshape.com/archives/474

You know, this question is at the crux of our entire security screening philosophy, not only in North America but world-wide as well.

Let's look at the facts

Hijacking first started to become a concern about sixty years ago, give or take. A quick Google search will reveal that the first hijacking took place in 1931 in Peru; that between 1948 and 1957 there were 15 hijackings; the number shot up to 31 in 1968 alone and then to 82 in 1969. Clearly, something had to be done. In the early 1970's some basic security measures began to appear, and these were soon formally mandated and became commonplace.

Most of these early hijackings involved single perpetrators commandeering planes bound from the United States to Cuba. Invariably a firearm or other weapon was involved. The logical step was to institute procedures that focused on keeping these weapons off the aircraft, the assumption being that if we deny the hijacker the tools of his trade the problem will go away. After a fashion, it worked.

However, today we face a different threat. Organized attacks

from fundamentalists are highly sophisticated and well thought out. But today, our strategy is essentially the same as it was in 1970; look for the bad object. Frankly, it's time to carry out a wholesale re-think of that strategy.

Bad People, Not Just Bad Objects

The problem with today's strategy is that it's rooted in principles that are six decades old. The only thing that's changed is the level of sophistication of our detection devices, and their resultant cost.

Every time we have stepped up our technology, the bad guys have found a way around it. So we throw more technology at it, at an astronomical cost. When the bad guys brought guns on the aircraft, we spent millions on metal detectors. Then they went to non-metallic weapons; we enhanced our technology with better X-ray and CT technology. Then they went to explosives; again we improved the CT technology and went to trace detection. When they found more creative ways to hide explosives, we made passengers take off their shoes. Then they switched to liquid explosives. We restricted the carriage of liquids and gels and now are trying to come up with technologies that will reliably detect liquid explosives. And when they went to difficult-to-detect explosives secreted in clothing, we responded with backscatter and millimeter wave technology. They are already looking for another way to beat this; we already know that surgically implanted explosives and explosives secreted in body cavities are being contemplated. These are currently almost impossible to detect. But it seems that we will spend billions more trying. And when we succeed… well, what will they try next? It's like we are telling ourselves, "We can't accept that our strategy is flawed; obviously we are doing the right thing, we just need to do more of it and spend more doing it."

It's a circular strategy, and we are using it to fight a battle that we can't win. We don't try to prevent tomorrow's attack; instead we try to fix yesterday's. We don't do security. We plug holes. I am reminded of the story of the little Dutch boy frantically plugging holes in the dyke with his fingers. It's a pretty apt metaphor, don't you think?

Isn't it time we shifted more of the focus to the terrorist as well as the tools of his trade?

Behaviour pattern recognition, contrary to popular perception, is nothing new. Every police officer since the days of Robert Peel's first "bobbies" in 1829 has used the technique, either consciously or subconsciously, every time he finds himself face to face with a potential criminal. The Israelis are, of course, the best at it; that's no secret. They have used the technique successfully for a long time.

I have heard the arguments that the SPOT (Screening of Passengers by Observation Techniques) program in the States "has yet to catch a terrorist" and is therefore somehow a failure. This is, of course, an outrageous conclusion. It completely ignores the deterrence value of the program, which has been proven successful in leading to arrests for drug-related offences. This alone shows its effectiveness in identifying those with less-than-honourable intentions. Frankly, our airport screening technologies have caught no terrorists either, although many terrorists have defeated them.

Not too long ago I was in Ottawa where a senior CATSA representative told me how many "prohibited items" were confiscated at PBS (Pre-Board Screening) in a single year at Canadian airports. It was in the thousands. Undoubtedly she expected me to be impressed. I countered by saying, "That's all well and good; but how many attacks did you prevent?" Somewhat taken aback, she had no answer. It was almost as if she thought that finding bad objects, not preventing attacks, was the mandate and if you did the first, you automatically did the second. I took the point further, and asked, "Of all the people that the bad objects were taken from, how many had hostile intent?" Again, no answer.

You see, we don't screen for hostile intent! We don't look for the bad guys. It's almost as if we are fine with bad guys on our aircraft as long as they don't have a weapon. Folks, with that philosophy, it's only a matter of time until we have another major terrorist incident.

It's not like we haven't had some successes in thwarting terrorism and terrorist attacks. We've prevented some attacks that would have been pretty devastating, had they been successful. How have these victories been achieved? Well, they have usually been due to some very good intelligence and good old-fashioned police work. Many attacks have been stopped before they even got started by getting the bad guys while they were still in the planning stages. I would submit

that this is where we need to focus more effort. Technology has its place, but it's not the silver bullet.

Sometimes I shock my fellow airline pilots by saying that I am very happy to carry firearms on my aircraft. But it's true. I am far more worried about a terrorist getting on my aircraft,
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even if he's unarmed, than all the police officers and air marshals in the world who are carrying. It's not the weapon that's the problem. It's the guy who controls it.

It's time to find the bad guys. The little Dutch boy is running out of fingers.

Capt. Craig Hall is a senior Captain for a Canadian-based air carrier. He has been flying professionally for over twenty years. He is a recognized leader in the field of aviation security, and has been actively involved in aviation security issues for nearly two decades.

The ABCs of Transportation Planning for Special Events

By Laurel J. Radow

Source:http://www.domesticpreparedness.com/Infrastructure/Special_Events/The_ABCs_of_Transportation_Planning_for_Special_Events/

The winter and summer Olympics, the annual National Football League (NFL) Super Bowl

The National Highway System

championship, and similar sports events are just a few of the numerous "special events" that continue to grab a nation's – and at times, the world's – attention. These same events – and others, such as the upcoming 2013 U.S. Presidential Inauguration – also draw huge numbers of participants and spectators to venues around the globe.

A prime example is the recent surge to first place in their division by the Washington Nationals baseball team – a drive that has significantly increased attendance at games. According to a 2012 summary posted at the Major League Baseball (MLB) website, only 10 games held at the Nationals Park during the previous four years (2008 through 2011) drew crowds of 40,000 or more. This year, that number has already been surpassed – and

average attendance, during the first half of the season alone, was close to 30,000. One previously unforeseeable result of the team's on-the-field successes this year is that the Nationals' stadium is now being considered as a potential site for the 2015 All Star game.

However, increased attendance also leads to additional requirements, including a greater need: (a) to manage and facilitate the transportation of fans to and from the games; and (b) to protect the players as well as the fans – which in Washington, D.C., often include some high-ranking government officials – from terrorist attacks and/or other dangers.

Although three years away, the 2015 All-Star Game is not as far into the future as it may seem. In fact, if D.C. is selected to host the game, there must be enough time to ensure that the right team of planners and "doers" – e.g., professionals in public safety, emergency management, health, transportation, and other fields – attend one or both of the 2013 and 2014 All-Star games to experience firsthand the plans and preparations that work and those that do not work.

One of the more important areas of concern will be the transportation available for what would undoubtedly be a sellout crowd. Among the critical considerations for everyone involved – from event planners and security personnel

to the players to those attending the game – are the following:

1. How best to ensure that the official baseball "family" – players, team officials and owners, media, and sponsors – as well as the fans will be able to travel to and from the stadium both swiftly and safely;
2. When these groups should leave for the stadium;
3. Whether they should use public transportation or drive; and
4. What other Washingtonians – non-participants who live or work in or around the area close to the stadium – and visitors to the nation's capital should do on the game-day itself to avoid excess delays in their plans. (Many in this category might telework, of course, but others would simply leave earlier for work – or just decide to take the day off.)

In addition, if the Nationals end up in the 2012 World Series, the same planners, safety personnel, and other officials must be able to provide security during this multi-day event. The experience of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) of the U.S. Department of Transportation strongly suggests that the most important safety and security factors needed to help ensure the operational success of a major event are to: (a) be able to manage transportation to and from the event; (b) determine the effects of the event on congestion; and (c) define the role the event plays in the local economy.

Statistical Evidence for Transportation's Criticality

The FHWA has also produced a number of publications designed to summarize the best practices recommended for several of the more complicated aspects of planned special events. For example, the information included in the agency's August 2008 report, titled "Planned Special Events – Economic Role and Congestion Effects," shows clearly why the experience and expertise provided by transportation professionals in both the planning and operation of activities are critical to the overall success of the event. That particular report included statistics from five major types of crowds: (a) professional team sports; (b) college and high school sports; (c) individual professional sports; (d) concerts, expositions, and other "entertainment" shows; and (e) various "street and park" events.

Using a large volume of data (covering the years 1993 through 2008) – collected from secondary sources, event organizers and venue managers, various responder agencies, and officials at all levels of government – the FHWA calculated the U.S. annual estimates of planned special events with more than 10,000 attendees. Their results include the following statistics:

- More than 24,000 Planned Special Events (most of them sports events of some type) are scheduled annually throughout the nation;
- Those events attract an estimated 600 million attendees;
- The collective "in-event" revenue of those same events is estimated to be about $40 billion – and what is termed the "total economic impact" is four times higher at about $160 billion;
- The local, state, and federal government revenues generated by these events is an estimated $4 billion, but the collective "congestion costs" range from $1.7 billion to $3.5 billion (based on Average Delay Per Traveler + Wasted Fuel Per Traveler + Travel Delay + Excessive Fuel Consumed);
- The "Travel Delay" factor (i.e., the total travel time above that needed when compared to a trip at free-flow speed), which ranges from 93 million to 187 million hours, affects both attendees and non-attendees; and
- The excess fuel consumption (i.e., the amount consumed for trips when compared to free-flow conditions) also doubles – from 64 million gallons to 128 million gallons.

That report and other FHWA publications on planned special events are available electronically at their website and a host of other documents, produced prior to 2011, are available on CD, including:

- Intelligent Transportation Systems for Planned Special Events: A Cross-Cutting Study
- Managing Travel for Planned Special Events Handbook
- Managing Travel for Planned Special Events Handbook: Executive Summary
- National Special Security Events: Transportation Planning for Planned Special Events
- Planned Special Events – Economic Role and Congestion Effects

- Planned Special Events: Cost Management and Cost Recovery
- Simplified Guide to the Incident Command System for Transportation Professionals
- Tabletop Exercise Instructions for Planned Events and Unplanned Incidents/ Emergencies

The FHWA also has developed a Planned Special Events peer-to-peer program designed specifically to help those responsible for event planning. Within the past 12 months, two peer-to-peer sessions were held. In the first, two officials (who had managed the September 2009 G-20 meeting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) went to Honolulu in July 2011 to help planners prepare for the November 2011 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting in Hawaii. In the second, the director of the Minnesota Transportation Management Center and a St. Paul police officer went to Tampa, Florida, in April 2012 to help planners in that city prepare for the 2012 Republican National Convention (RNC) – which St. Paul had hosted in 2008.

In short: (a) When traffic to and from an event goes well, public safety and security concerns are significantly reduced and the overall experience of participants is greatly improved; (b) The FHWA publications provide an abundance of "best practices" information to help special event planners and emergency planners handle crowd surges more safely and effectively; and (c) The transportation problems that might develop at such gatherings are often remembered long after the event has passed.

For additional information on:

- Links to the FHWA publications on planned special events, visit http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/publications.htm#pse
- The 25 June 2012 MLB.com article "Attendance surges during Interleague Play: Major League Baseball has chance at setting new overall record," visit http://mlb.mlb.com/news/article.jsp?ymd=20120625&content_id=33900088&vkey=news_mlb&c_id=mlb
- The 2010 FHWA report "National Special Security Events: Transportation Planning for Planned Special Events," visit http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop11012/index.htm

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Just in case

Ex-Navy SEAL Matt Bissonnette revealed as the author of 'No Easy Day: The Firsthand Account of the Mission That Killed Osama Bin Laden'

Source: http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/ex-navy-seal-matt-bissonnette-revealed-author-easy-day-firsthand-account-mission-killed-osama-bin-laden-article-1.1143421

Mark Owen was the pseudonym used by the ex-Navy SEAL Matt Bissonnette who penned "No Easy Day: The Firsthand Account of the Mission That Killed Osama Bin Laden".

The anonymous author of an eyewitness book about the mission that took out Osama Bin Laden was revealed Thursday as Matt Bissonnette, who retired as a Navy SEAL just months after the daring raid.

Bissonnette was first named by Fox News. His identity was later confirmed by The Associated Press.

The revelation came just one day after Penguin announced it would publish "No Easy Day: The Firsthand Account of the Mission That Killed Osama Bin Laden" on Sept. 11.

The publisher said the book was being released under the pseudonym Mark Owen, but identified the author as one of the Navy SEAL Team 6 members involved in the May 2, 2011, raid in Abbottabad, Pakistan, that killed the terrorist mastermind.

Bissonnette is 36 and hails from Wrangell, Alaska, Fox News said.

According to the report, Bissonnette is now retired, but participated in both the Bin Laden raid and the 2009 freeing of a hostage from Somali pirates in the Indian Ocean — another well-publicized SEAL success. The Times says he participated in more than a dozen deployments and only very recently retired.

Some have criticized Fox for releasing the author's name, speculating that if a left-leaning news source had done so, it would have been accused of a lack of patriotism. Others conceded that it was only a matter of time before the author's real name came to light.

The publisher said the names of all the SEALs
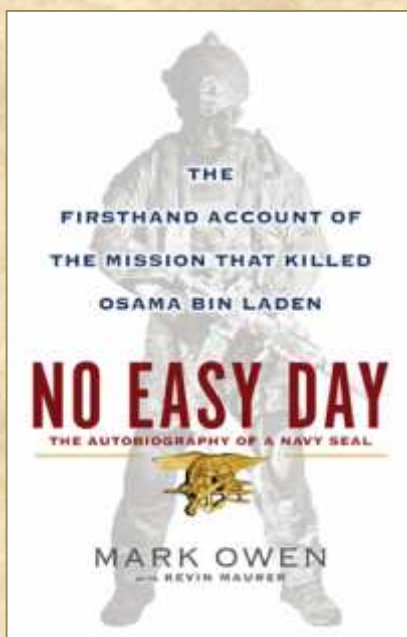
in the book were changed to protect their identities.

Special Operations Command spokesman Col. Tim Nye said the retired SEAL could be endangered by being identified, which could also expose those active-duty SEALs the author worked with in the killing of Bin Laden at his Pakistan safehouse last year.

Bissonnette could still be in trouble with the Pentagon, because of regulations that require

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retired military personnel to get Defense Department review of sensitive material in their writings to make sure classified information is not revealed.

The Pentagon said it didn't review the book or provide information for it.

"It is time to set the record straight about one of the most important missions in U.S. military history," he writes in the book, according to Fox.

FOLLOW-UP: Al-Qaida linked websites threaten ex-Navy SEAL turned author with 'destruction'

Users on several militant Islamic websites affiliated with al-Qaida have posted the name and photo of a former Navy SEAL identified as the author of an upcoming book on the commando raid that killed Osama bin Laden. The posts called for his "destruction" in revenge for the al-Qaida founder's killing.

"We pray to Allah for his destruction sooner rather than later," said one of the posts.

"Oh Allah, make an example of him for the whole world and give him dark days ahead," read another.

Among the website publishing the death threats was the "Al-Fidaa" web forum, which al-Qaida uses to distribute its media and public communications

QUIZ

In Google maps type: **Jil'ah, Shabwah, Yemen**

Can anybody identify the nature of the three parallelogram water (?) formations guarded (?) by warships (?) in the GoA off-shore the Jil'ah village?