

**North Korea is playing dangerous games !**

# **CBRNE Newsletter Terrorism**

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**Terror News**

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# Terror News

## The Year in Review - A Look at FBI Cases

Source: <http://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2012/december/the-year-in-review-part-1>

### Part 1

The FBI worked thousands of investigations



during 2012, involving everything from extremists bent on terror to cyber thieves, financial fraudsters, and child predators. As the year comes to a close, we take our annual look back at some of the Bureau's most significant cases.

**Part 1 focuses on our top investigative priority**—protecting the nation from terrorist attack. Working with local, state, federal, and international partners, we thwarted a number of potential attacks on U.S. citizens at home and abroad.

**Here are some of the top terror cases of 2012, in reverse chronological order:**

**Alabama men arrested on terrorism charges:** Two U.S. citizens living in Alabama were arrested in December and charged with planning to travel overseas to wage violent jihad. The pair met online and later confided their plans to an individual who—unbeknownst to them—was a confidential source working for the FBI.

**Plot to destroy Ohio bridge:** Four men were sentenced to prison in November for their role in a conspiracy to destroy a bridge near Cleveland. The men—all self-proclaimed anarchists—pled guilty to conspiracy to use weapons of mass destruction. The group

allegedly planned a series of crimes in the Cleveland area.

**Conspiracy to provide support to terrorists:** Four men were charged in Los Angeles in November with conspiring to provide material support to terrorists after they allegedly made arrangements to join al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan to kill Americans, among others.

**Plot to attack Pentagon and U.S. Capitol:** Also in November, a 27-year-old man was sentenced in Boston to 17 years in prison for plotting an attack on American soil and attempting to provide detonation devices to terrorists. The man built detonators for improvised explosive devices and provided them to FBI undercover operatives he believed were members of al Qaeda.

**Attempted bombing of New York Federal Reserve Bank:** A 21-year-old Bangladeshi national was arrested in October for attempting to detonate a 1,000-pound bomb in Lower Manhattan to strike the U.S. financial system on behalf of al Qaeda. The man allegedly traveled to the U.S. in January 2012 specifically to conduct a terrorist attack.

**Plot to attack U.S. Capitol:** A 29-year-old Virginia resident was sentenced to 30 years in prison in September for attempting to carry out a suicide bomb attack at the U.S. Capitol in February 2012.

**Plan to send weapons to Iraqi Insurgents:** A former resident of Iraq residing in Kentucky pled guilty to terrorism charges in August for attempting to send Stinger missiles and other weapons to Iraq to be used against U.S. soldiers.

**'Revolution' leader sentenced:** A New York City resident was sentenced in June to more

than 11 years in prison for using his position as a leader of the Revolution Muslim organization to promote violent extremism online against those he believed to be enemies of Islam.

**Violent extremists in Alaska:** Also in June, the leader of an Alaska militia was found guilty of conspiring to murder federal officials and possessing illegal firearms including silencers and grenade launchers.

## Part 2

With our partners in the law enforcement and intelligence communities, the FBI worked thousands of investigations during 2012, from cyber crimes to economic espionage and multi-million-dollar fraud schemes. As the year draws to a close, we take a look back at some of 2012's most significant cases.

**Part 1 focused on terrorism. This segment highlights some of the year's top cases from the FBI's other investigative priorities:**

**Insider trading:** Charges against seven investment professionals were announced in New York in January alleging an insider trading scheme that netted nearly \$62 million in illegal profits.

**California gang takedown:** A total of 119 defendants were charged in San Diego in January with federal racketeering conspiracy, drug trafficking violations, and federal firearm offenses in one of the largest single gang takedowns in FBI San Diego history. The target was the Mexican Mafia gang and its affiliates.

**Economic espionage:** In February, a federal grand jury in San Francisco charged five individuals and five companies with economic espionage and theft of trade secrets in connection with their roles in a long-running effort to obtain U.S. trade secrets for the benefit of companies controlled by the People's Republic of China.

**Cyber hackers charged:** Several hackers in the U.S. and abroad were charged in New York in March with cyber crimes affecting over a million victims. Four principal members of the hacking groups Anonymous and LulzSec were among those indicted; another key member previously pled guilty to similar charges.

**Anchorage man indicted for murder:** In April, Israel Keyes was charged with the kidnapping

**Supporting terrorism:** A 45-year-old Philadelphia resident was arrested in March and charged with conspiracy to provide material support to the Islamic Jihad Union, an extremist organization responsible for bombings and attacks against coalition forces in Afghanistan.

and murder of an Anchorage barista. Keyes is believed to have committed multiple kidnappings and murders across the country between 2001 and March 2012. In December, after Keyes committed suicide in jail, the FBI requested the public's help regarding his other victims.

**Financial fraudster receives 110-year sentence:** In June, Allen Stanford—the former chairman of Stanford International Bank—was sentenced in Houston to 110 years in prison for orchestrating a 20-year investment fraud scheme in which he misappropriated \$7 billion to finance his personal businesses.

**Nationwide sweep recovers child victims of prostitution:** The FBI and its partners announced the results of Operation Cross Country, a three-day law enforcement action in June in which 79 child victims of prostitution were recovered and more than 100 pimps were arrested.

**International cyber takedown:** Also in June, a two-year FBI undercover cyber operation culminated in the arrest of 24 individuals in eight countries. The investigation focused on “carding” crimes—offenses in which the Internet is used to steal victims' credit card and bank account information—and was credited with protecting over 400,000 potential cyber crime victims and preventing over \$205 million in losses.

**Health care fraud:** In July, global health care company GlaxoSmithKline pled guilty to fraud allegations and failure to report safety data and agreed to pay \$3 billion in what officials called the largest health care fraud settlement in U.S. history.

**Russian military procurement network:** In October, 11 members of a Russian military

procurement network operating in the United States and Russia, as well as a Texas-based export company and a Russia-based procurement firm, were indicted in New York

and charged with illegally exporting high-tech microelectronics from the U.S. to Russian military and intelligence agencies.



## Democracy, Terrorism and the Secret State

By Makinde Adeyinka

Source: <http://www.globalresearch.ca/democracy-terrorism-and-the-secret-state/5318091>

*“You had to attack civilians, the people, women, children, unknown people far from any political game. The reason was quite simple – to force the people to turn to the state for greater security.”*

Vincenzo Vinciguerra

The nature, necessity and scope of the miscellany of powers exercised by the state over the nation is in one sense arguably as contentious in the contemporary circumstances of the Western world as it was in the distant pre-democratic medieval past.

In his work *Della Ragion di Stato* (The Reason of State), which was completed in 1589, the Italian thinker Giovanni Botero argued against the underpinning philosophical amorality espoused by Niccolo Machiavelli in *Il Principe* (The Prince), a political treatise centred on the ways and methods of the manipulation of the

levers of the power by a ruler in an organised state.

The thrust of Machiavelli’s seminal piece was that virtually any action taken by a ruler to preserve and promote the stability and the prosperity of his domain was inherently justifiable. Thus, the employment of violence, murder, deception and cruelty toward achieving these ends were not ignoble in so far as the ends justified the means.

With its implications of a required recourse to illegality and a subtext offering more than a whiff of authoritarianism, this is not a conceptualisation of the *modus operandi* by

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which modern Western democratic states are supposed to operate both in terms of their domestic and foreign policy-strategies.

Yet, while the modern state, guided as it is by an ethos encapsulating the rule of law and the respect for human rights, exercises powers which are checked and balanced by a mandated adherence to constitutionality, there are troubling questions and unresolved problems which have been raised by the workings of the intelligence agencies of the executive branch of government.

Those who work in the domestic and foreign branches of the security services are tasked with detecting threats under a necessary veil of secrecy. But questions abound as to the boundaries of their activities and about how truly accountable they are.

Astoundingly, the laws under of the United Kingdom did not even formally acknowledge the existence of MI5, the domestic security service, until near the closing of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The case of Harman and Hewitt versus the United Kingdom in 1991, which was brought under the European Convention of Human Rights, held that the failure of the United Kingdom to provide a statutory basis for the existence of this body which had powers of surveillance and file-keeping ran counter to the rights protecting privacy, and, by extension, was an abrogation of the rule of law.

As a consequence of the ruling in the case, the United Kingdom passed a statutory charter for MI5 under the Security Service Act of 1989, and later took a similar step for its counterpart with a foreign remit, the Secret Intelligence Service, via the Intelligence Services Act of 1994.

Quite extraordinarily, the United Kingdom's intelligence services continue to maintain the fiction that they 'don't do dirty', in other words, that they do not subvert foreign governments and plan assassinations.

This goes all the way back to the denials about the so-called Lockhart Plot, a scheme by MI-1C; MI6's precursor, which was led by Robert Bruce Lockhart. Lockhart's plan is believed to have had as its aim the assassination of Lenin and the overthrow of the newly installed Bolshevik government in Russia.

Such eventualities, it was hoped, would enable a succeeding government to tear up the Brest-Litovsk Treaty and have Russia rejoin the war being waged being against Germany.

The assertion some years ago by a top MI6 official that it did not organise assassinations correctly provoked howls of derision as well as a sense of utter incredulity. "What do they exist for?" went the typical response.

This was somewhat recanted by Sir Richard Dearlove, a former head who admitted that agents had the power to use "lethal force".

Agents are allowed under the Intelligence Services Act to conduct illegal activities such as breaking and entering and planting listening devices in the interests of national security, and while there is no specific proviso giving MI6 agents a 'license to kill', section 7 of the Act, not only offers protection to agents who have bugged and bribed, but also where they have become enmeshed in enterprises involving murder, kidnap and torture, where such actions have been authorised in writing by a government minister.

Still, it must be reminded that while renegade British agents have alleged that plans had existed in the recent past to assassinate former heads of governments such as Serbia's Slobodan Milosevic and Libya's Muammar Gaddafi, the official policy of course remains to neither confirm nor deny any allegations related to its activities.

Despite the recent legislative reforms in Britain, the perception of an extremely powerful and at times sinister working secret state persists there as it does in the United States and other Western nations.

Congressional investigations in the United States after the fall of President Richard Nixon in the aftermath of the Watergate scandal explored and uncovered schemes by intelligence agencies, notably by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) which involved the deliberate subversion of foreign governments and targeted assassinations regarding the former, and widespread infringements on individual liberties through spying and harassment, as well as targeting groups and associations for infiltration and disruption.

A disturbing allegation often made and documented about many agencies of the secret state and their subterranean machinations, is a tendency to corruption and even the perpetuation of criminal cultures which have involved the



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forming of unholy alliances with gangsters, political extremists and corrupt regimes.

For instance, the CIA was discovered to have conspired with elements within the American Mafia to assassinate Cuba's Fidel Castro in the 1960s, and in the 1980s, in defiance of the law set by Congress, it disbursed funds to the Nicaraguan Contras who agents knew were also financed from drugs sources.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Aginter Press, the front for Yves Guérin-Sérac's fascist guerrilla training camp, which was designed to undermine the chances of Western liberal democracies from falling under the sway of the Left, was partly financed by the CIA.

Most of these endeavours were carried out with the backing and direction of figures in democratically elected governments. While politicians maintain the veneer of being subject to a guiding framework of moral propriety and the operation of the rule of law, in the shadows and behind the curtains, they urge, they manage and facilitate the commission by immoral methods what they construe to be ultimately in the interests of their nations.

And a critical question: to what extent does the historical record unmask governments as the agents of 'synthetic' terror? In the 'Game of Nations', the use of secret services and military 'black operations' to manufacture incidents to justify wars and social crackdowns is almost an obligation. As the often used phrase goes, "The first casualty of war is truth."

Western historians have no problems attributing blame to incidents manufactured by totalitarian or authoritarian regimes such as those perpetrated by the forces of imperial Japan in order to invade Manchuria and then China, and also the 'Gleiwitz Incident' used by Hitler's Third Reich to invade Poland.

And the Western media has had no problems in airing the suspicions about the Russian government's complicity in the 1999 outrage dubbed 'The Moscow Apartment Bombings'. Blamed on Chechen separatists, it formed the pretext for unleashing a second bloody war against the Russian federated state of Chechnya.

But what of the case for those acts of prefabricated violence and disinformation used by the security agencies of Western democracies not only to subvert foreign governments including the CIA's famous overthrow of the democratically elected government of Mohamed Mossadegh in Iran,

but also used within their own borders to achieve objectives based on a perceived 'national interest'?

Further, it may be asked whether this picture; that of one involving the possibility of the mounting of False-Flag operations, fits into the current contemporary circumstances of terror attacks in the West which have occurred before and during a series of wars waged in the Middle East by an alliance of America and Western European nations.

The state today, as was the case in the times of Machiavelli and Botero has a preeminent concern for its sustenance and its self-preservation. These concerns may at times be couched in terms of what is perceived to be the 'national interest' or as the 'strategic interests of the country' and as a matter of 'national security'.

And if the national interest is that Italy must not succumb to any form of influence by a government even partially populated by communists or that the American strategic interest must be to secure continuous access to mineral resources from a particular region of the world which happens to be predominantly populated by Muslims, how far should the state go towards ascertaining those interests?

Should it resort to amoral means including the aforementioned violence and deceit? Or are there limits or boundaries; the crossing of which would betray all of what is held to be sacrosanct in the self-avowed bastions of liberty and democracy?

Whereas the means of achieving certain state interests may be openly and unabashedly pursued and accomplished through the crude machineries of an authoritarian and despotic rulership, it becomes clear that in democratic societies, where objectives have to be met with the consent and approval of the majority of the people, recourse may have to be made to the services of secret apparatus' of state to create the circumstances for facilitating such consent. It also aids the rulers of such ostensibly freedom-loving and democratic states to be able to empower themselves with laws which enable it to adopt certain characteristics associated with authoritarian rule with the consent of the citizens who allow themselves to be stripped of hard won freedoms and liberties.

The result of some of the strategies employed first in containing the advancement of Soviet Communism



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and now in terms of grappling with political Islam in the context of the 'War on terror' has been to give the democratic states a surreal, almost psychopathic quality because of the pretence of a public face as being one of benevolence, while condoning secret organs which can act with extreme ruthlessness and even depravity.

Granted, it is the case for some that the use of the tactics of extraordinary renditions, torture and targeted assassinations, alongside the practice of the dark arts of deception and intrigue typically employed by the security and intelligence arms of the state, may be the necessary means used to justify the end of purportedly preserving public safety and safeguarding national interests.

But the discomfiture felt by others about the justification of the implementation of draconian and illegal government action speak to the counter argument to the 'end justifies the means' rationale. In other words, there must be limits placed on the deviations from conventional morality by governments operating under a democracy

It should be pointed out that the agencies utilised in the policy of fighting the aforementioned threats has not been delimited to the roles played respectively by the American and British secret services, alongside those of some of their Western European counterparts

The involvement of the military intelligence services of all the nations of Western Europe alongside their domestic and foreign intelligence spy houses have for long being co-ordinated under the aegis of the secret realm of a formidably powerful supra-national entity.

For at the centre of the promulgation of 'dirty wars' during the ideologically-based 'Cold War' between the Soviet Union and the 'Clash of Civilizations' between the West and Islamists in the era of the 'War on Terror' has been NATO, the acronym for the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

Under the leadership of the United States, NATO was created after the Second World War as a military alliance of much of the Western European nations for the purpose of defending the West from the threat of invasion posed by the Soviet Union.

However, it also provided the umbrella under which a war by stealth and deception was waged not only against violent extremist left-wing terrorist organisations, but also

diabolically against the populations of certain Western European nations.

Further, as recent events in Libya and current events in Syria indicate, it is now clearly the case that the remit of NATO has expanded to one that vastly exceeds its originally drawn up terms of reference.

But how did NATO become embroiled in the commission of acts of violence against the public in a number of European countries? The answer lies in the policy of the United States geared towards containing the spread of communism and Soviet influence.

As the vastly dominant military partner in the liberation of Western Europe from Nazi domination, and also as the financial powerhouse which facilitated the economic rehabilitation of the area via the implementation of the Marshall Plan, the United States of America had an interest in maintaining the political status quo of these nations.

It meant therefore that it was unwilling to countenance a situation where communist parties stood a chance of attaining political power or exercising influence through the success in the electoral process. This line of thinking also pertained to some degree to 'Soviet-friendly' socialist parties.

In the aftermath of the Second World War and in the circumstances of a developing Cold War, both the United States and the United Kingdom decided to establish a network of paramilitary forces, so-called 'stay-behind' cells which would wage guerrilla war against an invasion by the armies of the Warsaw Pact led by the Soviet Union.

In time, these networks would be co-opted under the aegis of NATO which co-ordinated the running of these secret armies by the military intelligence services of a range of European countries along with the efforts of the CIA, MI6 and the training programmes offered by the British Special Air Service regiment (SAS) and the American Green Berets.

NATO's Supreme Allied Commander in Europe was at the head of a structure which supervised the secret armies via the Clandestine Planning Committee (CPC) and a military command centre named Allied Clandestine Committee (ACC).

The existence of these secret armies and the malevolent role they played in contributing to politically motivated violence in many of the Western European nations was not officially



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revealed until November 1990 when Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti stood before the Italian Parliament to announce the existence of the stay-behind programme which went by different names in each country but which was known as *Gladio* in Italy.

The stay-behind cells were not subject to Parliamentary scrutiny or control, and such was the secrecy and sensitivity attached to this pan-European guerrilla network that many leaders such as French President Francois Mitterand feigned ignorance. Andreotti, who had caught a lot of heat after his revelation, had to point out that representatives of the French secret army had only met recently at the NATO headquarters in Brussels.

Most shocking about the revelation was how the secret armies had been used to foment violence and bore responsibility for several terrorist outrages against the people of their nations. The secret armies were also used in various plots to subvert and overthrow democratically elected governments, and are also suspected of having been involved in the assassinations of some European leaders.

In Italy they refer to the 'Anni di Piombo' or 'Years of Lead'. This was from a period beginning in the late 1960s and lasting into the 1980s when the thunder of bombs and the sonic crack of bullets intermittently added to the smorgasbord of the nation's urban soundscape.

These massacres and assassinations represented, ostensibly, a battle drama largely emanating from the ideological extreme Left-wing of the political spectrum. The *Brigate Rosse* (Red Brigades), a Marxist-Leninist terrorist organisation, was the standard bearer of a policy of waging war against capitalism and imperialism by means of urban guerrilla warfare.

They had ample competition provided by violent paramilitary groups of the far Right. But as pointed out by Daniele Ganser in his book, *NATO'S SECRET ARMIES: Operation Gladio and Terrorism in Western Europe*, while the Left favoured targeting specific figures from the state and business sectors, the Right favoured mass killings by placing bombs in highly populated areas.

And the Left's ability to 'compete' with the Right was seriously curtailed by the fact that the latter received protection from senior figures working within the Italian secret state including the military secret service.

Among the numerous acts of terror perpetrated during this era, those which stood out were bombings carried out at Milan's Piazza Fontana in 1969, Peteano in 1972 and Bologna in 1980. So far as assassinations were concerned, the 1978 kidnapping and execution of Aldo Moro, a prominent politician who had previously served as prime minister, represented a watershed.

Though the accumulated acts of violence were carried out by extremist political groups, it would later be revealed that the manipulating hand of the secret apparatuses of state had been at play; orchestrating bouts of synthetic violence in order to create a climate of fear and insecurity among the populace.

It was a 'Strategy of Tension', *La Strategia della Tensione*, an overarching plan which was designed to condition the public to call for a 'strong', authoritarian Right-wing government which would prevent the society from sliding into chaos and a possible political takeover of Italy by the Communist Party.

The confessions of Vincenzo Vinciguerra, a former member of the neo-fascist *Ordine Nuovo*, indicate that the carnage perpetrated at the Milan-based headquarters of the Banca Nazionale dell'Agricoltura which was blamed initially on anarchists, was in fact the work of the far-Right –with the collusion of the security agencies- and designed to instigate the declaration of a state of emergency.

What would have followed, the Left feared, might have been a reconstruction of the Italian constitution in an authoritarian mould.

Vinciguerra's revelations, made under the auspices of an investigation conducted by Judge Felice Casson, also point to the fact that the Peteano outrage, which involved luring members of the Carabinieri to a booby-trapped car and their subsequent murder, was carried out by members of *Ordine Nuovo*, although at the time it was blamed on *Brigate Rosse*.

He also specifically alleged that members of the Italian Military Secret Service had closely collaborated with *Ordine Nuovo* in the Peteano attack.

Mention of *Ordine Nuovo* among other organisations and individuals of the extreme Right in Italy and other Western European nations in the post-war period provide evidence of the line of thinking behind the strategy of containing the spread of communism.



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The stay-behind cells co-ordinated by NATO did not apparently remain dormant during the decades-long armed stand-off between its member nations and the forces of the Warsaw Pact.

he cells had access to stockpiles of weapons and munitions which were stored in multiple locations. Dumps were hidden in deep forests as well as under cemeteries and churches.

It was later discovered that the bomb used in Peteano, initially blamed on the *Brigate Rosse*, had in fact originated from a *Gladio* arms cache placed underneath a cemetery located on the outskirts of Verona.

The explosives utilised had not been of the type used by the *Brigate Rosse*, but were of the C4 variety, the most potent explosive available at that time, which was used by NATO.

Vinciguerra fitted the profile of the sort of person favoured for selection as a member of the NATO stay-behinds as well as those who were used for what were for all intents and purposes domestic false-flag operations of terrorism.

It was felt that those with leanings to extreme Right-wing political thinking would be more reliable in terms of the commitment and zeal required to carry out a 'war' against the spread of Soviet communism.

Of the Bologna railway massacre which led to the slaughter of 85 people, the attack has been blamed on the neo-Fascist *Nuclei Armati Rivoluzionari*, and as with the case of the Peteano bombing, is suspected of having been facilitated by elements working for the Italian secret service.

The Left-leaning Gruppo Democratici di Sinistra in a 2000 report based on a second parliamentary investigation of *Organizzazione Gladio* wrote the following:

"Those massacres, those bombs, those military actions had been organised or promoted or supported by men inside Italian state institutions and, as has been discovered more recently, by men linked to the structures of United States intelligence."

The reference in the report to "men inside Italian state institutions" points to a sinister aspect of the aforementioned murder of Aldo Moro that fits into the whole backdrop of the Cold War and the avowed policy of the United States to contain the spread and influence of communism.

Moro was kidnapped by a cell of the *Brigate Rosse* run by Mario Moretti. He was put on 'trial' before a so-called 'peoples' court' and then sentenced to death; a sentence which could only be commuted by the Italian state releasing 16 prisoners associated with the group. When this was not forthcoming, he was shot and his body placed in the trunk of an abandoned car on a street in Rome.

Was this a straightforward case of a terrorist operation ending in a promised murder after demands were not met? The investigations subsequent to the event have unearthed a series of troubling items of information, not least of which was the disappearance of most of the files on the case from the Ministry of the Interior.

Separate items of critical information were passed on to the ministry of interior, each of which could have led to the Via Graddi apartment where Moro was imprisoned for at least part of his captivity, were not acted upon.

But of the backdrop. In March 1978 at the time of his kidnap, Moro was in the midst of securing *compromesso storico*, the 'historic compromise', which was his grand plan aimed at forming a coalition government that would involve giving members of the Italian Communist Party, Partito Comunista Italiano (PCI) posts in the executive arm of government.

While he was in captivity, Moro wrote a series of letters to members of his political party, the Democrazia Cristiana (DCI) imploring them to negotiate with his captors and presumably to accede to their demands. These letters, which were not revealed to the public until many years later, were particularly critical of Giulio Andreotti, the then head of government.

In the end, Moro's pleas and that of his family fell on to the deaf ears of Italy's rulers; men from Moro's party who had decided upon a hardline policy of no concessions.

While in captivity, it is likely that Moro would have ruminated over whether his efforts at reaching the historic compromise with the Italian communists had something to do with his capture.

His wife, Eleonora, would recall that on an official visit to America four years previously, he had been told in no uncertain terms by a highly-placed government official that the United States was not in support of any accommodation being reached with the communist party and that he



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would suffer grievously if he persisted in making such an arrangement.

She testified that Moro had told her the official had said, "You must abandon your policy of bringing all the political forces in your country into direct collaboration. Either you give this up or you will pay dearly for it."

The comments were said to have so shaken Moro that he cut short his visit and on his return seriously contemplated retiring from politics.

Moro would have been all too aware of the power wielded by the United States in aid of the forces of the political Right in situations where countries were threatening to turn to the left. In 1973, the CIA-backed coup in Chile saw the violent overthrow of the democratically elected Marxist administration of President Salvador Allende.

Closer to home CIA backed coups had unseated governments in Turkey and in Greece. Moreover, he would have recalled an event of what effectively was a coup which had taken place in June 1964 while he was prime minister. It was directed by General Giovanni De Lorenzo, the chief of the Carabinieri, with material support from Renzo Rocca, the director of *Gladio* units within the military secret police.

The prelude to 'Piano Solo', the code-name for the coup, was that elections held in 1963 had resulted in gains for the PCI which polled 14% to the Partito Socialista Italiano's (PSI) 25%, with the American-favoured Christian Democrats (DCI) taking 38%.

As a result, the PSI was rewarded with cabinet positions, but the subsequent agitation by the PCI for cabinet posts caused a great deal of consternation.

When NATO forces staged a large military manoeuvre, and tanks and troops armed with heavy weaponry had remained within the precincts of Rome for all of May and a large portion of June after a parade marking the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Carabinieri, Moro had felt himself compelled to meet with De Lorenzo.

Shortly thereafter, the socialists gave up their ministerial posts.

A second Right-wing coup, led by Junio-Valerio Borghese, an unregenerate fascist took place on the night of December 7<sup>th</sup> 1970. 'Operation Tora Tora', as was the case with 'Piano Solo', laid out plans to take over public buildings, arrest Left-wingers and place hundreds on an

internment camp on the island of Sardinia. Preparations were also made to subdue working class districts that were bastions of communist sentiment.

Again, the backdrop was elections in which the political Left had made gains.

Backed by the CIA and the NATO-sponsored units of *Gladio*, and with the warships of NATO on high-alert in the Mediterranean Sea, the putsch was called off by a mysterious telephone call made in the early hours of the 8<sup>th</sup> to Borghese from a high-ranking official of the United States.

The call had come from either President Nixon himself or a highly-placed NATO official, and like the originator of the call, the reason for calling off the coup remains a mystery, although some speculate and others insist that a high level of Soviet naval activity in the Mediterranean indicated that they knew of the plans.

The Italian peninsula, a land for centuries renowned for the intrigues and machinations of popes, princes and its political classes, has been the fertile incubator of miscellaneous secret societies who have been greatly influential in the events shaping its people.

These have ranged from the political revolutionary *carbonaria* movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the regional-based organised criminal clans who compose *Cosa Nostra*, *Ndrangheta*, *Camorra*, and *Sacra Corona Unita*. The impact of the former on the eventual political unification of the peninsula, and the latter on the perennial blood-sucking of both the state and the people, have been immense.

The level of impact, on the other hand, of the phenomena of *massoneria* or Masonic lodges on the substantive course of Italian history is sometimes debated. An exception to any doubts can be made in at least one case.

In March of 1981, a list of names consisting of over 900 individuals drawn from the ranks of politicians, the secret service, the armed forces, the police, civil service, journalism and industry was discovered at the home of Licio Gelli, the Grand Master of Propaganda Due (P2) a pseudo Masonic lodge.

Among its members was future prime minister Silvio Berlusconi.

The reference of the aforementioned report by Gruppo Democratici di Sinistra to "men inside Italian state institutions" could also be directed to secret cabals outside of the visible structures



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of the state; that is, the other possible feature of the 'secret state' which involves the contemporaneous existence of a group of powerful and influential persons who may form what effectively is a parallel state.

The idea here is that this group of unelected and unaccountable individuals who are unknown to the public of what is formally termed a democratic society can steer and shape events. It is the stuff of what is often labelled as a 'conspiracy theory', but in Italy such an organisation, forming as it was a *de facto* shadow government, was alive and breathing during the anni di piombo.

What is more is that it was an organisation which was stridently anti-communist and it maintained strong links with the American intelligence community. In 1974, Gelli had a secret meeting with Alexander Haig at the United States embassy in Rome. Haig, the former supreme commander of NATO, who was then the chief of staff of the Nixon administration assured Gelli of continued support for *Gladio* and efforts geared at circumventing the political Left.

Thus both P2 and *Gladio* were funded by the United States. Where *Gladio* provided the armed muscle, P2 acted as a brain trust of sorts, initiating and directing in collusion with American interests the stratagem aimed at derailing the expanding influence of communism.

This secret society, existing in defiance of article 18 of the Italian constitution which forbids the establishment of such associations, was essentially a criminal organisation with ties to Italian organised crime.

It gained international notoriety at the time of the scandal involving the bankrupting of the Banco Ambrosiano, and the murder of the bank's managing director Roberto Calvi who was found hanging from Blackfriars Bridge in London in 1982.

The coat of arms of P2 bore the image of a black abbot.

P2 was involved in the murder of Mino Picorelli, a journalist whose fate was apparently not unrelated to inside information which he had obtained of the tragedy of Aldo Moro.

Members of the lodge, who were apparently embarking on a meeting on the morning of Moro's kidnap at the nearby Hotel Excoelsoir, are believed to have orchestrated the incident. Several of them, key personnel of the police, the carabinieri and the intelligence services,

were allegedly intimately involved in the charade of attempting to locate Moro and his kidnapers.

If so, it was P2's greatest victory, as the consequences of his murder halted any chance of the *compromisso storico*. Gelli's ultimate plan; that of overthrowing the government via *golpista*; a coup d'état, which was to be under a programme dubbed the 'Plan for Democratic Rebirth', did not come to pass, but the marginalisation of the Left in general and of the communists in particular was achieved.

In Britain the 'secret state' was active during this era of the communist threat, reaching the stage where at two distinctive points in history, the possibility of a military takeover of the country became mooted and later heightened to the extent that plans for action were substantively laid out.

Both coups were to have been directed against the socialist administrations led by Harold Wilson, the first plot occurring in the late 1960s and the second, a culmination of intrigues perpetrated by Right-wing operatives in British military intelligence and the domestic security service, MI5.

The latter part of the 1960s witnessed certain events and trends which caused certain members of the British elite to be alarmed at the direction in which the former imperial power was heading.

One key event was the devaluation of the pound in 1967, a symptom of the continuing perceived 'degradation' of a waning nation-empire still traumatised by the humiliation of the Suez debacle of 1956.

Another was the deteriorating situation in Northern Ireland, where the burgeoning civil rights movement of the Roman Catholic community was being transformed into a militarised struggle led by a revived Irish Republican Army (IRA).

There was also the perception of Wilson and the Labour Party being tolerant of the 'Ban the Bomb' movement and a drift towards a policy of unilateral nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, fears about the increasing power of trade unions and controversies related to the uneasiness felt about non-white immigration may have added to the sense of a nation in perpetual crisis.

In 1968, meetings were held at the instigation of the newspaper baron and MI5 agent, Cecil King who took the lead in an enterprise which



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proposed that the army would depose the elected government and install a military alternative with Lord Louis Mountbatten at the helm.

Wilson's electoral victory in 1964 signified a lurch to the Left, a direction in which elements in the United States government looked upon balefully. The CIA's 'spy-hunter', James Jesus Angleton, believed that Wilson was a Soviet-plant. The thesis went along the lines that Wilson had been compromised years before by Soviet agents when as chairman of the Board of Trade, he made several trips behind the 'Iron Curtain'.

What is more is that the sudden death in January 1963 of Labour leader Hugh Gaitskell, came to be believed by Angleton and some in the British intelligence community to have been engineered by the KGB in order to pave the way for Wilson to succeed him as the leader of the party.

Gaitskell was on the Right of the Labour Party, and he had proposed the then radical measure of ditching Clause Four of the party's constitution on common ownership. Wilson, on the other hand, was identified with the Left-wing of the party.

What followed was a dirty-tricks campaign mounted by British intelligence operatives. Code-named 'Operation Clockwork Orange', its remit was to smear a number of British politicians including not only Wilson, but significantly, Wilson's political rival from the Conservative Party, Edward Heath.

Heath's brand of 'One Nation' Toryism and perceived weakness in his handling of the increasingly belligerent trade unions did not meet with the approval of members of the Establishment who wanted a more Right-wing leader and agenda from the Conservatives.

This sort of thing was not without precedent in British political history. The infamous 'Zinoviev Letter', a 1924 forgery which came by way of an asset of MI6, was purportedly a communication from Grigori Zinoviev, the president of the Comintern, enjoining British communists to stimulate "agitation-propaganda" in the armed forces.

Thus, four days before the British General Election, the *Daily Mail* had as its banner headline the following: "Civil War Plot by Socialists' Masters: Moscow Orders To Our Reds; Great Plot Disclosed."

The Labour Party lost the election by a landslide.

The early part of the 1970s, a period which on the European continent was marked by an intensification of the ideological polarisation of the political Left and Right with malcontents on the Left favouring the use of urban violence in favour of the 'ineffectual' results of mass street demonstrations, saw the birth in Britain of an organisation calling itself the Angry Brigade.

The Angry Brigade, an anarchist group, temporarily provided Britain with a taste of continental-style guerrilla warfare which involved targeting figures of the state such as government ministers and judges as well as the bombing of foreign embassies and establishments of those states which its members considered as 'imperialist' or 'fascist'. The "law and order issue" became the short-handed appellation of choice in referring to the battles between the radicalised forces of the Left and the apparatus of state authority which permeated the political and cultural discourse.

The question of how these deep-rooted tensions were going to be resolved were framed in terms ranging from a revolution which would profoundly alter the status quo to that involving the state preserving its authority through the implementing of extreme measures.

The sentiments representing one version of a possible resolution to society's discordant drift, namely one providing the template of the 'strategy of tension', even made its way into the public eye through the realm of popular entertainment.

In 1971, the ITV network aired an episode of the TV series, '*The Persuaders!*' entitled 'The Time and The Place' wherein the playboy heroes stumble upon a plot to carry out a coup d'etat by members of the British establishment which is being co-ordinated by a member of the aristocracy.

The idea is to have the prime minister assassinated during a live TV debate on a contentious law and order bill, which according to its opponents and proponents represents either a "death to democracy" or a "return to sanity".

The assassin, who appears to be a subdued and detached figure nestled in the audience, is to be activated Manchurian Candidate-style with a gun hidden in the compartment of what on the outside is a book. The murder would then present itself as



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the justification for a takeover of the government and the imposition of martial law.

As one of the foot soldiers of the eventually failed conspiracy explains, “the public will be outraged, and when Croxley (the Lord leading the coup) makes an impassioned plea for strong action, the people of this country will not only approve of a new government, they’ll demand it.”

The aforementioned fiction from early evening light entertainment nonetheless did reference one consistent aspect of the prevalent understanding among the mass of Britons about the nature of their governance: namely its alluding to the existence of the Establishment; a group of powerful people who although unelected and unseen, consistently influence the direction of the country.

It also followed that any plan to effect any radical change in society such as by a military coup would find its conception and execution from persons belonging to such Establishment.

Traditionally, the British Establishment referred to those of high-born status and usually with an old school tie/Oxbridge background, who along with others in high government positions of the judiciary, the armed forces, civil service, courtiers within the royal family, the police and security services, have a tendency to form coterie within the exclusive endaves of gentleman’s clubs.

The fictional Lord Croxley meets with establishment figures in the grandiose settings of a club to finalise the details of the coup which bears traces of reality to the claimed influence of the real life Clermont Club at which some argue that a plot to overthrow the Labour government in the 1970s was hatched.

It is useful to note that the Establishment does not necessarily merge with the concept of the ‘Deep State’, i.e. the ‘state within a state’ of which the Turkish *derin devlet* is considered the standard.

This other aspect of the secret state; that of a parallel government manipulating events in the background without the knowledge of the incumbent, visible elected power, has, unlike in the case of Turkey and Italy, never been specifically identified in the British context, although her majesty the Queen is once believed to have alluded to the “powers at work in this country about which we have no knowledge.”

However, what is not disputed is the existence of an influential establishment alongside at

least a sizeable element of the secret service which plotted against the Labour government in the 1970s with the aim of destabilising it. Wilson himself had made intimations to the reporters Barrie Penrose and Roger Courtiour of “dark forces threatening Britain.”

There are historian-experts in the field such as the author Rupert Allason who assert that the intelligence services in the United Kingdom, unlike some of their European counterparts such as in Italy, is not composed overwhelmingly of individuals of a Right-wing bent. Those with Leftist tendencies, he has argued, were always represented.

While the personnel of the British secret service have tended to come from the elite of society, they did, after all, produce the notorious Cambridge set consisting of the likes of Burgess, McClean, Philby and Blunt, who indoctrinated earlier in their student days by the communist ideology, would later turn traitors against their country.

By the mid-1970s during Wilson’s second tenure as prime minister, the nation had already been through a three-day working week during Heath’s confrontation with the powerful miners union. Militant unions and a Left-wing agenda which could compromise Britain’s commitment to the free market economic system as well as to NATO was a cause of great concern.

Thus it was that in this noxious atmosphere of suspicion and paranoia of the existence of pro-Soviet subversive elements within the political classes, the intelligence services and the powerful labour unions that a group of MI5 agents led by Peter Wright, the author of *Spycatcher*, “bugged and burgled” their way across London, he claimed, “at the behest of the state.”

Harold Wilson was convinced that he was being watched and that insidious information about him was being disseminated from sources within the security services; part of the executive branch of the government which he was supposed to control.

Apart from the troublesome spooks who were lurking in the shadows, he was also of the mindset that waiting in the wings were high-ranking figures of the military, both serving and retired, who were ready for the signal to overthrow his government.

Not since 1648, when Colonel Thomas Pride strode into the august precincts of the English legislature



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one December day to bring an end to the 'Long Parliament', had anything of the semblance of a military coup d'état taken place in the 'mother-nation' of democracy.

It seemed then to be a most unlikely development.

But Wilson, who privately complained of being undermined by the security services, also took note of a "ring of steel" mounted by the army around London's Heathrow Airport, first in January and again in June of 1974. The first occurred on the eve of the February general election in which Labour was returned to power after a narrowly contested result.

Although explained as security measures in response to unspecified terrorist threats, Wilson considered these manoeuvres to be clear warnings pointed in his direction.

Warnings came from elsewhere. General Sir Walter Walker, a retired former high echelon figure within the command structure of NATO, expressed dissatisfaction over the state of the country and wrote to the *Daily Telegraph* calling for "dynamic, invigorating, uplifting leadership... above party politics" which would "save" the country from "the Communist Trojan horse in our midst." He was involved with Unison (later renamed Civil Assistance) an anti-Communist organisation which pledged to supply volunteers in the event of a national strike.

Another military figure, Colonel David Stirling, the founder of the elite SAS regiment, created 'Great Britain 75'. Composed of ex-military men, its task would be to take over the running of government in the event of civil unrest leading to a breakdown of government functioning.

These two, however, were red herrings according to Peter Cottrell, author of *Gladio: NATO's Dagger at the Heart of Europe*, who claims that these public utterances were a distraction from "what was really going on."

But the Rubicon was not crossed. There would be no tanks rolling down Whitehall along with the probable modus operandi of solemn martial music preceding the presumed clipped upper class tones of a lord or general proclaiming a state of national emergency and the establishment of a junta.

In the end, however, the British Right won. Wilson abruptly resigned in March 1976, thoroughly exhausted by the campaigns directed at him, while Edward Heath lost the

Conservative Party leadership to Margaret Thatcher, the choice of the Right.

The common thread regarding the actions threatened, attempted or actualised in Britain and other Western European nations was the American secret state's backing of any covert initiatives that would prevent a corruption of or the breakup of what was termed the Yalta system.

Disinformation campaigns against leaders and public officials, false-flag terrorism directed at innocent civilian targets and military coups against democratically elected governments were all part and parcel of the strategy.

Assassinations also played a part. The independent ways of President Charles de Gaulle impinged on the smooth working of the Yalta system and the attempt made to depose him in 1961 by four generals based in Algiers was done with the alleged support of elements within the CIA.

The subsequent assassination attempts mounted against him by the Organisation de l'armee secrete or Secret Army Organisation (OAS), were supported by the CIA and NATO's secret networks. Many of the members of the OAS were in fact members of the French stay-behind version of *Gladio*.

An infuriated De Gaulle publically accused a trading company, Permanent Industrial Expositions, better known by its contraction Permindex, of secretly channelling funds to the OAS.

The company was expelled from Italy in 1962 for being a CIA front company involved in espionage and de Gaulle himself issued threats of retaliation against the Swiss government which forced the company to shut down its European offices in 1965.

Aware that at least one further NATO-CIA-sponsored plot against his life was in the works after the last major attempt led by Lt. Colonel Jean-Marie Bastien-Thiry in the Parisian suburb of Petit-Clamart in 1962, he embarked on the final phase of divesting France of its subordination to NATO's command structure, a process that ended in 1968 when he had NATO evicted from its French headquarters.

The assassination of those who went counter to the designs of the American hegemon may also have applied to Britain. Airey Neave, a formidable figure of the British Establishment had been the campaign manager for Margaret Thatcher's bid to become the leader



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of the Conservative party and planned the strategy for what would be her victory at the 1979 General Elections.

He was blown up by the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), a group even more hardline than the provisional IRA. Neave had apparently been designated to be chief of the intelligence services upon Thatcher's assumption of power.

He had plans, it is said, to reform the security organisation of Britain by merging MI5 and MI6 into one body and putting a number of its personnel on trial for "corruption". He would also pursue an unmercifully hardline policy in combating the IRA and loyalist terror groups.

Enoch Powell, the Right-wing Conservative MP claimed that he was told by an officer of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), that the Americans had him killed because its goal was to have a united Ireland as part of the NATO structure. It was alleged that the mercury switch on the bomb placed in Neave's car was only available to the CIA at the time.

History will record that the American-led Western alliance won the 'Cold War'. Italy did not turn communist and the British electorate kept a Conservative government in power for 18 years after which it was defeated by a Labour opposition which had since moved to the centre of the political spectrum having renounced Clause 4 of its constitution.

But the ending of that war did not necessitate the dismantling of the alliance's military set up. Indeed, NATO proceeding to enlarge its membership to include several of the former constituent parts of the Warsaw Pact.

The crashing into the twin towers of New York City's World Trade Center by hijacked aeroplanes on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 would unleash the might of NATO and, for the first time, the invoking of article 5 of its constitution. The article provides that an attack on one member state is considered as an attack on the others.

Within three weeks, battle orders were issued to commence the invasion of Afghanistan. An American-led war against the regime of Saddam Hussein was prosecuted in Iraq and this was to be followed by another against Iran. The workings of the secret apparatus of the American government may be pivotal in an understanding of how the War on Terror was promulgated and also how it continues to be sustained.

The horrific events of September 11<sup>th</sup> which led to the massacre of almost 3,000 people is inextricably tied to the performance of the American state security agencies certainly as far as a consideration of its failure to prevent this massive breach in domestic security is concerned.

At worse, there are many who feel that enough evidence exists to presume the prior knowledge of or even collusion of elements of the secret state in the tragedy, which in classic strategy of tension tactics, is argued to have been a false-flag operation designed to institutionalise fear and stimulate public support for a series of wars which would have been difficult, if not impossible to be prosecuted without the backing of the overwhelming majority of the American population.

Francesco Cosigga, former president of Italian republic and one-time overseer of the *Gladjo* network, for one, claimed in a 2007 interview in the *Corriere della Sera* newspaper that the 9/11 terrorist operation was an "inside job" carried out by the American and Israeli secret services and that this was "common knowledge among global intelligence services."

There is, of course, great sensitivity here. The import of such conclusions would mean that elements within the American government were effectively involved in high treason and the mass murder of their own citizens.

Further, suggestions of the involvement of the state of Israel in a particularly vile brand of skulduggery tends to raise the accusation of anti-Semitism alongside the charge of 'dual loyalty' on Jewish-American citizens whom proponents of this theory claim were utilised as assets in the putative 'cover up'.

If the attack was not a surprise attack by extremist Islamists often referred to as Al-Qaeda as the official government narrative contends, the event could fit into either of two other separate categories; namely that which is referred to as the 'Let it Happen on Purpose' (LIHOP) theory and the other which is designated the 'Made it Happen on Purpose' (MIHOP) theory.

These theories are based on a belief that the collapse of both main towers of the World Trade Center as well as Building Seven of the complex which was not hit by any aeroplanes, were accomplished by means of controlled demolition. The significance of Building Seven, which appeared to collapse right into its



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footprints, was not even addressed in the report of the commission which was set up to look into the attacks.

The 9/11 commission was itself only established after much pressure was brought to bear on the Bush administration, including that applied by a campaigning group of widows of the victims.

Headed by Thomas Kean and Lee Hamilton, it was considered by many to not be sufficiently independent to reach a full and unbiased judgement. In fact, both Kean and Hamilton claimed that the commission had been set up to fail due to a short time framework, under resourcing and that the persons responsible for setting it up were among the “most partisan people in Washington.”

The lack of access to relevant documents led to the resignation of Max Cleland, a former US senator. Both President Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney were not summoned to testify under oath.

Under these circumstances, it is perhaps understandable that the ‘Surprise Attack’ theory was confirmed when the commission issued its report, which was written by one Philip Zelikow, in the summer of 2004.

But doubts were raised and continue to be raised over numerous aspects of the explanations given to specific happenings on that fateful day. Did a plane crash into the relevant part of the Pentagon complex, or was the destruction caused by a missile?

Was NORAD, the North American Aerospace Defence Command, only alerted at the later stages of the hijackings by design or by incompetence? Was the change in hijacking protocols in May of 2001 which transferred the decision-making chain of command from the military to civilian authority based on a sinister motive?

What import should be given to the many witness accounts given by firemen and those escaping buildings of explosions heard coming from inside the stricken buildings?

Why was rubble from the collapsed buildings carted off and recycled in what could be termed indecent haste? What is the significance of the discovery of reacted and non-reacted nano-thermite, a particularly potent form of incendiary, in the dust particles culled from the rubble of the collapsed Twin Towers?

Andreas Von Bulow, a former German politician who served on the Bundestag’s intelligence services committee, is convinced of

United States government complicity in the attacks. As he explained to *Der Tagesspiegel* in 2002:

“Planning the attacks was a master deed in technical and organisational terms. To hijack four big airliners within a few minutes and fly them into targets within a single hour and doing so on complicated flight routes! That is unthinkable without backing from the secret apparatuses of state and industry.”

The nature of the attack on the Pentagon building raised questions because of the size and shape of the hole in the relevant part of the complex and the inconclusiveness of the only film released which purports to present the moment of impact.

The relative flatness of the complex and the angle at which a Boeing aeroplane acting as a projectile would be required to fly would have severely taxed the capabilities of an expert pilot as much as it would have the level of precision manoeuvring required to hit each of the twin towers.

George Nelson, an aircraft accident investigator and retired US Air Force colonel claimed that “with all the evidence readily available at the Pentagon crash site, any unbiased rational investigator could only conclude that a Boeing 757 did not fly into the Pentagon as alleged.”

Even if the object of impact was not a projectile but an aeroplane, other questions still remain.

There are queries as to why the hijacked aeroplanes were not intercepted by NORAD and speculation as to whether the United States Air Force was enabled to ‘stand down’.

Norman Mineta, the transportation secretary at the time of the attacks, testified at the commission hearing about an incident while with Vice President Cheney in the Presidential Emergency Operating Center as flight 77 approached the Pentagon.

“There was a young man who had come in and said to the vice president, ‘The plane is 50 miles out. The plane is 30 miles out.’ And when it got down to, ‘The plane is 10 miles out,’ the young man also said to the vice president, ‘Do the orders still stand?’ And the vice president turned and whipped his neck around and said, ‘Of course the orders still stand. Have you heard anything to the contrary?’ Well, at the time I didn’t know what all that meant.”



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This piece of testimony was not recorded in the 9/11 Commission Report.

Meanwhile, other matters serve to intrigue and exercise the mind of any rational being. World Trade Center Building Number 7, it was revealed, housed offices for the Department of Defense, the Secret Service and the CIA.

Also, the speed at which rubble from the collapsed building was carted off and then recycled continues to raise questions because Ground Zero was essentially the scene of a crime. It meant that the steel beams and debris could not be subjected to the forensic scrutiny expected of a competent criminal investigation. Furthermore, there are no effective explanations forthcoming in regard to Operation Able Danger, a top secret probe conducted by the Pentagon into potential Islamist motivated terrorism which had identified Mohammed Atta, the alleged ringleader of the hijacked planes and three other alleged participants, as posing a potential terrorist threat.

The whistleblower in this matter, former US Lt. Colonel Tony Schaffer claimed that while on active duty in Afghanistan, he had informed Philip Zelikow of the existence of Able Danger and its identification of Atta, but that none of this was considered by the commission.

Allegations of destroyed data on the project and government efforts aimed at suppressing information contained in Schaffer's 2010 memoir have only added to the sense of murkiness.

Again, two questions give particular cause to meditate over. The first is whether it is conceivable that elements within an American government could countenance the deliberate slaughter of its own people. The natural follow up question relates to the reason undergirding such an act.

The answer to the former is that such a plan was once indeed concocted. The Northwoods Project, secretly developed after the unsuccessful attempt to unseat Fidel Castro's government via the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion, was to have involved orchestrating a series of violent and deadly incidents which would be blamed on operatives acting on behalf of the Cuban state.

These were to include hijackings, blowing up an American ship berthed at Guantanamo Bay, staging a shooting and bombing campaign in the Miami area, cities in the state of Florida and even in Washington D.C.

The modus operandi of a proposed hijacking gives cause for much cogitation in the light of the events of 9/11. An American passenger aeroplane would be hijacked by Special Forces who would be in the guise of Cuban agents. The plane would then dip from radar and be replaced by a pilotless aircraft which would crash and purportedly kill all the passengers, while the real plane would be secretly flown back to the United States.

The idea was that the identification of an irresponsible and belligerent Cuban government as perpetrators of the campaign would form the excuse for the full-scale invasion of that island which naturally would find overwhelming support from the American people and much of the international community of nations.

The document, titled 'Top Secret – Justification for US Military Intervention in Cuba', was undersigned by General Lyman Lemnitzer, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. President Kennedy refused to sanction such a project and relieved Lemnitzer of his position, redeploying him to Europe to serve as the Supreme Commander of NATO.

As to the second question, why corrupt elements of the American government and agents within its security apparatus would have either planned or allowed this outrage to happen, the answer, for some, can be found in the post-Cold War objectives of the Project For the New American Century (PNAC), a self-described educational think-tank which was established in 1997.

As the world's only superpower, PNAC argued that the United States needed to seize the opportunity to create a global framework which would be moulded to its advantage. But to achieve such a state of affairs would require a significant increase in American military expenditure, as well as a resolve to "challenge regimes" hostile to the "interests and values" of the United States; pre-eminent among which was that of Saddam Hussein's Iraq.

In 2007, General Wesley Clark, a retired United States general, recalled that on a visit to the Pentagon about ten days after September 11, he encountered some of his former subordinates on the joint chiefs of staff, one of who told him that the decision had already been made to go to war with Iraq.

At this stage, the informing general told Clark that there was no information connecting Saddam



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Hussein with Al-Qaeda. Returning a few weeks later while NATO was bombing Afghanistan, the general who had revealed the intention to strike at Iraq referred him to a just-released memorandum which described how the United States was going to “take out seven countries in five years.”

The countries were Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and “finishing off” with Iran.

The connection with the strategic objectives of the state of Israel with this general policy, it is argued, stems from a similar document prepared in 1996 for the then Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu entitled *A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm*. Known as the ‘Clean Break document’ and formulated by a team led by Richard Perle who had a contributing role in the aforementioned PNAC, it foreswore the goal of achieving a “comprehensive peace” with the entire Arab world. Instead, the report enjoined Israel to work jointly with Jordan and Turkey to “contain, destabilize and roll-back” those entities that are threats to all three.”

The removal of Saddam Hussein in Iraq was a primary objective as was the “weakening, controlling and even rolling back” of Syria. The fact that these regimes represented the remnant of the few Arab nations capable of offering a modicum of challenge to Israel’s undisputed military domination of the region invited comparisons with the Iron Wall Doctrine.

Standing at the heart of the Zionist Revisionism creed developed by Ze’ev Jabotinsky, the doctrine maintained that the Jewish settlers in Palestine had no alternative in their aim of securing the colonisation of Palestine other than by eschewing any attempts geared towards diplomacy and compromise, and instead crushing the will of Palestinian and Arab resistance by acquiring superior force of arms and adopting a military doctrine which needed to be implemented in a brutal manner.

Israel, a nation described by an intelligence analyst as one which “operates on strong survival instincts,” if it need be reminded is one which almost from the beginning of its inception as a state has managed to consistently penetrate the high commands and controlling brain trusts of virtually every Arab military and terrorist organisation of substance.

In the weeks following the attacks, FOX TV News in a series of reports which aired in 2002 reported on an Israeli spying network within the

United States. Over 60 Israelis, including a “handful of active Israeli military”, had been detained under either under the provisions of the 2001 PATRIOT ACT or for immigration violations.

The report claimed that the Israelis, some of them shadowing Arabs suspected of militant tendencies, may have gathered evidence about the attack but failed to relay them to the United States authorities. The agents utilised fronts as art students, removal firms and an assortment of small business enterprises.

The story of an effervescent group of five Israelis, men who were seen celebrating on a white van in New Jersey’s Liberty State park; high-fiving, posing and making merry as they took photographs with the burning Twin Towers in the background is well known.

A phone call by a concerned resident who had taken the vehicle registration number and business logo led to the apprehension of five men in East Rutherford, New Jersey. When arrested, one member of the party identified as Sivan Kurzberg is said to have told the officers, “We are Israeli. We are not your problem. Your problems are our problems. The Palestinians are the problem.”

The logo of the van was marked as ‘Urban Moving Systems’ owned by Dominik Suter, an Israeli national, who after been interviewed by the FBI fled to Israel with his family.

Moving companies are just one of a range of tried and tested useful fronts for the conduct of espionage activities and the conclusion of the FBI investigating team was that Suter was running a Mossad team who were spying on local Arabs who would have included the group of hijackers presumed to have taken control of the plane targeting the Pentagon along with those like Mohamed Atta who had traveled from Florida.

The Jewish-American *Forward* newspaper reported that the names of two of the Israelis appeared on a CIA-FBI database of foreign intelligence operatives.

These and other detentions resulted in a series of deportations. There were no prosecutions, but the aforementioned FOX report quoted an FBI source as saying about the implications regarding the terrorist outrage: “How could they not have known?”

Those who protest and attack any line of inquiry into the possibility of Israeli involvement should be reminded of at least one archived



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factual occurrence in history. In 1954, a cell of Mossad agents in Egypt who had been recruited from the populace of Jewish Arabs, planted a series of bombs in buildings around the cities of Alexandria and Cairo housing American and British interests.

A bomb prematurely exploded while one of the agents was entering a cinema which had been targeted, and the agent was arrested. Two of the terrorist conspirators went to the gallows while others who had not committed suicide in order to avoid capture, were handed down lengthy terms of imprisonment by an Egyptian military tribunal.

All the time, the Israeli government insisted that the government of Gamal Nasser was involved in a grotesque exercise in anti-Semitism by framing a group of innocent Jews and convicting them in a show trial.

Yet, the truth was that the failed Operation Susanah, hatched behind the back of Prime Minister Moshe Sharett who had established back channels of communication between emissaries of his and Nasser, had been an attempt by Israel to turn the Western powers away from any form of rapprochement with the Egyptian leader. It was intended to encourage the British not to withdraw from the Suez Canal. Worse, it could have led to major military action by the Americans and British against the Egyptian nation.

Israel, finally, officially admitted 51 years later that the 'Lavon Affair', so-called because defence minister Pinhas Lavon had been privy to its conception and execution, had indeed been a covert operation. The surviving members were awarded certificates of appreciation for their efforts on behalf of the state.

In the early years of its tumultuous existence the Zionist state applied its own secret 'strategy of tension', with the likes of David Ben Gurion and Moshe Dayan taken by a philosophy that without border skirmishes, many of which were provoked and responded to with brute force, its inhabitants might yield to laxity and complacency. It is a policy which dismayed Sharett. "What is our vision on this earth", he entered in his diary, "war to the end of all generations and life by the sword?"

The sinking of the USS Liberty, an American listening ship which was cruising in international waters off the coast of Egypt during the Six Day War of 1967, by Israeli forces, also bears some mentioning.

The order, which was likely given by Dayan, who had been installed as the defence minister on the eve of war in the cabinet of Levi Eshkol by means of what can only be described as a form of coup d'etat, had the result of killing 34 crew members and wounding 171.

The Israelis made efforts to jam the ship's frequencies and the sustained method of attack which included the launch of torpedoes, hurling napalm bombs and machine gunning those sighted on deck and the life rafts leave the impression of the unmistakable design that no survivors were to be left.

Why would Israel attack a non-combatant ship of an ally? The planners of the war, it is argued, knew that there would be a limited time to wage war before the inevitable United Nations resolution brokered by the US and Soviet superpowers to enforce a ceasefire would have to stop Israeli operations in its tracks.

The Johnson administration had acceded to the Israeli strategy of destroying Nasser's armed forces, but not to attack Syria and take its territory, nor to take the territory of East Jerusalem.

The Liberty, which would be closely monitoring events and relaying the results to Washington, needed to be disabled so that the Americans would not be listening in when the full might of the Israeli war machine was swung northwards. Furthermore in the Sinai Desert Israeli troops, confronted by the swelling numbers of prisoners of war of the routed Egyptian army, were executing Egyptian soldiers in the town of El -Arish. Mass graves would be discovered there in 1995.

However, the ultimate objective of the Liberty's destruction appears to have been to blame it on Egypt and thus give America a free hand - without the burden of potential Soviet intervention to save the face of its client states - to invade Egypt and overthrow the government of Nasser.

The discovery in the Lyndon Johnson Presidential Library of a document referring to 'Operation Cyanide' adds credence to this view. Conceived in the bowels of the National Security Agency, it was a joint effort between United States and Israeli intelligence services with a strong input on the American side coming from the CIA's James Angleton, noted for his closeness to Israel and the beneficiary of a posthumous honour from Mossad.



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The minutes of the document refer to the '303 Committee'; a method of examining proposed covert operations on behalf of the president so that he would not be compromised if it went wrong. The assault on the Liberty was decided upon months before the event took place. The result was that Cairo was to be attacked by American Air Force A-4 Skyhawk jets armed with nuclear bombs.

Although the Israelis admitted to having made a "mistake" and paid compensation, the aftermath of the event, which featured a series of cursory inquiries, the bestowal of medals for bravery out of the public eye as well as orders given to crew members to ensure their silence, smack of a cover up of the highest magnitude. The discovery of Operation Cyanide provides an historical record of a precedent of elements of the intelligence services of the United States and Israel working in tandem towards a diabolical scheme. It also invites a consideration of the possibility of rogue elements from the intelligence services of both nations devising a sophisticated plan of deception geared towards facilitating the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>.

For some like Alan Sabrosky, a former director of studies at the United States War College, the Israeli Mossad had the motive and the means of carrying out such an operation along with garnering the relevant political protection to ensure its cover up.

The line of thinking here inexorably then asks in the Latin parlance "Cui bono?" What strategic benefits would be hoped to accrue from such an outrageous act of violence?

While Benjamin Netanyahu's comments made seven years after the September attack and reported in the Israeli paper *M'a'ariv*, that 9/11 had "been good for Israel", cannot be taken to be evidence of Israeli foreknowledge of or complicity in the outrage, its effect certainly dovetailed into the long-term policy of Israel which had been to involve the United States in a 'war against terrorism' in the Middle East.

"We are benefiting from one thing," Netanyahu said, "and that is the attack on the Twin Towers and Pentagon, and the American struggle in Iraq." These events he opined had, "swung American public opinion in our favour."

And it may be added that the "catastrophic and catalyzing event – like a new Pearl Harbor" required to kick-start the new American century, as suggested by Dov Zakheim on page 51 the PNAC principles; this a fine-tuning

of a doctrine long proselytised by Paul Wolfowitz, was enabled by virtue of the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>.

Among the signatories to the statement of principles were future Vice President Richard Cheney and future Defense Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld.

The 'Wolfowitz Doctrine', as mentioned earlier, called for greater military spending and the application of its war machinery with or without adherence to international treaty obligations in order to enforce the American will on a globe presently without any competing power in order to secure access to vital resources including that of oil from the Persian Gulf.

If the aforementioned theories of the involvement of secret state elements of espionage and political elites within America and Israel in planning and fomenting the War on Terror cannot be proved and the attack fits into the 'surprise' category, the role of the intelligence services in the conduct of the 'war' at home and abroad has nonetheless been obvious in so many respects.

The American secret agencies of state play a prominent role in the liberty-constricting legislation of the Homeland Security era and the latent threats to the values inherent to a democracy are all too apparent in the powers granted, for instance, to conduct surveillance of its citizens.

Their role in providing the political leaders with the information utilised for justifying militarily-based interventions in the Middle East and North Africa have been attacked as been based on carefully manufactured deceptions.

It is clear now the the war in Iraq, which was invaded after Afghanistan, was effected with the help of the secret state providing items of information which were fed to the media in order to swing public opinion in favour of an invasion.

The Western public was invited to believe that the secular regime of Saddam Hussein was a sponsor of Al Qaeda and had something to do with the September Attacks. Saddam's Iraq had apparently sought to acquire uranium from the Republic of Niger and that the country already had weapons of mass destruction which could be deployed, according to British Prime Minister Tony Blair in an announcement before Parliament, within 45 minutes.

Blair himself blocked the United Kingdom's attorney general, the



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government's legal advisor, from giving his view on the legality of the proposed war to his cabinet. A document from Richard Dearlove, then head of MI6, to Blair revealed that the prime minister was advised that President Bush had decided on attacking Iraq even though the case for the existence of weapons of mass destruction was "thin".

But that was no problem according to Dearlove, because "intelligence and facts were being fixed (by the US) around the policy."

The results of this 'fix' would be revealed to the world in the infamous speech-presentation made before the United Nations Security Council in February of 2003, the United States secretary of state, Colin Powell claimed that Iraq was harbouring "weapons of mass destruction" and refusing to disarm.

No such weapons were found after the subsequent invasion.

Thus was America and a collection of allied nations led into a war predicated on flawed or fabricated information manufactured by the intelligence services.

The manipulation of the public in so-called democracies is continuing during the so-called 'Arab Spring' which was used as a cover to dislodge Muammar Gaddafi from Libya and is presently involved in the strategies at use in the ongoing attempt to unseat Bashar Assad in Syria.

Whereas in the anti-communist efforts, the United States had used *Gladio* outfits to perpetuate terrorist outrages against those populations perceived to be threatened by the Left, so it is now that it is using irregular combatants, many of them associated with the Islamic extremism to which the 9/11 terror attack is attributed, in order to unseat governments which fit the geo-political strategy mentioned in the memorandum to which Wesley Clark had been made privy.

The incomprehensible dallying-with-the-devil strategy employed during the anti-communism drive with a reliance on unreformed fascists from the pre-war period alongside the post-war generation of neo-fascists to defend liberal democracy from the perceived threat of the Soviets, are more than matched in grotesqueness by the chess board design of NATO's covert support of jihadist death squads who formed a sizeable segment of the armies fighting in opposition to Libya's Colonel Gaddafi, much in the manner that they form

components of the so-called Free Syrian Army in the effort to overthrow the Assad regime.

The same species of fanatic which the United States targets for slaughter in Yemen, Somalia and Pakistan; the very same who went on tribal and racially motivated orgies of lynching during and after Gaddafi's overthrow, and whose venom will likely inspire a similar fate, perhaps on a larger scale, for members of the Alawite, Shiite and Christian minorities of Syria.

Indeed, the maze of immorality staggers even by Machiavellian-style 'end-justifies-the-means' rationale, as the funding and supporting jihadists in Libya and Syria is full of the promise of poisonous blowback; one of which, notably, may have been behind the events occurring in the eastern Libyan city of Benghazi on September the 11<sup>th</sup> 2012, which shapes up to have all the trappings of an Iran-Contra-style scandal.

The very public revolt against Colonel Gaddafi which saw the bombardment of Libya's infrastructure by NATO forces, involved a secret war conducted by Britain and the use of its special forces in training the rebels and co-ordinating their ground fighting strategies and the bombing campaign.

When Gaddafi, leader of a secular regime, had announced that the West was in fact aiding "Al Qaeda", the world looked on in bemusement until evidence surfaced of the connections of certain leaders of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) to Islamist militants in Afghanistan, Sudan and Pakistan.

Evidence gathered from the post-conflict ruins of Libyan government buildings also showed that Western intelligence agencies had shared information with Gaddafi's own secret services in regard to the surveillance and apprehension of Islamist militants.

These included the LIFG's Abdel Hakim Belhadj who was arrested in Malaysia in 2004 before being sent to a secret prison in Thailand operated by the CIA. He was later handed over to the Gaddafi regime by MI6 having been transported via the British controlled island of Diego Garcia. The papers authorising this move had been signed by the then foreign secretary, Jack Straw.

Belhadj is currently pursuing legal action against the British government for an ordeal which included being tortured by the Libyan state's security apparatus. He has refused an offered settlement as was the case with a fellow Libyan,



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Sami al-Saadi whose whole family was rendition in an operation involving the British and American security services.

Of the capture of the former Libyan head of state which led to his lynching, there is little information forthcoming as to the possible role played by the Western security services and Special Forces, although press reports in August of 2011 indicated that the British SAS were taking a lead in hunting him down.

The justification for involvement in the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime, predicated on the “humanitarian” purposes argument is based on inconclusive evidence that a massacre was about to take place in Benghazi. Certainly, NATO’s destruction of the country’s infrastructure through its unceasing bombing campaign did not amount to ‘humanitarian’ conduct.

Humanitarianism has of course been the least of concerns so far as the behind-the-scenes tactics of extraordinary rendition and the torturing of Islamist suspects by the security agencies of the West are concerned.

The implications for democracy and constitutionality have been immense. The legislatures of the United States, Britain and the rest of the Western world implemented laws in the wake of 9/11 which had the sum effect of curbing personal freedoms.

And in the ‘Land of the Free’, it may be that the United States may need to revise its perception as a free nation to one with aspirations to be free. The observation by Tacitus that the “more corrupt the state, the more numerous its laws” bears the ring of truth given the apparent institutionalisation of fear and the ever present potential for the misuse of anti-terror laws.

In America, the Uniting (and) Strengthening America (by) Providing Appropriate Tools Required (to) Intercept (and) Obstruct Terrorism Act (2001), i.e. the ‘USA Patriot Act’ and the National Defense Authorization Act (2012) form the backdrop to the Homeland Security framework which allows for government to spy on its citizens, use secret evidence in court, utilize the framework of a gulag-style system of ‘black prison’ networks where people undergo medieval style techniques of torture having been ‘extraordinarily rendered’; the euphemism for state-sanctioned kidnapping, and condone a philosophy of state-sanctioned assassinations.

To make an analogy with the system employed by the fascist regimes of South America during

Operation Condor may not be overstating the point. Suspects are killed by drone attacks in countries such as Pakistan and Yemen without trial, and the body count of innocent civilians caught up in the spiralling carnage is referred to by the euphemism ‘collateral damage.’

What, it may be asked, is the danger that such extreme measures, as applied to suspected Islamists abroad, may at some point in the future be re-directed to citizens within the borders of the United States?

Neither should it be considered as unnecessarily alarmist to raise concerns about the extension of a totalitarian-like system of ‘secret courts’ to the area of civil proceedings as envisaged by the present British government. The basis of this provision of the Justice and Security bill would allow for government transgressions such as complicity in torture and, conceivably murder, to be covered up.

The inspiration for this particular measure has its roots in the court room defeats suffered by the British government in civil claim actions brought by British citizens such as Binyam Mohamed who had been detained under the Guantanamo Regime as well as on-going actions by non-British citizens such as the aforementioned Belhadj.

If the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> alongside the bombings a few years later in London and Madrid, capital cities of two allied nations with significant constituencies demonstrating strong resistance to the wars being waged, are definitively revealed to have been episodes of manufactured, synthetic violence aimed at creating a false fear syndrome among the respective populaces; they will not have been without precedent as the *Gladio*-era of terror demonstrates.

For some, these events smack of the strategy of tension plays conceived and directed by the genius manipulations of the practitioners of the dark arts of the secret state. The stench of the possibility of false-flag terrorism emanating or being directed by the state cannot be ruled out given the holes which lace the official narratives.

The British security services, it was discovered had at one time had one of the key participants in the London bombings under close surveillance, and as with the case of the Madrid bombing, anti-terror exercises simulating the response to an imagined terror attack took place



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on the actual day of the London bombs.

Whereas the exercises conducted under the auspices of NATO (CMX-04) concluded a few hours before the explosion in Madrid, those in London were still ongoing at the time of the actual bombings.

Peter Power, an ex-Scotland Yard official turned crisis management consultant gave interviews on July 7<sup>th</sup> 2005 in which he revealed that the mock exercises in which he was involved was “based on simultaneous bombs going off precisely at the railway stations where it happened this morning.”

Both may of course be coincidental. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, a former NATO Secretary General used this term of description in regard to the Madrid exercise, as did Peter Power himself in later interviews (he used the term “spooky coincidence”), but it is not enough to dampen the mind of those blessed with average reserves of wit and healthy curiosity.

For sure, two of the presumed London bombers left what may be termed as ‘suicide videos’. Mohammad Sidique Khan justified the atrocity as his means of “protecting and avenging” Muslims who had suffered from the atrocities perpetrated “all over the world”, while Shehzad Tanweer claimed that the attacks would continue until forces were pulled out of Iraq and Afghanistan and also for British “financial and military support to America and Israel.”

But does this seal the matter?

The story of the American-born Mohammed Junaid Barber and his connection with Mohammed Sidique Khan provides some food for thought. Barber moved to Pakistan soon after the September 11th attack and set up a training camp at which he schooled people including Khan on a range of matters which included the manufacture of bomb devices.

He pled guilty to charges related terrorism and in return had a potential sentence of up to 70 years drastically reduced to one of less than five. He had returned to the United States in 2004, the year before the London bombings, where he agreed to cooperate with the government; this assuming that he was not already an American intelligence asset while in Pakistan.

If he was an asset of the American secret service while in Pakistan, he would have been passing on information gathered as he ran his training camp and such information as related to British subjects would have been passed on

to British intelligence agencies, who admit to having had Khan under surveillance. Barber is believed to have known Khan by the name of ‘Ibrahim’.

Just as the intelligence services are thought to have infiltrated the *Brigate Rosse* in the *Gladio* years of terror in Italy and steered the hand of unwitting perpetrators of terror, so it may be that Sidique Khan and his accomplices were stooges of an elaborate ‘LIHOP’ or ‘MIHOP’ operation, much in the manner as Mario Moretti had been when he drew out and fired the weapons which ended the life of Aldo Moro.

Yves Guerin-Serac, the *eminence grise* of Right-wing European terrorism who was influential in the formation of the French OAS as well as the suspected architect of the Italian ‘strategy of tension’ beginning with the bombing at Piazza Fontana, perfected the art of infiltrating opposition groups among the range of skills in the art of urban violence taught at the training camps he ran under Aginter Press, his secret anti-communist army.

The template for staging such ‘false-flag’ operations is well established and there is no reason to disbelieve that the contemporary security services, domestic or foreign, are incapable of mounting them.

The change of administrations respectively in the United States and Britain have not altered the course set in the aftermath of the attacks of September 11th. Perhaps it is the case that the long-term strategists of the ‘invisible government’ of the deep state and security apparatus of state along with certain visible powerful lobbies play a large role in holding incoming leaders captive to their agendas. Certainly, those who felt that an Obama presidency would stem the sense of malaise have been sorely disappointed.

This era, envisioned by the Project for the New American Century as one to be dedicated to interventionism, can be best described as being one of American militarism. Such martial militancy was expected to reap rewards and induce stability.

But the benefits which were expected to accrue to the United States are not particularly easy to discern given that the nation is mired in debt, is severely divided in its political and cultural discourse, has had the tenets of its Bill of Rights compromised, and has seen its prestige among the generality of the community of nations plummet.



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It has borne a heavy price. According to a 2011 report by a group of researchers at Brown University, the cost of wars in both Afghanistan and Iraq have amounted to at least over 225,000 human souls dead and over 4.4 trillion dollars spent. Among American soldiers the rates of suicide and domestic violence have spiralled.

And of the democratic right to free speech, there is much to argue of more than a semblance of its fracture in the aftermath of September 11th. The sense that the right of the concerned citizen to make earnest and forthright enquires, as well as to invite discourse, has been made an awkward enterprise is quite palpable.

The often used phrase 'conspiracy theory' is utilised blanket-style to pathologize those who make justifiable enquiries into the inconsistencies of official narratives which themselves may bear more than a few traces of fiction.

History is after all littered with diabolical conspiracies which have been unmasked in the past such as, to name but a few, that which involved Alfred Dreyfus, the Lavon Affair, the multi-national agreement at Sevres which preceded the Suez War and the Iran-Contra Affair.

And of course, the suspicions in Italy about certain operations carried out during the Anni di Piombo which were attributed to Left, but which were later found to have been committed by extremists on the right with the support of the secret state cannot be forgotten.

Yet, the mainstream media, a corporatized set of entities has displayed tentativeness and even outright timidity by failing to explore the covers up, the inconsistencies and inadequacies in government narratives of the September 11<sup>th</sup> and other attacks.

Andreas von Bulow is referred to as "anti-American" and a "paranoid publicity seeker", while an Australian trade union leader who cast doubts on the official narrative had his views referred to as "stupid and wrong" by his prime minister.

The suspicion among a growing segment of world opinion is that these and other epithets including the appellation of 'anti-Semite' so far as the state of Israel is concerned is designed to shut down honest and open debate.

Professional groups of persons doubting the official version have arisen, including those composed of architects, engineers, scientists,

pilots and lawyers. The objective is that a comprehensive and transparent investigation be given to the events of September 11th.

The potential for a correlation between the sinister aspects of the *Gladio* era and the War on Terror is one which is already being made, and the sentiments expressed in the Belgian Parliament's condemnation of NATO and the United States in a resolution for having manipulated European politics with the stay-behind armies may likely be recreated in the future as more facts are unearthed and people become more aware.

There are many eminent persons who have gone on the record to voice strong suspicion, if not outright belief, of the current War on Terror as being an exercise in manipulation and deception; a clever but devious creation of a false fear syndrome based on synthesized violence.

Judge Ferdinando Imposimato, an honorary President of the Supreme Court of Italy and a former Senior Investigative Judge who has presided over investigations into the assassination of Aldo Moro and the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II, is among those convinced that the attacks in New York bore the hallmarks of the 'strategy of tension' which maligned his nation decades ago. He has called for the International Criminal Court to convene a criminal trial on 9/11.

How to sum up or rationalise the role of the secret arms of state in the key Western powers during the anti-communist period and the present War on terror?

In the future, it will be detailed that both eras were dominated by the security and material concerns of the American empire and that its efforts to maintain its power and status required that it did not always act as a benign hegemon.

And just as the Soviet threat, genuine at the outset, was overrated so far as an armed invasion of Western Europe was concerned, so history may likely find evidence of a manufactured fear and a manipulated heightening of antipathy towards Islam, as a cover for the goal of an the expansion of American influence and consolidation of a form of global hegemony.

The discovering and uncovering of the truth behind September 11 and the War on Terror is proving to be an onerous process. It cannot be achieved where there is an absence of political will



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and is made all the more difficult by the inaction of the mainstream media and, naturally enough, the opacity of the secret state.

But the costs, measured in the deaths, the mangled bodies, the hatreds unleashed and the colossal waste of economic resources demands that the push for a review of the rationale which has nourished the ongoing militarism needs to be intensified.

*Adeyinka Makinde is an author based in London.*

The irony of the War on Terror, which has promulgated a doctrine of ‘pre-emptive war’ as a mask for the prosecution of wars of aggression, is that it has amounted to the conducting of a purportedly civilising mission in a grossly uncivilised manner.

History may yet record it as having been not so much a ‘War on Terror’, but as being a perpetration of mass terror and deception.

### Somali Pirate Kingpin Calls It Quits as Hijackings Plummet

Source: <http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2013/01/pirate-kingpin/>



Masked Somali pirate Hassan stands near a Taiwanese fishing vessel on Sept. 23, 2012. Photo: AP/Farah Abdi Warsameh

#### Have we reached — and passed — Peak Pirate?

The dread Somali pirate Mohamed Abdi Hassan — also known as “Afweyne,” or “Big Mouth” — is retiring from the hijacking life. Big Mouth has picked a good time to get out of the game: Piracy is way, way down.

“After being in piracy for eight years,” Big Mouth told a press conference (!) in Somalia on Thursday, “I have decided to renounce and quit, and from today on I will not be involved in this gang activity.”

Hassan played a huge role in the late-2000s resurgence of piracy in the northern Indian Ocean. He and his crew pulled off two of the most audacious hijackings on the high seas in

recent history. In 2008, he captured a Saudi-owned supertanker, the *Sirius Star*, loaded with \$100 million worth of oil and about the size of a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier. Hassan got \$3 million for the *Sirius Star* — he had initially demanded \$25 million — and the notoriety of hijacking the biggest vessel in history.

But Big Mouth arguably one-upped himself later that year. His team bum-rushed a Ukrainian ship the *MV Faina*, packed with weapons: anti-aircraft guns, rocket-propelled grenades and at least 30 T-72 tanks.

Hassan didn’t care about the arms. He wanted cash — and after over 100 days of maritime drama, helicopters hovering over the *Faina* dropped him



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over \$3 million. As it turned out, the ship was bound for the separatist army of South Sudan, which helps explain Big Mouth's windfall. Piracy isn't what it used to be, however. Gone are the days when dead Somali pirates washed ashore carrying \$153,000 in cash. According to the International Maritime Board, from January to September 2012, Somali pirates attacked vessels 70 times, down from 199 such assaults during that period in 2011. From July to September 2012, only one ship near Somali waters came under attack, a major drop from the 36 attacks that time the previous year. (Though it's worth noting that pirates take a

summer vacation.) Stepped-up international naval patrols — including dramatic Navy SEAL rescues — help explain why even piracy isn't recession-proof.

Still, Somali piracy has merely fallen to its 2009 levels, and in 2009, pirate attacks were a global concern. Big Mouth told journalists he was "encouraging many of my colleagues to renounce piracy too." If you can take the pirate at his word — and just consider that phrase for a moment — some of his fellow hijackers are going to be more likely to see a market, however shrinking, cleared of a major competitor.

### Algeria crisis: hostages feared dead after troops storm gas field

By Julian Borger and Patrick Wintour

Source: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/jan/17/algeria-bp-hostages-battle>



The BP plant in Algeria, where up to 30 hostages may have died as troops attacked their jihadist captors. Photograph: Demotix/Corbis

Thirty hostages were feared dead after Algerian troops stormed a desert gas field seized by a jihadist group in a disastrous end to the worst international hostage crisis of recent years.

Reuters news agency quoted an Algerian security source as saying that the 30 victims included eight Algerians, two Britons, two Japanese and one French national, and that the nationality of the remaining 17 hostages

killed in the battle had not been confirmed. Earlier in the day, the militants claimed 34 western hostages had lost their lives in the Algerian rescue attempt. Eleven jihadists were also reported to be killed.

One British contractor died in the initial jihadist attack on the In Amenas gas field on Wednesday morning, but prime minister David Cameron warned that the country "should be

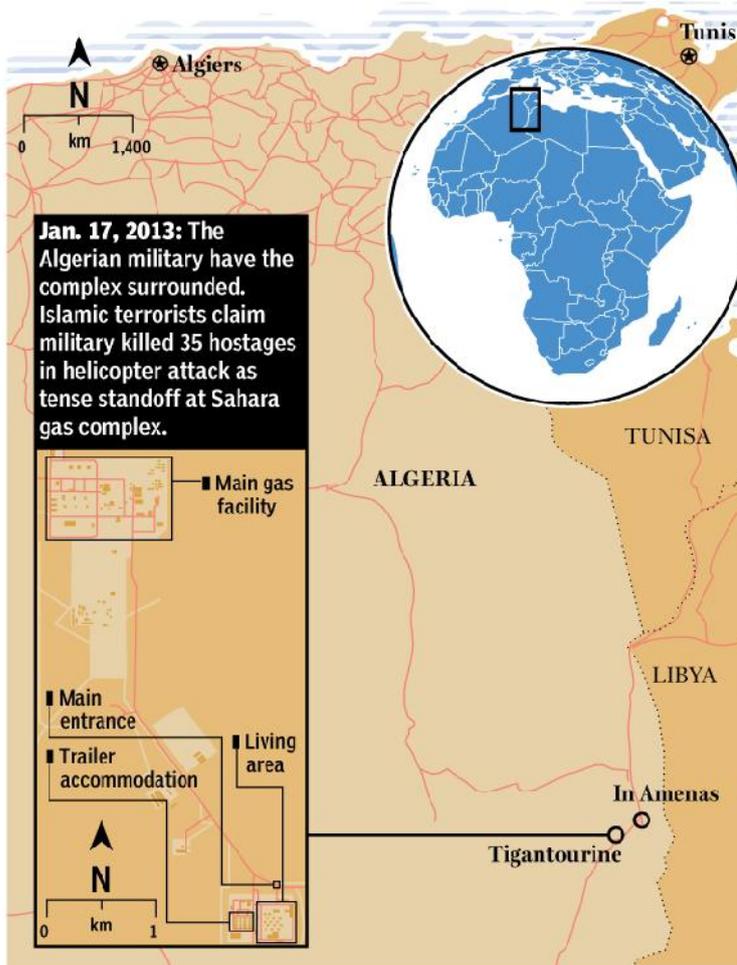


prepared for further bad news in this very dangerous, fluid situation". The Foreign Office

"Unfortunately, we deplore also the death of some, as well as some who were wounded.

**ALGERIAN MILITARY IN OPERATION AGAINST TERRORISTS HOLDING HOSTAGES AT GAS FACILITY**

*Up to 30 Algerian workers fled the complex earlier in the day suggesting the militants are having trouble managing the many hostages they have taken.*



**Jan. 17, 2013:** The Algerian military have the complex surrounded. Islamic terrorists claim military killed 35 hostages in helicopter attack as tense standoff at Sahara gas complex.

SOURCE: BBC

ANDREW BARR / NATIONAL POST

called it "an appalling tragedy". Algeria's state news agency APS said the military operation to free hostages had ended, quoting an unnamed official source who gave no further details.

Mohamed Saïd, the Algerian communications minister, earlier confirmed that several hostages had been killed but said troops had been forced to act to free them due to the "diehard" attitude of their captors. "The operation resulted in the neutralisation of a large number of terrorists and the liberation of a considerable number of hostages," Saïd said, according to the New York Times.

immediately demanded an explanation from Algiers. Washington and Paris indicated they too had been left in the dark.

There were also questions about the tactics used by the Algerians to break the hostage standoff. Several reports from the scene describe helicopter gunships strafing the workers' living quarters where the hostages were being held. The militants claimed they still held seven hostages: two Americans, three Belgians, one Japanese and one British citizen.

One of the survivors was Stephen McFaul, an Irish national, who called

We do not have final numbers."

Officials said 600 Algerian workers at the site had been freed and more than 20 foreigners had survived.

Norway's Statoil company said it was unable to account for nine Norwegian employees who had been at the In Amenas gas field at the time of the raid.

The Algerian government said it was necessary to take instant action to end the standoff as the jihadist group, known as the Signers in Blood, had intended to take the hostages out of the country.

An Algerian source quoted by Reuters said three Egyptians, two Algerians, two Tunisians, two Libyans a Frenchman and a Malian, were among the 11 militants killed.

"The terrorists told us at the very start that they would not hurt Muslims but were only interested in the Christians and infidels," one survivor, a 53-year-old local man called Abdelkader, told Reuters.

The British government complained it had not been informed before the military operation was launched. Cameron was only told once it was under way and



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his wife, Angela, in west Belfast at 3pm to say he was alive and free. McFaul said the Algerian army bombed four jeeps carrying fellow captives and probably killed many of them, his brother Brian told Reuters. McFaul told his family that he survived because he was on the only one of five jeeps not hit by Algerian bombs.

Angela after she spoke to him. The hostages had their mouths taped and explosives hung from around their necks, McFaul added.

The White House said it was concerned about the loss of life and was seeking clarification. A senior official told journalists travelling with the US defence secretary, Leon Panetta, in the UK: "Details remain very murky over this raid

and what has happened. We're assessing reports that the Algerians may have conducted some kind of action in connection with the incident, but cannot confirm precisely what happened."

French president François Hollande told business leaders the hostage crisis "seems to be heading towards an end in dramatic conditions" and the violence in Algeria justified his

decision last Friday to launch a military campaign against Islamist militants in



"They were moving five jeep-loads of hostages from one part of the compound. At that stage,



they were intercepted by the Algerian army. The army bombed four out of five of the trucks and four of them were destroyed," Brian McFaul said.

"The truck my brother was in crashed and Stephen was able to make a break for his freedom. He presumed everyone else in the other trucks was killed."

Brian McFaul said he did not speak to Stephen directly, but got an account from Stephen's wife

neighbouring Mali.

The Algerian raid, thought to have been spearheaded by the army's special intervention group, was carried out only hours after Britain had said its "focus is on working through the Algerian government and BP", a partner in the gas field.

According to Downing Street, Cameron learned of the rescue attempt from British officials in Algiers



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in touch with London by satellite link. He then rang the Algerian prime minister at 11am to be informed that the operation was already under way, despite an earlier appeal by the British prime minister that no substantial action be

helicopter gunship opened fire on one of the jihadists' vehicles, which was carrying militants and hostages. It is not clear whether the vehicle was attempting to flee the scene at the time.



taken without first consulting him. "The prime minister explicitly told the Algerians he wanted advance warning of any military operation, but they just went for it," a Downing Street source said. One source described the 10-15 minute phone call as businesslike, but stressed that no British judgment would be made on the operation while it was still under way. However, a spokesman said: "The prime minister explained we would have preferred to be consulted in advance." The prime minister made that view known first in a phone call on Wednesday, but Algerians countered that it had not been possible since, in its judgment, it had been imperative to act immediately. The prime minister's spokesman said "the aim of the British government had been to work with the Algerian government and the company to resolve the situation peacefully". According to two separate reports, many of the casualties were caused when an Algerian

Even before the main Algerian army attack, the jihadists told al-Jazeera television that the army was firing on the complex, and a Japanese hostage reported he and a Norwegian hostage had been wounded by army snipers. Another hostage warned the "message does not seem to be getting through", al-Jazeera reported, and Algerian troops were continually firing at the camp. The Signers in Blood militant group that attacked the gas field before dawn on Wednesday also called itself the Masked Brigade and owed allegiance to Mokhtar Belmokhtar, a one-eyed veteran jihadist who until last year was a deputy leader in al-Qaida in the Maghreb. He broke away from the group to start his own faction, pledging to fight western influence in the region. One of the hostage survivors said that members of the group spoke Arabic with Egyptian, Tunisian and Syrian accents. "The terrorists told us at the very start that they would not hurt Muslims but



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were only interested in the Christians and infidels," another survivor, a 53-year-old local man called Abdelkader, told Reuters news agency. "We will kill them, they said." He added: "The terrorists seemed to know the base very well ... moving around, showing that they knew where they were going."

The timing of the attack also suggested inside knowledge. The group struck when there was an unusually high number of foreigners at the gas field and some of them were leaving in a bus to the airport.

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### Hot Issue: A Response to the Crusaders?: Defining the True Purpose and Origin of the Attack on In Aménas

By Andrew McGregor

Source: [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no\\_cache=1&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=40325](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=40325)

As the Algerian government continues to control a haphazard and inconsistent flow of information from In Aménas, the site of this week's dramatic hostage-taking by Islamist militants, there continues to be confusion over the number of hostages killed in an assault by Algerian security forces and even the fate of the militants themselves. The remote In Aménas gas field is close to the Libyan border, some 1,600 kilometers from the capital of Algiers, and is operated as a joint venture of BP, Norwegian Statoil and the Algerian government-owned Sonatrach. However, with most of the facility now in the hands of the Algerian military after a bloody intervention, the main questions that must be addressed at this point involve the origin and purpose of the attackers. The answers to these questions may differ significantly from those provided by the militants themselves over the last two days.

#### "Those Who Sign in Blood"

At the core of the attack is veteran Algerian jihadist Mokhtar Belmokhtar (a.k.a. Khalid Abu al-Abbas), a prominent al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) commander whose differences with the movement's leadership resulted in Belmokhtar splitting with AQIM in October to set up his own fighting group, "the Brigade of Those Who Sign in Blood." In early December, Belmokhtar led a column of fighting vehicles and loyalists to the Malian border post of al-Khalil, close to the frontier with Algeria (see *Terrorism Monitor* Brief, January 10). Al-Khalil is just north of the Adrar des Ifoghas Mountains of Kidal and is a vital border post along a main Saharan highway that brings all

types of commerce, licit and illicit, south through the Algerian desert town of Adrar. Algeria announced that its borders had been sealed and secured on January 14, two days before the raid on In Aménas (AFP, January 14).

Belmokhtar's new militant formation issued a statement of responsibility for the raid on In Aménas on January 16, declaring the attack "a response to the blatant intervention of the Crusader French forces in Mali" and the Algerian "conspiracy with the French to strike the Muslims in Mali" (ansar1.info, January 16). Though the claim of responsibility suggested that the attack was made in response to Algeria's January 14 decision to allow overflights by French military aircraft, such an assault would in fact require weeks of planning and organization, even more so if the attack was actually mounted from Mali, as the attackers claim. A spokesman for AQIM's Katibat Mulathamini confirmed that "the commando" had been prepared for this operation for nearly two months "because we knew in advance that the [Algerian] regime would be a good ally of France in the war against Azawad [i.e. northern Mali] (Agence Nouakchott d'Information, January 17).

Most interesting was a nearly simultaneous claim of responsibility from AQIM's Katibat al-Mulathamini ("Brigade of the Wearers of the Veil," a reference to the male Tuareg custom of wearing a veil – Arabic "litham"). This brigade was formerly Belmokhtar's command before his split with the rest of the AQIM leadership in October. If this was not simply a case of AQIM trying



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to jump onboard an ongoing operation, it would seem to indicate that Belmokhtar's split with the rest of the organization was not as severe as some thought or has been subject to some degree of reconciliation in recent weeks.

One of the kidnappers told a French news agency by phone that his group was composed of "members of al-Qaeda" under the command of Mokhtar Belmokhtar and had come "from northern Mali" (AFP, January 16). However, this claim merits some deeper examination. The distance from Mokhtar Belmokhtar's new base in the Malian border town of al-Khalil to In Aménas is no less than 725 miles as the crow flies. For those not blessed with wings, the actual drive would be significantly longer, using both Algerian highways and desert tracks that would take the attackers around the north side of Algeria's Hoggar mountains. While it is true that Algeria's border with Mali is long and difficult to defend, it is difficult to envision the passage of a large convoy of militants through the busy section between al-Khalil and the Algerian border post at Bordj Mokhtar without detection. A sizable convoy would be required to carry out the attack, carrying its own food, water and fuel as well as fighters, weapons and munitions. If the attackers were indeed able to travel in a heavily-armed convoy from one end of Algeria to the other without the least interference or detection from Algerian security forces, this would indicate either Algerian government cooperation or a complete breakdown in Algeria's security infrastructure, both unpalatable alternatives. A third option, however, is that such claims are intentional misdirection designed to conceal the real point of origin of the attackers – Libya.

Algerian Interior Minister Dahou Ould Kablia hinted at the unlikelihood that the attackers had come direct from Mali or any other country, saying that the terrorists had come "not from Mali, nor from Libya, nor from any other neighboring country" (Algérie Presse Service, January 16). By the next day, however, Kablia had changed his mind, now claiming that the attackers were from Libya, without elaborating (Echorouk [Algiers], January 17).

A terrorist attack of this type was somewhat unexpected, at least based on previous experience. Even at the height of clashes between Algeria's Islamist militants and government forces in the 1990s, the Islamists never attempted to penetrate a heavy security cordon placed around Algeria's vital oil and gas

infrastructure in the southern desert region. Fighting from well-concealed bases in the heavily-wooded Kabylie Mountains of northern Algeria was always preferable to mounting operations in difficult desert terrain where no cover was available from air surveillance or attack. In this sense, it seems that proximity to Libya may have been the deciding factor in the selection of In Aménas as a target. Libya is still struggling to consolidate control of its desert interior and the distance from the Libyan border to In Aménas could be easily covered at night, allowing the attackers to emerge undetected with the rising of the sun. The nearby Algerian military camp entrusted with protecting the gas installation did not go into action until the terrorists had already seized the facility.

### The Purpose of the Attack

Belmokhtar's new group is one of a host of new Islamist formations to suddenly emerge in northern Mali. According to a spokesman from the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA), these new groups are intended to "fight the neighboring countries, especially Algeria" (*Le Temps d'Algerie*, January 16).

The raiders were reported to have demanded the release of 100 Islamists from Algerian prisons in exchange for the hostages, which seems to have been the real purpose of the hostage-taking (AFP, January 16). Unusual for a Belmokhtar kidnapping, there was no mention of a cash ransom, though it is possible that not all the details regarding demands have become available. The assailants claimed to be equipped with mortars and anti-aircraft missiles, saying "We hold the Algerian government and the French government and the countries of the hostages fully responsible if our demands are not met. It is up to them to stop the brutal aggression against our people in Mali" (Ansar1.info, January 16).

According to Algerian government sources, the raid began at 5 AM when three vehicles carrying heavily armed terrorists attacked a bus carrying foreign workers to the local airstrip, overpowering its security escort and killing at least one foreign worker (Algérie Presse Service, January 16; *L'Expression* [Algiers], January 16). Algeria's Interior Minister, Dahou Ould Kablia, was clear from the outset; there would be no negotiations with the terrorists.



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Algerian helicopters opened fire on the terrorists when they tried to flee the gas plant in vehicles using hostages as protection. Among those killed in the first Algerian attack was Abu al-Bara, an Algerian associate of Belmokhtar and the apparent leader of the raid (*al-Akhabar*, January 17). Others killed in the Algerian assault include veteran jihadist Lamine Boucheneb (a.k.a. Amir Tahir), leader of the Fils du Sahara pour la justice islamique and Mauritanian Abdallahi Ould Humeida. According to a source within the “Signatories in Blood,” the raiders were a diverse group that included jihadis from Canada, Algeria, Mali, Egypt, Niger and Mauritania (Agence Nouakchott d’Information, January 17).

The hostage-taking was somewhat unusual in that both kidnapers and abductees remained in touch with the outside world by telephone. One of the hostages told France 24 TV that the prisoners had been forced to wear explosive belts by the raiders, who promised to blow up the gas plant if attacked by Algerian forces (France 24, January 16). Another hostage reported that the attackers had mined the entire plant and were well armed with rocket-propelled grenades (*Le Figaro* [Paris], January 16). As the Algerian military made its final assault on the complex, a spokesman for the hostage-takers was on the phone with a Mauritanian news agency, threatening to kill the hostages against a background of loud explosions before the line went dead (Agence Nouakchott d’Information, January 17).

After the Algerian military had retaken control of the gas facility, an AQIM spokesman promised more operations would be mounted against the Algerian regime, warning Algerians to “keep away from the locations of foreign companies, as we will strike where nobody would expect” (Agence Nouakchott d’Information, January 17).

### Conclusion

The raid suggests that Belmokhtar continues to work closely with AQIM elements despite the differences that led the veteran jihadist to assemble his own formation in early December. However, there is a strong possibility that Belmokhtar’s raid on In Aménas will have the inevitable result of dragging a so-far reluctant Algeria into the conflict in northern Mali. Mauritania, another hold-out despite a history of intervening in northern Mali against al-Qaeda elements, has now reversed its position and agreed to deploy combat troops in northern Mali (*Jeune Afrique*, January 16). Chad has also decided to send a so-far indeterminate number of its highly capable desert fighters to Mali, thus furnishing, together with Algeria and Mauritania, the missing elements of an African intervention force that was far too reliant on West African troops with little knowledge of Saharan-style desert warfare. If Algiers does commit to the military destruction of the Islamist forces in northern Mali, Belmokhtar’s ill-timed raid on In Aménas may be remembered as the beginning of the end for the Mali-based Islamists.

Though unsuccessful in the short-term, the raid will have a long-term impact on the Algerian energy industry as expat workers are recalled or leave on their own accord and Algerian military resources are diverted to protect isolated desert installations. There is a strong possibility of further strikes in Algeria to relieve pressure on embattled AQIM units in northern Algeria, where recent and effective counterterrorist operations have put the movement on its heels. Most important, however, is the realization that it is Libya, rather than northern Mali, that has become a base for terrorist operations in the Sahara/Sahel region.

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**Al Qaeda offers to swap 2 US hostages for 2 jailed terrorists**

Source: <http://www.debka.com/article/22695/Al-Qaeda-offers-to-swap-2-US-hostages-for-2-jailed-terrorists>

The North African Al Qaeda group which seized hostages from 10 nations at the remote Algerian gas field in In Amenas Wednesday,



Jan. 16, has addressed its first demand to the United States: The release of two American hostages for two high-profile Islamist terrorists jailed in the US: Egyptian Omar Abdel-Rahman, the Blind Sheikh convicted of masterminding the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and Pakistani-American neuroscientist Aafia Siddiqui, convicted for trying to kill US troops and FBI agents in Afghanistan in 2009.

The offer from Moktar Belmoktar, head of al Qaeda's Signed-in-Blood Battalions, was relayed by a Mauritanian news site Friday afternoon Jan 18. Until now, their most pressing demand was for France to end its military operation in Mali.

The Obama administration has not released information about the Americans held hostage at the gas field. They are believed to number seven.

Friday afternoon, as Algerian Special Forces were still unable to overpower the terrorists holed up with hostages at a gas facility, US military transports began lifting foreign nationals out of Algeria. Most are oil and gas facility personnel and their families. Their evacuation, which will badly affect the operation of Algeria's energy industry, indicates fears that more terrorist attacks on oil and gas sites are still to come, with devastating impact on world energy markets.

Military sources in London reported that a British Mi6 secret service plane has landed

near the Algerian hostage site carrying a command and control team specializing in terrorist situations.

British Prime Minister David Cameron called the Cobra emergency cabinet into session Friday night, its third since the hostage crisis erupted. Addressing Parliament earlier, Cameron promised the UK would hunt down the terrorists responsible for the brutal and savage attack in Algeria.

According to the first tentative hostage figures released by Algeria Friday afternoon, the second day of its rescue operation, a total of 650 hostages were taken, of whom 573 were freed – most of them Algerian - indicating that 77 were killed or missing. A total of 132 foreign nationals from 10 nations were taken of whom



66 were freed, which leaves 66 dead or unaccounted for.

None of these figures will be final before the gas field is finally cleansed and secure. debkafile: Al Qaeda's demand for the Blind Sheikh's release from an American jail is intended to embarrass Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi, who has said he would press for this when he visits Washington soon. This now puts Morsi on the same side as al Qaeda. Bucked up by their success in keeping the Algerian army at bay and dragging out their first multinational hostage crisis into another day, Al Qaeda in North Africa upped the ante by directly confronting the United States in what is unlikely to be their last demand.



## Tribes and Terrorists: The Emerging Security Threat from Libya's Lawless South

By Andrew McGregor

Source: <http://www.jamestown.org>

One of the reported demands of the terrorist group that seized the In Aménas gas field last week was safe passage to the Libyan border, some 30 miles away and the likely launching point for their attack on Algeria. This should not be surprising, despite a stream of statements from Benghazi regarding increased security in southern Libya, an oil-rich region that has also become a home for criminal gangs, arms traders, smugglers, militias, armed tribal groups and foreign gunmen since the fall of the Qaddafi regime.

The alleged planner of the In Aménas attack, Mokhtar Belmokhtar, is believed to have travelled to southwestern Libya in the fall of 2011, possibly returning there in the spring of 2012. In November 2011, Belmokhtar told a Mauritanian news agency that he had purchased Libyan weapons to arm his group (Nouakchott Info, November 11, 2011; CNN, January 21, 2012). He was again reported to be in southwestern Libya by Malian security sources in March 2012 (AFP, March 12, 2012). Both occasions would have allowed Belmokhtar to establish important connections with local Islamists or others willing to work for him. Belmokhtar could also have used these trips to reconnoiter routes from northern Mali through Niger into southwestern Libya, possibly by crossing the lifeless Tafassâset desert.

At least two of the terrorists involved in the attack on Algeria's In Aménas natural gas facility have been identified as Libyan by the Algiers government (Libya Herald, January 17). Amidst fears that Libya might have provided the staging ground for the terrorist raid on In Aménas, Libyan Prime Minister Ali Zidan promised that "Libya will not allow anyone to threaten the safety and security of its neighbors" (Reuters, January 19). Zidan's government has rejected the "attacks on Mali," urging a return to dialogue to resolve the situation there (Tripoli Post, January 21). Prime Minister Zidan has been reluctant to acknowledge terrorist activity within southern Libya, but claims that "There are powers that don't want stability involved in white slavery, drugs smuggling, arms smuggling, money laundering and others who want North Africa to be a theatre of instability" (Libya Herald, January 19).

### Protecting Libya's Oil Infrastructure

Libya has recently created the Petroleum Faculty Guard (PFG), a force dedicated to protecting energy operations in the vast Libyan interior. In the aftermath of the In Aménas attack, the PFG announced it was taking steps to secure Libyan energy facilities, including "the formation of a special operations room, adding military air support and increasing guards and military personnel, and intensifying security patrols inside and outside the sites around the clock to block any attempt from anyone who wishes to compromise public property" (Libya Herald, January 18). As seen in Algeria, however, deploying troops as guards is not enough; they must be well-commanded, maintain an appropriate system of patrols and level of vigilance and be supplied with the necessary intelligence to do their job.

Efforts are under way to try and integrate many of the militias active in southern and western Libya into the newly-formed National Guard, which operates directly under the Libyan head-of-state but may soon be transferred to the control of the Interior Ministry. For the moment, many members of the 10,000 man force are working in support of the Libyan Border Guards (Libya Herald, January 8).

Last December, EU foreign ministers met to consider the problems created by the trafficking through Libya of arms and illegal migrants (many of them bound for Europe). Italy emphasized the need for stronger border controls and urged its counterparts to initiate a border guard training mission by January, a proposal considered "unrealistic" by other EU diplomats, who suggested training could wait to begin in mid-2013 (Reuters, December 10, 2012).

Prime Minister Ali Zidan rejected rumors that the southern al-Wigh airbase was being used as a base for French operations in Mali or as a base for terrorist operations in Algeria (Reuters, January 19; al-Wataniyah TV, January 19; Tripoli Post, January 21). Al-Wigh was an important strategic base for the Qaddafi regime, being located close to the borders with Niger, Chad and Algeria. Since the rebellion, the base has come under the control of Tubu tribal fighters under the nominal command of the Libyan Army and the direct command of Tubu commander Sharafeddine Barka Azaiy, who complains: "During the revolution, controlling this base was of



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key strategic importance. We liberated it. Now we feel neglected. We do not have sufficient equipment, cars and weapons to protect the border. Even though we are part of national army, we receive no salary” (Libya Herald, December 23, 2012). Since the hostage-taking in neighboring Algeria, Prime Minister Zidan has ordered surveillance operations and patrols to be stepped-up in the region of al-Wigh (al-Wataniya TV, January 19).

Only days before the raid on In Aménas, the premiers of Libya, Algeria and Tunisia met on January 12 at the Libyan oasis border town of Ghadames to discuss border security, with an eye to securing their borders “by fighting against the flow of arms and ammunition and other trafficking” (AFP, January 10). There are continuing tensions in the region around Ghadames near Libya’s border with Tunisia and Algeria, where Arab-Berber tribes have sought revenge on the local Tuareg community, parts of which provided security support to the Qaddafi regime during the battle for Libya.

On December 15, Libya’s ruling General National Congress (GNC) declared that Libya’s borders with Algeria, Chad, Niger and Sudan would be temporarily closed and designated the regions of Ghadames, Awbari, Sabha, al-Shati, Murzuq and Kufra as military zones to be ruled by a military governor. Only certain roads in the south would remain open, with Prime Minister Zidan warning that caravans, convoys or other groups using anything other than official frontier posts would face action by land forces or military aircraft (Libyan News Agency, December 16, 2012; Libya Herald, December 18, 2012). Two days later, Libyan fighter-jets struck a suspected smugglers’ camp in the Kufra region near the borders with Chad and Sudan. During the anti-Qaddafi rebellion, Sudanese troops coordinating with Qatari forces moved into the strategically important Kufra region and helped rebel forces seize the oasis (Sudan Tribune, August 28, 2011; Telegraph, July 1, 2011). According to air force spokesman Colonel Miftah al-Abdali, Libyan warplanes would monitor the Kufra region from the border with Chad to Jabal al-Uwaynat and Jabal al-Malik near the border with Egypt (Libyan News Agency, December 19). Eventually Libya plans to establish only one authorized border crossing with each of its four southern neighbors, Chad, Niger, Sudan and Algeria (AFP, December 19).

The new military governor for the south has the authority to detain and deport illegal immigrants, initiating a round-up of refugees and migrants in parts of southern Libya. These powers were seen as necessary in expectation of a greater flow of “illegal immigrants” from an expected war in northern Mali. Libya is concerned that if things go poorly for the Islamists in Mali, there will be a reverse flow of fighters and weapons back into southern Libya in the hands of armed groups.

### Tunisia – A Conduit for Libyan Weapons?

On January 12, Tunisian President Moncef Marzouki suggested that local jihadists had ties with terrorist forces in northern Mali and that Tunisia was “becoming a corridor for Libyan weapons to these regions” (AFP, January 12). The Tunisian border with Libya is rife with the smuggling of everything from milk to explosives since the collapse of the Qaddafi regime. Violent incidents have become common – two uniformed Libyans were arrested on the night of January 17 after using a 4X4 vehicle to attack the Tunisian security post at Jedelouine (Libya Herald, January 18; For the smuggling routes across the Tunisian-Libyan border, see Terrorism Monitor Brief, May 20, 2011).

While the hostage crisis was still ongoing in Algeria, Tunisian security forces announced the discovery of two large arms depots in the southeastern town of Medenine on the main route to Libya. The materiel seized at the depots included bombs, missiles, grenades, rocket launchers, ammunition, bullet-proof vests, uniforms and communications equipment (Tunis Afrique Press, January 18).

### The Egyptian Border and the Route to Gaza

A minor crisis in Libyan-Egyptian relations occurred on January 18 when a Lebanese newspaper, *al-Diyar*, reported that Egyptian Prime Minister Hisham Qandil had rights over parts of eastern Libya. Though historical claims to parts of the Libyan Desert once existed, they were renounced by Egypt in a 1925 agreement with Italy, the occupying power of the time. After Libyan premier Ali Zidan appealed for clarification, the Egyptian government issued a firm denial: “These alleged statements were not made by Qandil or any Egyptian official” (Egypt State Information Service, January 21).

Libya and Egypt fought a three-day border war in July, 1977 after Qaddafi sent thousands of protesters on a “March to Cairo” to protest Egypt’s progress towards a peace treaty with Israel. When the demonstrators were turned back at the border, Libyan forces raided the coastal town of Sollum, the site of fighting between Sanusi militants and the British-controlled Egyptian



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Army during the First World War. Retaliation came swiftly in the form of three Egyptian divisions supported by fighter-jets destroying Libyan opposition as they crossed the border into Libya. A complete invasion was averted only by the mediation of Algerian president Houari Boumediène.

More recently, it appears that a shipment route for Libyan arms on their way to Sinai and Gaza has been opened along the northern coast of Egypt, encouraging greater activity by militants in the area. There are fears in Cairo that these militants could eventually turn the Libyan weapons against the Egyptian government (see *Terrorism Monitor*, May 18, 2012). [1]

### Sabha Oasis – A Strategic Base under Threat

GNC President Muhammad Magarief toured southern Libya earlier this month, meeting with Major General Omran Abd al-Rahman al-Tawil and other military officials in the strategic southern oasis of Sabha. While in Sabha, Magarief's hotel was attacked by gunmen who wounded three of his guards (*Libya Herald*, January 6; *al-Jazeera*, January 13).

Six days of clashes between the Qadhafha (the Arab-Berber tribe of Mu'ammad Qaddafi) and the Awlad Sulayman tribe left four dead and several others wounded in Sabha on January 2 (*AFP*, January 2). An attempt by Libyan Special Forces units to enter the town on December 31 and impose a truce ultimately failed when fighting resumed (*Libya Herald*, January 4). The oasis town, 500 miles south of Tripoli, was the site of an important airbase during the Qaddafi regime and many of the current tribal clashes are rooted in differences between the Qadhafha, regarded as Qaddafi supporters, and the Awlad Sulayman, who opposed Qaddafi in the rebellion (see *Terrorism Monitor*, April 5, 2012).

The inability of security forces in Sabha to keep detainees under lock and key has contributed to the insecurity in the region. On December 4 there was a mass breakout of 197 inmates from the Sabha jail with the apparent assistance of the Judiciary Police responsible for guarding them (*Libya Herald*, December 6, 2012). Local authorities claimed most of the prisoners were common criminals, while others were alleged to be Qaddafi loyalists (*Reuters*, December 5). In July 2012, 34 prisoners escaped another detention facility in Sabha by crawling through ventilation shafts. The most recent breakout was followed by 20 southern GNC representatives walk out of the Libyan Congress to protest the "deteriorating security situation in their region," saying the government's inability or unwillingness to address these problems was "the last straw" (*AFP*, December 16, 2012; *Libya Herald*, December 6, 2012; December 18, 2012).

There are plans to spur development in Sabha by turning its military airport into a regional air cargo hub, but this is unlikely to happen so long as the region remains plagued by violence and instability.

### Kufra Oasis – Where Race Politics Meets Border Security

Clashes between the Black African Tubu and the Arab Zawiya tribe continue in the southeastern Kufra Oasis, where inter-tribal fighting earlier this month developed into firefights between the Tubu and members of the Libyan Desert Shield, a pro-government militia that was flown into Kufra last year to bring the region under control. Desert Shield has failed to win the trust of the Tubu, who accuse the militia's northern Arabs of siding with the Zawiya. According to a Tubu tribal chief in Kufra: "We want the army to secure Kufra, and not a group of civilian revolutionaries who have no military principles" (*AFP*, January 9; For the struggle over Kufra, see *Terrorism Monitor Brief*, May 5, 2011, *Terrorism Monitor*, February 23, 2012).

Tubu fighters in the Kufra region are led by Isa Abd al-Majid Mansur, head of the Tubu Front for the Salvation of Libya (TFSL), founded in 2007 to combat the Qaddafi regime on behalf of the disenfranchised Tubu community. Following a failed revolt against Qaddafi and his "Arabization" program, the Tubu had their citizenship stripped, access to services cancelled and their homes bulldozed. Prior to the declaration of a military zone in the south, Mansur maintained that Libya's southern borders from Sabha to Kufra were controlled and guarded by desert-savvy Tubu tribesmen after the fall of Qaddafi (*Libya Herald*, December 23, 2012; January 13, 2013). Local Arab tribes accuse the Tubu of actually seizing control of the region's smuggling routes for their own profit.

Government authorities maintain there are only some 15,000 Tubu tribesmen in Libya, while Tubu activists claim the real number is closer to 200,000. According to Tubu activist Ahamat Mliikini, the Tubu are confronting an Arab desire to create a new demographic reality in the south: "Many from the [Arab] Zuwaya and Awlad Sulayman tribes want the Tubu people out before they create a new Libya, before it becomes a democracy. They provoke the Tubu with



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these new attacks and killings; they create conflict to evict them.” These tribes have succeeded in convincing the northern Arab tribes that the native Tubu who predate the Arab presence in southern Libya are actually foreigners (a popular Qaddafi canard) “with an agenda to make southern Libya an independent country” (Minority Voices Newsroom, January 8).

### No Better in Benghazi

In the *de facto* Libyan capital of Benghazi, meanwhile, a campaign of attacks on members of the police and military continues as Western nations begin to pull out their nationals amidst rumors of an impending terrorist attack. Many of the victims of assassination were formerly employed by the Qaddafi regime (Xinhua, January 14; January 16; see Terrorism Monitor Brief, August 10, 2012). The government is considering what it described as a “partial curfew” to help deal with the deterioration of security in Benghazi (Middle East Online, January 17).

Western diplomats also continue to be targeted; on January 12, unidentified gunmen fired on the Italian consul’s bullet-proof car, damaging the vehicle but causing no casualties in a strike that Italian Foreign Minister Giulio Terzi described as “a vile act of terrorism” (AFP, January 13; Xinhua, January 12). On January 16, Italy agreed to provide logistical support to air operations targeting terrorists in northern Mali after shutting down its Benghazi consulate and withdrawing all diplomatic personnel (*Telegraph*, January 16; UPI, January 16; Reuters, January 16).

On January 19, a car carrying Libya’s defense minister, Muhammad al-Barghati, came under attack at the Tobruk airport, east of Benghazi. Al-Barghati claimed the attack was the work of followers of al-Sadiq al-Ghaithi al-Obeidi, a reputed jihadist who had just been sacked as deputy defense minister after refusing to bring his fighters under the command of the army’s chief-of-staff. Al-Obeidi was formerly responsible for border security and the security of foreign oil installations (AFP, January 19; Reuters, January 21).

### Conclusion

The “closed military zones” of the south are little more than a fiction without the resources, personnel and organization necessary to implement strict controls over a vast and largely uninhabited wilderness that is nonetheless the heart of the modern Libyan state due to its vast reserves of oil and gas that provide the bulk of national revenues and its aquifers of groundwater that permit intensive agriculture and supply drinking water for Libya’s cities.

The Libyan GNC and its predecessor, the Transitional National Council (TNC), have failed to secure important military facilities in the south and have allowed border security in large parts of the south to effectively become “privatized” in the hands of tribal groups who are also well-known for their traditional smuggling pursuits. In turn, this has jeopardized the security of Libya’s oil infrastructure and the security of its neighbors. As the sale and transport of Libyan arms becomes a mini-industry in the post-Qaddafi era, Libya’s neighbors will eventually impose their own controls over their borders with Libya so far as their resources allow. Unfortunately, the vast amounts of cash available to al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb are capable of opening many doors in an impoverished and underdeveloped region. If the French-led offensive in northern Mali succeeds in displacing the Islamist militants, there seems to be little at the moment to prevent such groups from establishing new bases in the poorly-controlled desert wilderness of southern Libya. So long as there is an absence of central control of security structures in Libya, that nation’s interior will continue to present a security threat to the rest of the nations in the region, most of which face their own daunting challenges in terms of securing long and poorly defined borders created in European boardrooms with little notice of geographical realities.

### Note

1. See Andrew McGregor, “The Face of Egypt’s Next Revolution: The Madinat Nasr Cell,” Jamestown Foundation “Hot Issue,” November 20, 2012, [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=40137&cHash=bc3b95312dc7c4911c1727f4b929e2fd](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/gta/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=40137&cHash=bc3b95312dc7c4911c1727f4b929e2fd).

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### Africa: Is Africa New Al-Qaeda Launch Pad? Experts Say Global Threat Emerging

Source: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201301240036.html?viewall=1>

Shortly before leaving the Capitol following President Obama's inauguration Monday, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta was asked about an al-Qaeda affiliate's recent attack on an Algerian gas plant in which three Americans workers were among the 37 dead.

"I'm glad we were able to get some rescued," Panetta said. "That just tells us al-Qaeda is committed to creating terror wherever they are, and we've got to fight back."

As U.S. forces have largely left Iraq and plan a withdrawal from Afghanistan, intelligence experts see a global threat emerging on a continent that has frustrated foreign forces for much of the past century and provided the world's bad actors a refuge from international justice.

Indeed, less than two years after the death of Osama bin Laden, recent events have shown that global terrorism is alive and well. As the fractured terrorist networks with shifting alliances adapt to this new world, counterterrorism experts say the United States and its allies need to craft a strategy to counter this ever-changing enemy.

Though al-Qaeda might be "on its heels," as Obama declared during the presidential campaign, the terrorist organization that launched the 9/11 attacks a dozen years ago from its haven in Afghanistan is finding new life – and a new base – in North Africa and Syria. Among its most recent advances:

Terrorists with ties to al-Qaeda were involved in attacks on U.S. embassies in Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen and Libya.

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula in Yemen has gone from a few hundred fighters to several thousand despite the threat of American drones.

Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) was advancing on Mali's capital until French troops joined the fight.

Much of Somalia is in the hands of al-Shabab, the sharia-imposing ally of al-Qaeda.

The "core al-Qaeda" group overseen by bin Laden deputy Ayman al-Zawahri has not conducted a successful terrorist attack in years, according to the global intelligence consulting firm Stratfor in a recent report. Its financing and communications have been seriously hampered.

However, in North Africa, al-Qaeda-aligned operatives are thriving and creating an "arc of instability" that stretches from the coast of West Africa into the Horn of Africa, says NATO Allied Command's Civil-Military Fusion Center, which provides military data to civilian groups.

#### The intelligence challenge

The United States has worked to counter extremists in Africa and the Arabian desert for more than a decade, and the Obama administration emphasizes that it remains committed to relentlessly defeating terrorism wherever it festers.

The White House has "always said that we need to remain vigilant about any al-Qaeda affiliates, in particular AQIM in its efforts to exploit unrest in the region," Tommy Vietor, spokesman for Obama's National Security Council, said Tuesday.

"We have worked closely with countries across Africa to build up their capacity to fight terrorists and to address the political and economic instability that allows countries to become terrorist safe havens," Vietor said. "We've also been in close touch with international partners like the French who share our goal of denying terrorists a safe haven."

The efforts include support for the African Union Mission in Somalia, a multinational force that pushed the al-Shabab movement from the capital of Mogadishu in 2011.

U.S. Africa Command, established in 2007, works with military units of African countries such as Kenya and Uganda to help them fend off threats. The Obama administration supports a similar force in West Africa to take back northern Mali from Islamist extremists who overran the area last year. Drone strikes have hit targets in East Africa.

Yet just as Deputy National Security Adviser John Brennan, Obama's nominee to head the CIA, notes that al-Qaeda is weaker than ever, analysts watching the global terrorism picture say the recent attack in Algeria and the drumbeat of incidents elsewhere illustrate the need for a new kind of "global war on terror" that focuses not on all-out invasions but on superior intelligence-gathering followed by military strikes.



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"The key is to keep improving our analysis and intelligence capability," says J. Peter Pham, director of the Africa Center at the Atlantic Council. "Things are shifting, and we need to be agile, able to shift personnel, expertise and resources to where the hot spots are."

Experts in counterterrorism echo Pham's assessment that when it comes to combating a more diffuse terrorist network in the 21st century, the starting point is better intelligence. The controversial U.S. drone program is often lauded for precision strikes and the elimination of high-value terrorists, but many strategists say picking off terrorists in this manner has a clear downside.

Joshua Foust, a former senior intelligence analyst for the U.S. military and a political analyst for the Defense Intelligence Agency in Yemen, says the administration should monitor militants longer before killing them with drones. He says the United States needs to focus more on human intelligence and social media to pull back the curtain on terror networks – then break them up.

"We don't have human assets inside those organizations," says Foust, a fellow at the American Security Project. "That requires a rewrite of the rules of gathering clandestine information."

Joe Wipple, who served 30 years as an operations officer in the CIA's National Clandestine Service, says U.S. intelligence agents are bound by laws that limit their effectiveness.

"I do not believe we would allow a source to engage in a terrorist act in order to establish his credibility with a terrorist organization," he says. "That's what it would likely take for someone to infiltrate up the ladder in a terrorist organization." Instead, agents look for people in a terrorist organization's support network, who provide money, explosives or transportation, he says.

If there are no such sources in the difficult environment of North Africa's deserts, Wipple says, it's because the United States has focused elsewhere during the past decade.

"Good (human intelligence) takes years and decades of development and recruitment, not a U.S. strong suit," Wipple said.

### Human vs. mechanical

Foust recommends that Congress and the White House craft rules that would allow the U.S. intelligence services to do more to

penetrate terror networks in Africa and beyond with human spies as opposed to mechanical ones in the air or electronic surveillance.

Others say Obama should revive parts of the detainee and interrogation program in effect during President George W. Bush's administration when the CIA employed "enhanced interrogation" techniques such as waterboarding to wrest information from captured terrorists.

"With every drone strike, we're vaporizing intelligence about what they intend to do in East Africa, the Islamic Maghreb and elsewhere," says Marc Thiessen, a former White House official under George W. Bush.

"There are times you have to (use drones), but anytime you can get somebody alive rather than killing them, you ought to be doing it."

Thiessen says Obama should issue an executive order to revive parts of the Bush-era program. Such a program would require legal guidance to enable holding detainees and facilities for long-term detention and interrogation, he says.

Reviving the harsh interrogation techniques of the Bush era is not necessary, Thiessen says, but "we need to be doing something to get intelligence, and that involves talking to people."

Targeted killings have removed half the top leaders of the centralized terrorist network once based in the mountains of Afghanistan and Pakistan, according to the Obama administration. But al-Qaeda has grown stronger in places such as Libya and Syria.

In northern Mali, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) joined forces with other Islamist militias last year to take control of arid territory the size of Texas. The United States is providing a French invasion force with aerial intelligence and transportation close to the battlefield.

An AQIM offshoot that calls itself "Signers in Blood" attacked an Algerian gas facility last week in Amenas and took hundreds of hostages over a five-day onslaught. Thirty-seven workers were killed, including three Americans.

### Threat to the U.S.?

Pham and others say AQIM's threat to the U.S. homeland is remote, for now. But the group is a danger to U.S.



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interests in an area that the United States and much of the world relies on for energy.

Brennan's assessment? He has called al-Qaeda's vision of global domination through a violent Islamic caliphate "absurd" and said U.S. strategy is not organized "against a feckless delusion that is never going to happen."

He says the Obama administration will frustrate al-Qaeda leaders' hopes "to bleed us financially by drawing us into long, costly wars that also inflame anti-American sentiment" by ending wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and not deploying large armies.

"Going forward ... our best offense won't always be deploying large armies abroad but delivering targeted, surgical pressure to the groups that threaten us," Brennan says.

Some experts say a soft response to the growing threat will come back to haunt the United States, just as it did during the 1990s when bin Laden and his associates were seen as a dangerous, but limited, nuisance rather than the mammoth threat that launched 9/11.

Reuel Marc Gerecht, a former CIA operative at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, points out that there has been no U.S. retaliation after al-Qaeda-linked terrorists attacked the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya, on the anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks. U.S. Ambassador Chris Stevens and three other Americans were killed. The restrained reaction creates the perception that "the United States is weak," which will embolden more jihadism, he says.

When the consulate was attacked, Gen. Carter Ham, leader of U.S. Africa Command, didn't have a regular fighting force under his command and couldn't launch a quick rescue, Pham says. He still doesn't.

"We're fighting unconventional asymmetric challenges across the globe, but we're constantly fighting using conventional means -- fighting the last war and not the current one," Pham says.

### Inside the Ring: New al Qaeda threat

Source: <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/jan/30/inside-the-ring-new-al-qaeda-threat/>



A jihadist website posted a new threat by al Qaeda this week that promises to conduct "shocking" attacks on the United States and the West.

The posting appeared on the Ansar al Mujahidin network Sunday and carried the headline, "Map of al Qaeda and its future strikes."

The message, in Arabic, asks: "Where will the next strike by al Qaeda be?" A translation was obtained by Inside the Ring.

"The answer for it, in short: The coming strikes by al Qaeda, with God's Might, will be in the heart of the land of nonbelief, America, and in France, Denmark, other countries in Europe, in the countries that helped and are helping France, and in other places that shall be named by al Qaeda at other times," the threat states.

The attacks will be "strong, serious, alarming, earth-shattering, shocking and terrifying."

Under a section of the post on the method of the attacks, the unidentified writer said the strikes would be "group and lone-wolf operations, in addition to the use of booby-trapped vehicles."

"All operations will be recorded and published in due time," the message said. "Let France be prepared, and let the helpers of France be prepared, for it is going to be a long war of attrition."

The reference to France appears linked to the group's plans for retaliation against the French-led military strikes in northern Mali in operations to oust al Qaeda terrorists from the North African country.

The Ansar al-Mujahidin network is a well-known jihadist forum that in the past has published reliably accurate propaganda messages from al Qaeda and its affiliates.

U.S. counterterrorism actions over the past 10 years have prevented al Qaeda from conducting major attacks. However, U.S. officials warn that the group continues to be dangerous, despite the killing of its top leaders in drone strikes and special operations.

A U.S. official said the threat is being taken seriously by the U.S. government.

"Extremists regularly make threats online," he told Inside the Ring. "This one is not particularly unusual, but of course should be taken seriously."

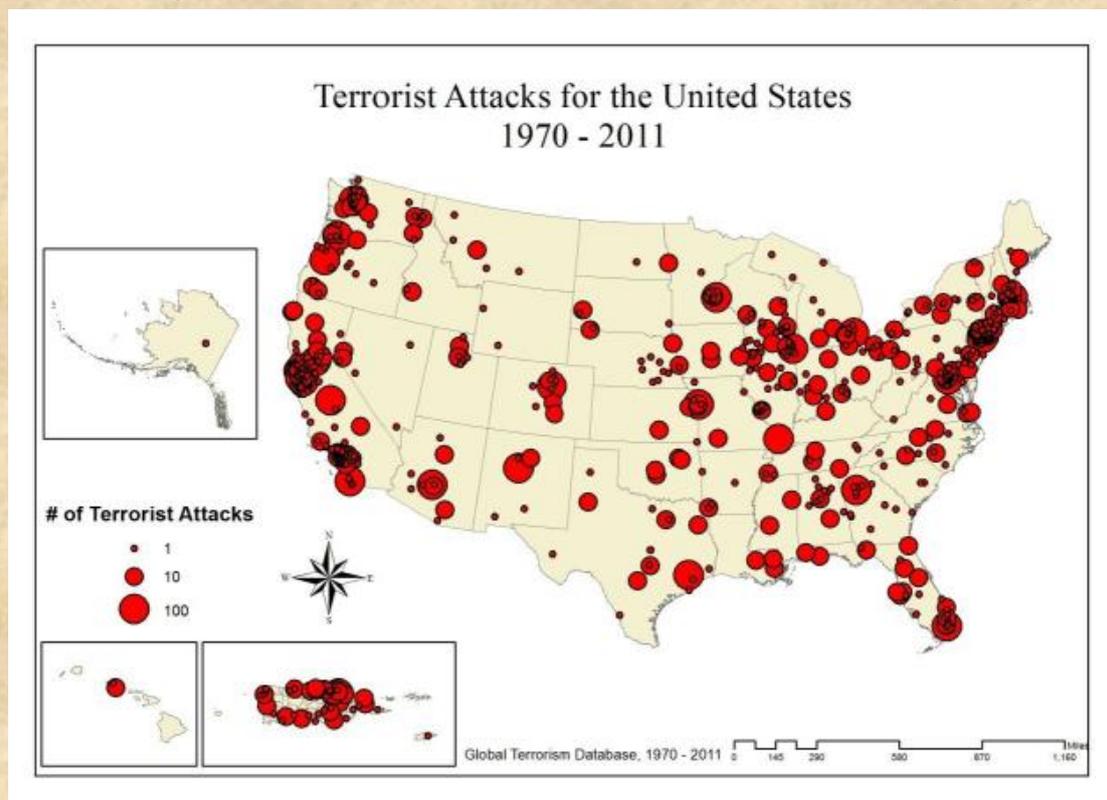


**Trends in terrorism in the U.S.: New report analyzes terrorist attack data 1970-2011**

Source:[http://www.start.umd.edu/start/announcements/announcement.asp?id=478&utm\\_source=START+Announce&utm\\_campaign=129f4ad4b9-START+November+Newsletter&utm\\_medium=email](http://www.start.umd.edu/start/announcements/announcement.asp?id=478&utm_source=START+Announce&utm_campaign=129f4ad4b9-START+November+Newsletter&utm_medium=email)

The most common weapons used in the 207 terrorist attacks in the United States from 2001 to 2011 were incendiary devices and explosives, according to a new report from the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. For the entire duration covered by the study, 1970 to 2011, these two categories accounted for more than

104,000 terrorist attacks from around the world, 38 percent of all of the weapons used in terrorist attacks between 1970 and 2011 were firearms while firearms represented about 13 percent of the weapons used in U.S. terrorist attacks for the same time period. In general, the most commonly used firearms involved readily available types, including shot guns and



81 percent of all the weapons used in the attacks. Incendiary devices accounted for more than half of all weapons used over the last decade, representing a large increase in the use of such weapons compared with the norm for the 1970 to 2011 time period. However, from 2001 to 2011, the use of explosives such as dynamite, grenades and “car bombs,” is markedly lower, accounting for only 20 percent of all weapons used compared with 52 percent for the entire sample from 1970 to 2011. Firearms were used less often in terrorist attacks in the United States than they were in other parts of the world. In START’s Global Terrorism Database (GTD) as a whole, which currently includes information on more than

pistols. The new report focuses on the U.S. segment of START’s GTD and describes trends at the country, state and city levels, among the 2,608 terrorist attacks occurring in the U.S. between 1970 and 2011. Throughout that time period, the frequency of terrorism has generally decreased drastically and fatal attacks are much less common than non-fatal attacks. In focusing on the data on attacks occurring between 2001 and 2011, the authors found:

- There were 21 fatal terrorist attacks in this time period.
- Total attacks declined from a high of 40 in 2001 to nine in 2011.

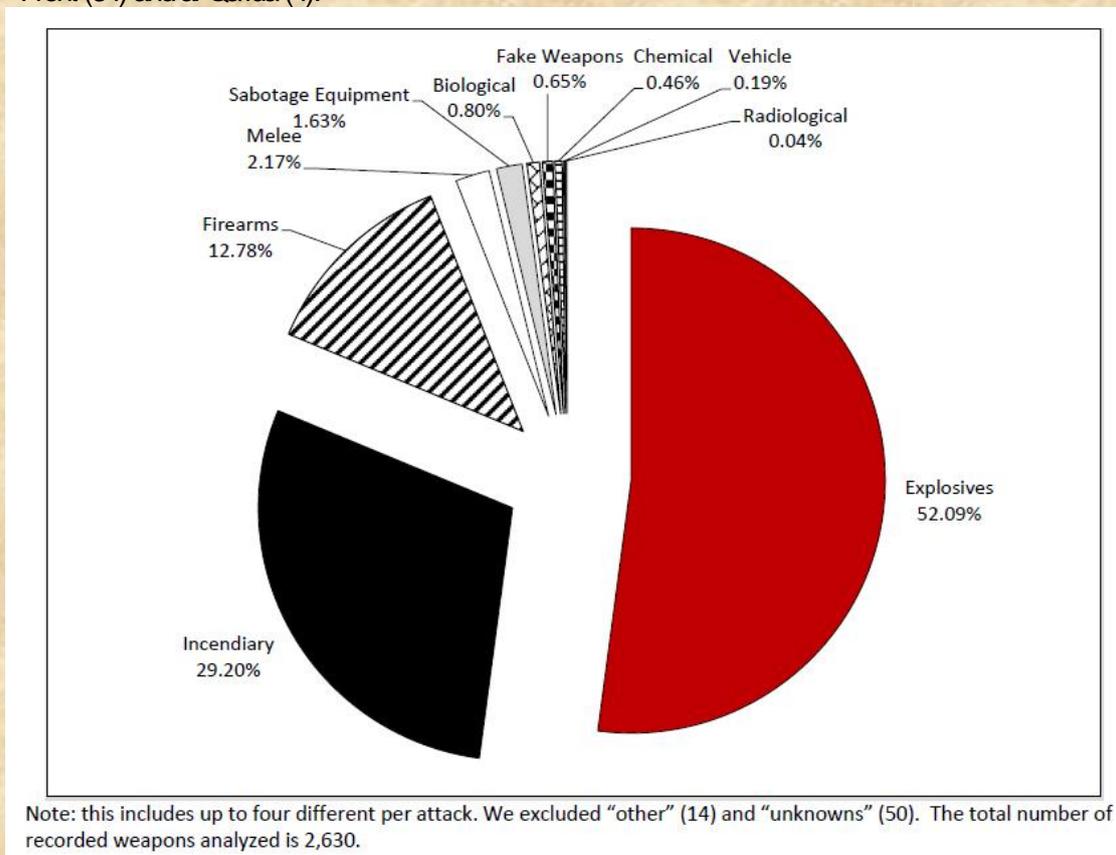


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- From 2001 to 2011 California (40) and New York (19) experienced the most total terrorist attacks against the U.S. homeland.
- The three cities in the United States that experienced the most attacks from 2001 to 2011 were New York City (12), Washington, DC (9) and Los Angeles (8).
- The most common targets of terrorists in the U.S. during this time period were businesses (62 attacks), private citizens and property (59 attacks) and government (43 attacks).
- The three terrorist organizations with the largest number of attacks on the U.S. homeland from 2001 to 2011 were the Earth Liberation Front (50), the Animal Liberation Front (34) and al-Qa'ida (4).

Additionally, the GTD includes incidents involving perpetrators who were “out the door” intending to imminently attack their targets but who were ultimately unsuccessful. The study found that the highest proportion of unsuccessful attacks since 1970 occurred in 2011, when four out of nine recorded attacks were unsuccessful. The lowest proportion of unsuccessful attacks occurred in 1990 when all 31 attacks in the United States were successful.

The study was funded through START by the Department of Homeland Security, Science and Technology Directorate’s Resilient Systems Division.



*The full report, “Integrated United States Security Database (IUSSD): Data on the Terrorist Attacks in the United States Homeland, 1970 to 2011,” is available at [http://www.start.umd.edu/start/publications/START\\_IUSSDDataTerroristAttacksUS\\_1970-2011.pdf](http://www.start.umd.edu/start/publications/START_IUSSDDataTerroristAttacksUS_1970-2011.pdf).*

**U.S. Embassy Bombing In Turkey Was Suicide Attack**

Source:[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/02/01/us-embassy-turkey-suicide-bombing\\_n\\_2597384.html?utm\\_hp\\_ref=world#slide=more278204](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/02/01/us-embassy-turkey-suicide-bombing_n_2597384.html?utm_hp_ref=world#slide=more278204)

In the second deadly assault on a U.S. diplomatic post in five months, a suicide bomber struck the American Embassy in

Ankara on Friday, killing a Turkish security guard in what the White House described as a terrorist attack.



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Washington immediately warned Americans to stay away from all U.S. diplomatic facilities in Turkey and to be wary in large crowds.

Turkish officials said the bombing was linked to leftist domestic militants.

The attack drew condemnation from Turkey, the U.S., Britain and other nations and officials from both Turkey and the U.S. pledged to work

Turkish man was a member of the outlawed Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front, or DHKP-C, which has claimed responsibility for assassinations and bombings since the 1970s.

The group has been designated a terrorist organization by the United States but had been relatively quiet in recent years.



together to fight terrorism.

"We strongly condemn what was a suicide attack against our embassy in Ankara, which took place at the embassy's outer security perimeter," said White House spokesman Jay Carney.

"A suicide bombing on the perimeter of an embassy is by definition an act of terror," he said. "It is a terrorist attack."

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan said police believe the bomber was connected to a domestic leftist militant group. Carney, however, said the motive for the attack and who was behind it was not known.

A Turkish TV journalist was seriously wounded in the 1:15 p.m. blast in the Turkish capital, and two other guards had lighter wounds, officials said.

The state-run Anadolu Agency identified the bomber as Ecevit Sanli. It said the 40-year-old

Hillary Rodham Clinton, in her farewell speech to State Department staff moments after she formally resigned as secretary of state, said "we were attacked and lost one of our foreign service nationals."

She said she spoke with U.S. Ambassador Francis Ricciardone, "our team there and my Turkish counterpart. I told them how much we valued their commitment and their sacrifice."

Sen. John Kerry, the incoming secretary of state, also was briefed.

The U.S. Embassy building in Ankara is heavily protected and located near several other embassies, including those of Germany and France.

U.S. diplomatic facilities in Turkey have been targeted previously by terrorists.

In 2008, an attack blamed on al-Qaida-affiliated militants outside the U.S. Consulate in Istanbul left three



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assailants and three policemen dead.

On Sept. 11, 2012, terrorists attacked a U.S. mission in Benghazi, Libya, killing U.S. Ambassador Chris Stevens and three other

hardened that we only lost the one local security guard. And in fact, there were other security guards inside the building behind the glass who were only shaken up by this."



Americans. The attackers in Libya were suspected to have ties to Islamist extremists, and one is in custody in Egypt.

Friday's bombing occurred at a security checkpoint at the side entrance to the U.S. Embassy, which is used by staff.

State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said a man detonated a suicide vest at the checkpoint on the outer perimeter of the embassy compound.

"He came to this first point of access to the compound ... where you have to have your ID checked, you have to go through security," Nuland said.

The guard who was killed was standing outside the checkpoint, while the two wounded guards "were standing in a more protected area," said Interior Minister Muammer Guler said.

The two were treated on the scene and did not require hospital treatment, he said.

"The level of security protection at our facility in Ankara ensured that there were not significantly more deaths and injuries than there could have been," Nuland told reporters in Washington.

"This is one of the compounds where we have been making steady security upgrades over the last decade," Nuland said. "And in fact, the attack was at one of the exterior compound access sites. So it was far from the main building, and it was a result of the way that was

While praising its security and the response of Turkish authorities, Nuland noted that the embassy in Ankara is due for a completely new compound in future. She described the current main building as a 1950s complex that "needs a full upgrade."

The Hurriyet newspaper said staff at the embassy took shelter in a "safe room" inside the compound soon after the explosion.

Police swarmed the area and immediately cordoned it off. Forensic investigators in white outfits and gloves soon combed the site.

TV news video showed the embassy door blown off its hinges. The blast also shattered the windows of nearby businesses, littering debris on the ground and across the road. The inside of the embassy did not appear to be damaged.

Television video also showed what appeared to be a U.S. guard in a helmet and body armor surveying the area from the roof of an embassy building.

In a statement, the U.S. Embassy thanked Turkey for "its solidarity and outrage over the incident."

Ricciardone declared that the U.S. and Turkey "will continue to fight terrorism together," and described the U.S. Embassy compound as secure.

"From today's event, it is clear that we both suffer from this terrible, terrible



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problem of today's world. We are determined after events like this even more to cooperate together until we defeat this problem together," he said.

Erdogan echoed that sentiment, saying the attack aimed to disturb Turkey's "peace and prosperity" and demonstrated a need for international cooperation against terrorism.

"We will stand firm and we will overcome this together," he said.

Nuland said U.S. officials were "working closely with the Turkish national police to make a full assessment of the damage and the casualties, and to begin an investigation."

Carney, the White House spokesman, said the attack would strengthen the resolve of Turkey

He also paid tribute to the Turkish guard who was killed, calling him a "Turkish hero" who died while defending U.S. and Turkish staff.

Americans in Turkey were warned to avoid visiting the embassy or U.S. consulates in Istanbul and Adana until further notice and were told to register on the State Department's website.

"The Department of State advises U.S. citizens traveling or residing in Turkey to be alert to the potential for violence, to avoid those areas where disturbances have occurred, and to avoid demonstrations and large gatherings," the U.S. Consulate in Istanbul said in a statement.

British Foreign Secretary William Hague

condemned the attack "in the strongest terms" and said Turkey and the U.S. will get the U.K.'s full support as they seek to hold those responsible to account.

NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen added his condemnation, calling it "an outrageous attack" that



and the U.S.

"Turkey remains one of our strongest partners in the region, a NATO ally," he said. "We have worked shoulder-to-shoulder with the Turks to counter terror threats. Turkey has been a very important ally, broadly speaking and in the effort to counter terrorism."

Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu vowed Turkey would spare no effort in protecting diplomatic facilities.

"We have always shown great sensitivity to the protection of foreign missions and we will continue to do so," he said.

The injured journalist was 38-year-old Didem Tuncay, who until recently had worked for NTV television. A hospital official said she was "not in critical condition."

Ricciardone visited her in the hospital and told reporters outside that he had invited her to the U.S. Embassy for tea.

"shows a reckless disregard for human life and for the inviolability of diplomatic staff."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu sent a message to President Barack Obama, saying he was "shocked and saddened to learn of the vicious terrorist attack."

Ed Royce, the chairman of the U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee, said the attack was "another stark reminder of the constant terrorist threat against U.S. facilities, personnel and interests abroad."

"Coming after Benghazi, it underscores the need for a comprehensive review of security at our diplomatic posts. The committee stands ready to assist the State Department in protecting our diplomats," he said in a statement.

Turkey's parliament speaker, Cemil Cicek, linked Friday's attack to the arrest last month of nine Turkish



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human rights lawyers, who prosecutors have accused of links to the DHKP-C.

"There was an operation against this organization," Cicek said and suggested the attack could be an attempt by the group to "say 'We are still here, we are alive.'"

James F. Jeffrey, a visiting fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy who was U.S. ambassador in Turkey between 2008 and 2010, said DHKP-C was a resilient group that had been "relatively quiescent" in recent years. He said the organization was born out of the 1970s European tradition of pro-communist terrorism, and he drew a parallel with Germany's now-defunct Baader-Meinhof gang.

"I do not see them as a major threat compared to al-Qaida," Jeffrey said of DHKP-C in a conference call with journalists. The group, he said, typically attacks with small arms and conducts periodic assaults "just to make sure people know they're still out there."

He said it seemed to have "very deep roots" and means of recruitment in several urban centers, including Istanbul, Ankara and possibly the coastal city of Izmir. Jeffrey said it was unlikely the attack was a response to recent regional developments – including, for example, Israel's strike this week on a Syrian target – but did not rule out that DHKP-C

conducted the bombing as a kind of subcontractor for another group.

He also said the embassy's strong defenses worked as they were supposed to, with the "minimum number of casualties" for such a grave attack.

"It's a very hard perimeter to crack, as we saw today," Jeffrey said.

In past years, the DHKP-C group has spearheaded hunger strikes against Turkish prison conditions that led to the deaths of dozens of inmates. The protesters opposed a maximum-security system in which prisoners were held in small cells instead of large wards.

In September, police said a leftist militant threw a grenade and then blew himself up outside a police station in Istanbul, killing a police officer and injuring seven others. Police identified the bomber as a member of the DHKP-C.

In 2008, Turkish police said they had foiled a bomb plot by DHKP-C against some U.S. companies in Turkey.

Turkey has also seen attacks linked to homegrown Islamic militants tied to al-Qaida. In a 2003 attack on the British consulate in Istanbul, a suspected Islamic militant rammed an explosive-laden pickup truck into the main gate, killing 58 people, including the British consul-general.

**EDITOR'S COMMENT:** From the photos released and comments made, the hardening defense measures in the Embassy are obvious (raining poles, blast proof windows and doors, metal frames [possible for RPG attack] in escape stairs and windows, metal detector, safe room etc). But for what purpose? What is obvious for us, is also obvious for the terrorists (rule No1). If they want to proceed to an attack they will have to identify gaps in security (rule No2). If we want to effectively defend against terrorist attack security planners will have to think like terrorists (rule No3). The latter is the problem and security planners need to take it under serious consideration. In most cases, planners are desk officers with no field experience. They have little knowledge of terrorists' modus operandi both at national and international levels and in most cases they try to solve security problems based on promises of modern technology paying no attention to human innovation and importance of the element of surprise. For an Embassy in an urban area, with a road just adjacent to the perimeter of the building, surrounded by other buildings (sometimes higher than the Embassy) and tighten security due to the presence of other Embassies in the area, suicide bombing was the only attack solution. And this only solution was not predicted or intercepted. When the US Embassy of Athens was RPG attacked, this happened from the street level opposite the Embassy. There was not invisible second perimetric surveillance line most probably due to the fortification of the main building against intrusion, VBIED, fire arms shooting and similar conventional methods of attack. So attacking from a distance was the best solution. Thinking like a terrorist is an ongoing process, constantly updating and the only solution to avoid unpleasant surprises that cost lives. What would be really an unexpected surprise could be a Marsian spaceship landing in the main Embassy yard and fire with laser guns against the building and the people working there! Not a suicide bomber in the US Embassy in Ankara!



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**British troops deploy Black Hornet nano UAV**

Source: <http://www.shephardmedia.com/news/uv-online/british-troops-deploy-black-hornet-nano-uav/>



Black Hornet measures around 4 inches by 1 inch and weighs 16 grams; and is designed to provide troops with situational awareness via a micro camera that delivers full motion video and still images. Images are displayed on a handheld terminal, giving troops the ability to see around corners, over walls and other battlefield obstacles. The system is capable of performing in harsh environments and windy conditions.



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see around corners, over walls and other battlefield obstacles. The system is capable of performing in harsh environments and windy conditions. The UK MoD has acquired the system from Prox Dynamics of



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Norway as part of a £20 million contract for 160 units with Marlborough Communications Ltd (MCL). As the prime contractor for the nano UAV project, MCL based in Horley, Surrey, will have ultimate responsibility for delivery of equipment, training, spares, publications, logistics and repairs.

Sergeant Christopher Petherbridge, of the Brigade Reconnaissance Force in Afghanistan, said: 'Black Hornet is definitely adding value, especially considering the light weight nature of it. We used it to look for insurgent firing points and check out exposed areas of the ground

before crossing which is a real asset. It is very easy to operate and offers amazing capability to the guys on the ground.'

Philip Dunne, Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology, said: 'Black Hornet gives our troops the benefits of surveillance in the palm of their hands. It is extremely light and portable whilst out on patrol. Intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance systems are a key component in our 10 year equipment plan and now that we have balanced the defence budget we are able to confidently invest in these kinds of cutting-edge technologies.'

**Terrorists with Western links a growing threat**

**By Robert H. Reid** (Associated Press)

Source:[http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/H/HOMEGROWN\\_TERRORISTS?SITE=ININS&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT](http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/H/HOMEGROWN_TERRORISTS?SITE=ININS&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT)

They are called "homegrown terrorists," Western citizens highly prized by Islamic militant groups because they can move across borders and carry out attacks easier than people from Middle East or South Asian nations.

Two such people - one Canadian and one Australian - are believed to have been involved in the July 18 bus bombing in Bulgaria that killed five Israeli tourists and a Bulgarian driver, according to Bulgarian investigators. Interior Minister Tsvetan Tsvetanov of Bulgaria said the two were members of the Lebanese Shiite Muslim militant group Hezbollah, which in turn is linked to Iran.

Here are some examples of Western citizens who have been linked to terrorism either in their home countries or abroad in recent years:



**LONDON SUBWAY BOMBING**

Four young Britons - three of Pakistani and one of Jamaican origin - carried out a series of suicide attacks July 7, 2005, on the London public transport that killed 56 people. More than 700 people were injured. All four had lived normal lives under the police radar and had no criminal records. They carried home-made bombs in backpacks. Al-Qaida released video testimonies of two of the bombers who denounced the West and declared their allegiance to Osama bin Laden.



**SHOE BOMBER**

Richard Reid was a British citizen who converted to Islam in prison. After his release he traveled to Afghanistan and Pakistan, where authorities say he trained with al-Qaida. More than three months after Sept. 11 attacks, Reid boarded an American Airlines flight in Paris bound for Miami and tried to

detonate a bomb in his shoes. He was subdued by passengers and crew members, and the



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plane landed safely in Boston. In 2002, Reid was sentenced to life without parole after pleading guilty to eight counts of terrorism and attempting to destroy a commercial airliner.



**DAVID COLEMAN HEADLEY**

Headley, a Pakistani-American, used his U.S. passport to travel frequently to India, where he allegedly scouted out venues for terror attacks on behalf of the Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorist organization. The al-Qaida-affiliated group used the information to plan and carry out the 2008 attacks in Mumbai, India, in which more than 160 people died. Last month, Headley was

sentenced by a U.S. federal court in Chicago to 35 years in prison for his role in the Mumbai attacks.



**TIMES SQUARE FAILED BOMBING**

On May 1, 2010, two street vendors alerted police to smoke coming out of a vehicle parked on New York's Time Square - an area teeming with tourists. Police found the vehicle was rigged with a bomb that failed to explode. Two days later, federal agents in New York arrested Faisal Shahzad, 30, a Pakistan-born U.S. citizen who lived in Bridgeport, Connecticut, after he had boarded a flight bound for Dubai in the Persian

Gulf. Shahzad confessed to the attempted car bombing and said he had trained at a Pakistani terror training camp. Shahzad was sentenced to life imprisonment in October 2010.



**ANWAR AL-AWLAKI**

Al-Awlaki was born in 1971 in New Mexico, where his father was studying agriculture as a Fulbright scholar. The son was educated in the United States but left in 2002, eventually returning to Yemen where he became a key figure in the local al-Qaida branch, which U.S. authorities believed was the most dangerous of the al-Qaida franchises. Al-Awlaki's fluent English and articulate speaking style won him a huge following among disaffected young Muslims in the West. He and another American, Samir Khan, who edited al-Qaida's Internet magazine, were killed in a U.S. drone attack in Yemen on Sept. 30, 2011.



**MAJ. NIDAL MALIK HASAN**

Born in Arlington, Virginia, to Palestinian parents, Hasan joined the U.S. Army in college and became a military psychiatrist. Colleagues said during an assignment at Walter Reed Medical Center, he was deeply affected by dealing with young soldiers wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan. FBI investigators alleged that he corresponded by email with al-Awlaki. Hasan was wounded and captured by police on Nov. 5, 2009, after he allegedly opened fire on soldiers in Fort Hood, Texas, killing 13 and wounding more than two dozen. Hasan, who was paralyzed from the waist down in the shooting, was charged with 13 counts of premeditated murder and 32 counts of attempted premeditated murder. A trial date has not been set, and he could face the death penalty if convicted.



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**ADAM GADAHN**

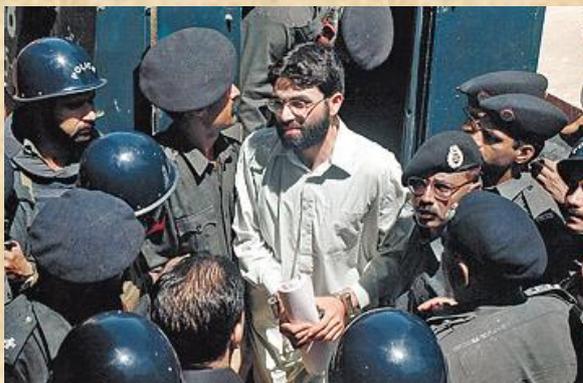
Born Adam Pearlman in Oregon, Gadahn converted to Islam in 1995 and moved to Pakistan, where he joined al-Qaida as a propagandist. Using the name "Azzam the American," he appeared in numerous al-Qaida videos, denouncing U.S. moves in Afghanistan and elsewhere and threatening attacks on Western interests abroad. U.S. authorities filed treason charges against him in 2006 and have offered a \$1 million reward for information leading to his arrest or conviction. Despite rumors he had been killed or captured, Gadahn appeared in a video last September marking the 11th anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks.



**GLASGOW AIRPORT ATTACK**

On June 30, 2007, a jeep loaded with propane canisters slammed into the terminal of the Glasgow International Airport in Scotland, setting the building on fire. Five bystanders were injured. Both occupants of the vehicle were arrested. Police identified them as Bilal Abdulla, a British-born, Muslim doctor of Iraqi descent and Kafeel Ahmed, the driver. Anti-terrorism officials said Abdulla became radicalized due to the Iraq war. Ahmed, an Indian engineering student, died of his burns.

Abdulla was convicted of conspiracy to commit murder and was sentenced to 32 years in prison.



**AHMAD OMAR SAEED SHEKH**

Following his education in Britain, the British-born Sheikh traveled to South Asia, where he joined Islamic militant groups. He was sent to prison for kidnapping Western tourists in India in 1994, but was released to Pakistan five years later in an exchange of prisoners following the hijacking of an Indian airliner to Afghanistan. In 2002 he was convicted of kidnapping and murder in the death of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl and sentenced to death. His appeal is still pending

in a Pakistani court.



**Terrorism**

By Saul, Ben

Published by Hart Publishing (01 Feb 2012)

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Pages: 1620

Source: <http://isbs.com/partnumber.asp?cid=&pnid=294637>

International anti-terrorism measures existed long before September 11, 2001, but have increased markedly since then. A myriad of norms in different branches of law are now deployed to confront transnational and domestic terrorism. There is also a proliferating body of 'soft law' addressing terrorism, stemming from United Nations organs, specialized international bodies, and regional organizations. It is timely to draw together these diverse legal developments over



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time into a single reference work. Bringing the original documents together provides for ease of reference and enables scholars, practitioners, and students to more easily compare and contrast various sources. This book's coverage of terrorism is comprehensive (thematically, organizationally, geographically, and temporally) and is open to a balance of sources (hard and soft), but is judicious in its selection and prioritization of the most significant and representative documents in a field where there are many repetitive or insubstantial documents. Importantly, the book looks beyond the traditional trans-Atlantic bias towards European, British, and American sources in this area to include materials from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. Taken as a whole, the book aids in providing evidence for the emerging field of international anti-terrorism law. (Series: Documents in International Law)

### The Double Agent Who Infiltrated Al Qaeda

Source: <http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2013/02/11/the-double-agent-who-infiltrated-al-qaeda.html>



*This is an abridged and translated version of the investigative reporting project that won the European Press Prize in the News Reporting Category last month. Originally published in the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten, it recounts the extraordinary story of Morten Storm, a former agent of the Danish secret service, and his role in helping the CIA locate the American-born al Qaeda leader Anwar al-Awlaki, who was killed by U.S. drones in Yemen with three other suspected members of al Qaeda in a targeted assassination in September 2011.*

*Dismayed that he wasn't credited by American officials for his help finding Awlaki, Storm approached Jyllands-Posten with his story. Journalists interviewed him for more than 120 hours and vigorously checked his extraordinary account against a trove of documents and email messages as well as audio and video recordings that he provided. The Danish intelligence agency PET provided a statement to the reporters, but the CIA did not return requests for comment.*

*The story is Storm's account of his own role in a high-profile targeted assassination of a U.S. citizen by U.S. forces. With its cloak-and-dagger plot twists, it's an astonishing story that provides a glimpse into the strange—and sometimes strained—partnerships in the war on terror.*



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The American is traveling with his cohorts in two pickup trucks through the rugged desert in northern Yemen. Around 9:30 a.m., the trucks pull over, and a slight man, with a bushy beard and wire-rimmed glasses, steps out of one of the trucks. His small frame belies his importance: Anwar al-Awlaki is the leader of al Qaeda in Yemen, and one of the most wanted terrorists in the world.

Born in New Mexico to Yemeni parents and trained as an engineer, the 40-year-old Awlaki has grown into a brilliant orator and strategist within the terror network, suspected of involvement in an attempted Christmas Day airplane bombing in 2009, among other things. For more than a year, his name has been on the CIA “kill list”—one of a number of people whose assassination President Barack Obama has authorized.

The men sit down to eat a breakfast of tea and dates when a sound from the sky unnerves them. It’s the morning of Sept. 30, 2011. And the sound the men are hearing is the sound of two unmanned drones, sent from a secret U.S. military base somewhere in the Arabian Peninsula. As the men start running back toward the pickup trucks, they are struck by Hellfire missiles fired from the drones. None survive.

In Washington, President Obama hails the assassination as “another significant milestone in the broader effort to defeat al Qaeda.”

Unmentioned in the subsequent news accounts detailing the hunt for Awlaki is the unlikely double agent who infiltrated the innermost circles of al Qaeda in Yemen—a burly, redheaded, 37-year-old Dane who appears to have been a central character in a bizarre U.S.-Danish mission to track down the terror leader. This is the story of Morten Storm, who has since decided to go underground, fearing for his safety.

For almost 10 years before this story begins, Storm was an internationally well-known figure in radical Islamist circles, known by the nickname Murad Storm. A convicted criminal who had converted to Islam, Storm visited mosques throughout Europe and the Middle East, speaking openly about the need for armed jihad.

But, he says, a series of complicated events in 2006 prompted a crisis of faith and left him disillusioned with the cause. No longer a believer, he decided to become a double agent and, in the winter of 2006, called the Danish

Security and Intelligence Service, also known as PET.

Well aware of who he was, the Danish security agency took his call and quickly arranged a meeting between him and agents from the British intelligence agencies, The Security Service (MI5) and the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) at a tony hotel near Regent’s Park in London. Later, PET facilitated a meeting between the CIA and Storm, which took place at the Scandic Hotel in central Copenhagen. During these and subsequent meetings, the agents discussed possible ways in which Storm could infiltrate radical Islamist groups.

One plan, involving the procurement of a European bride for Awlaki, so worried the Brits they opted out of the partnership. But the American and Danish intelligence agencies continued to work with Storm, he says, and by the end of 2006, the Dane was leading a double life. In radical Islamic circles in Europe and the Middle East, he was known as the militant Murad; with agency handlers, he was Aghi—meaning “brother” in Arabic—an undercover agent trying to infiltrate a dangerous terror network.

Danish and American intelligence agencies “knew that Anwar saw me as his friend and confidant,” Storm said. “They knew that I would be able to reach him and find out where he was hiding. That meant that I would be able to help ... in the process of tracking down Anwar so the Americans could set up a drone attack and kill him. That was the plan.”

Storm had first met Awlaki earlier in 2006 at the house of Awlaki’s father, Nasser al-Awlaki. At the time, Storm was living in Sana, Yemen’s capital, where he studied Islam and Arabic at Al Imam University, a university known to teach a radical form of Islam and led by Abdul-Majid al-Zindani, whose other students had included Anwar al-Awlaki and Osama bin Laden.

In part because of their shared Western background, Awlaki and Storm grew close, Storm says. “Anwar did not see me as one of his ordinary students of Islam, nor did he see me as a pupil. He saw me more as a friend. We both came from the West, and we could speak freely to each other, while others who came to his lessons treated him with the utmost respect.”

Over the next several years, Awlaki, whose star was on the rise within al Qaeda, began to make use of



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Storm, asking him to bring him equipment including flashlights, solar panels, and Leatherman knives as he traveled between Europe and Yemen. At the same time, the Western intelligence agencies pursued their own goals.

“The people from the CIA instructed me to buy two sets of everything so that their technicians could check if it was possible to hide tracking equipment,” says Storm. “Their objective was to place a sender that would enable them to track down al-Awlaki.”

Nothing came of the plans, though, until Storm visited Awlaki on Sept. 17, 2009.

The terror leader, now on America’s most-wanted list, was hiding out in southern Yemen where radical Islamists held sway. As a tribal leader led him to Awlaki, Storm feared that, this time, someone would call his bluff. But Awlaki greeted him warmly, embracing him in front of 30-some mujahedin warriors and asking him to join them for dinner. After the meal, Awlaki and Storm left the others to talk privately, and Awlaki started to list what he wanted his friend Murad to do.

Beyond equipment and help with fundraising, the two discussed terror attacks.

“He wanted to attack the big shopping centers in the West ... by using biological weapons. But I said that I didn’t want to take part in killing civilians—I could only agree to attacking military targets,” Storm says. “Of course I wouldn’t have helped him carry out any kind of terrorist actions. But I had to let him think that I was on his side.”

According to the stamp in his passport, the double agent left Yemen two days later. It was the last time the two men saw each other.

Upon his return, Storm was debriefed by agents from the Danish, British, and American intelligence services at a London hotel. A couple of weeks later, another CIA meeting took place at a hotel in central Copenhagen. Here, Storm was shown a number of satellite photos of a southern province in Yemen.

The agents wanted Storm to pinpoint the place where he had met Awlaki—something he says he did. A few months later, Yemeni troops attacked the Yemeni safe house in a large-scale operation, killing its owner. But by then, Awlaki had already left. In an email dated Jan. 17, 2010, the terrorist leader wrote to Storm:

“Do you remember the guy you stayed with? It has been confirmed that he has been killed. I had just spoken to him a while ago and told

him to escape into the mountains if the government troops decided to attack. He said that he would fight to the death ... and that is what happened.”

After the attack, the Americans lost track of Awlaki, and Storm volunteered to find him.

By spring of 2011, Storm met with three agents from PET whose code names were “Klang,” “Olde,” and “Abu Kaj” at a seaside hotel north of Copenhagen. Another agent, a slight, redheaded woman, gave Storm an iPhone and an Acer Aspire One computer, which he was to use for all communication.

“The mission discussed at the meeting was clear: al-Awlaki had to be killed,” says Storm. “The people from PET believed that I could lead them and the Americans to Anwar. That turned out to be true.”

Since Qaeda leadership believed that the Yemeni government was keeping an eye on Storm, however, it was no longer possible for Storm to meet directly with Awlaki, who had disappeared into the Yemeni hinterland. To try to contact the terror leader, Storm wrote an email to the Qaeda magazine *Inspire* signing off as “Polar Bear,” a nickname bestowed by the terror leader. Storm wrote that he would soon be arriving in Yemen and that he was ready to help Awlaki with anything he might need. Awlaki, who was heavily involved with the magazine, answered that he would send Storm a message by courier, and that the message would be stored on a USB flash drive. Storm immediately called the PET from the iPhone given to him at the latest meeting, telling the agency that he was in contact with Awlaki.

The plan, Storm says, was for the CIA to track down Awlaki either by making the USB flash drive traceable by satellite or simply by trying to follow the courier who would carry the message from Storm to Awlaki.

Storm arrived in Yemen on June 23, 2011, and managed to establish contact within days of his arrival with someone Awlaki trusted. According to his passport, he left the country again five days later, only to return in late July, spending the following weeks trying to establish a secure contact. Storm sent Awlaki a message listing three different times and locations where the courier would be able to meet him—a standard safety precaution within al Qaeda. Storm told Awlaki that he would only wait 15 minutes at each location before leaving because he



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was concerned that people might notice him. No one showed up on the first two nights Storm suggested, but on the third night, Aug. 14, the courier arrived on time at the agreed spot, the entrance to the Yemen Mall, carrying a USB flash drive with a message from Awlaki as well as \$300. Awlaki wanted his friend Storm to buy some personal items for him and send them back to him with the courier. That same evening, Storm went to Hadda Street in Sana to buy the things Awlaki wanted, handing them off to the courier when they met later in a restaurant called Alhamra.

A few days later, Awlaki sent a thank-you message to Storm—and the two continued to correspond.

“On the last USB flash drive that I received from Anwar, he asked me to find out what the West had been writing about him and his plans to carry out a ricin attack,” Storm recalls. “He also asked me to find a transportable fridge where he could store elements to be used in biological weapons. He asked me to bring it the next time I visited Yemen.”

Storm contacted PET and was told to come to a meeting in southern Spain to discuss a plan of action. Before he left, he contacted Awlaki to let him know that he was leaving the country on a private trip but that he would hand over a flash drive, containing the newspaper articles he had found, to a middleman in Sana that Awlaki knew and trusted.

In Malaga, Storm met the Danish agents Klang, Olde, and Abu Kaj along with “Hvalper” and “Jed,” an American agent who had been Storm’s CIA handler in Denmark for so many years that he was even mentioned in a Christmas card sent by the agents to Storm at one point.

“Everyone’s spirits were high, and we were giving each other high-fives because we sensed that we were close to locating Anwar,” Storm says. “The American said that the bounty on Anwar’s head was enormous, and that the account had no expiration date because they wanted him dead. The PET was present during the meeting in Malaga, as always, when I met with the CIA. The PET knew and accepted the consequences of the mission—they were fully aware that al-Awlaki would be killed.”

A few days later, in early September, Storm received a call from the middleman, who said he was about to meet Awlaki’s courier to give

him the flash drive with the news articles so the courier could bring it to Awlaki.

Storm says he called PET straight away to tell them where the exchange would take place; the Danish agents told him they would contact the Americans immediately with the information. Later, the middleman in Sana told Storm the courier had met him at the mall and received the USB flash drive with the news stories.

Three weeks later, Storm saw on the news that Awlaki had been killed. The CIA drones had found their target.

Storm believed he had played a key part in helping the Americans track down Awlaki before the assassination, and was therefore surprised when the Danish agent Klang told him that the Americans denied that, crediting instead intelligence from a separate mission. Frustrated that he wasn’t getting his proper due and recognition, Storm told PET he no longer wanted to have anything to do with the Americans. But the Danish agents tried to smooth things over by setting up a meeting between Storm and a CIA representative by the name of Michael, who Storm had been told had recently taken over from Jed.

The meeting was to take place exactly a week after the attack on Awlaki at the same seaside hotel north of Copenhagen where he had met the Danish agents before. But Storm had grown distrustful and decided to use his cellphone to record the meeting. On the recording, the voices of several Danes can be heard (later identified as the PET agents) trying to persuade Storm to talk to the American, who is nearby. Storm reluctantly agrees and the Danish agents lead him to an apartment near the hotel, where he is left alone in the living room with Michael as the other agents make coffee in the kitchen.

During the conversation, the American can be heard saying that “al-Awlaki was an evil man” who “had to be neutralized.” During the exchange, the man also confirms that Storm has worked for the CIA and PET for many years, and that Storm and PET have played a crucial role in helping track down Awlaki. The agent even suggests that President Obama knows who Storm is.

Michael: “I want you to understand, this was a team. All of this was a team effort, which involved a team from my organization—me here with you guys, Jed who was with you, OK. For this



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long period of time—it was not—we had our team, we had a project going. And you played the most important role in it. OK. And it's because of that that there is a lot of people in my government—and when I say a lot, I mean, a few chosen ones ...”

Storm: “Yes, we all know Alex, we all know George [CIA agents that Storm met] and you know—all the others.”

Michael: “Yes, but I am not talking about Alex and George, you know. I'm talking about ...”

Storm, laughing: “What, Obama?”

Michael: “I am talking about the president of the United States of America ... he knows you ... he knows about you. So the right people know what you have contributed with. And we are grateful for that.”

At same time, however, Michael insists that, to his knowledge, it wasn't Storm's mission but a parallel operation that located Awlaki.

The CIA did not return requests for comment.

Asked to account for PET's role in planning the mission that killed Awlaki, Jakob Scharf, who heads the Danish agency, wrote in a statement:

“Out of consideration for PET's operational work, the PET neither can nor will confirm publicly that specific persons have been used as sources by the PET. Furthermore, the PET is prevented from publicly passing on information about specific source operations. However, the PET does not participate in or

support operations where the objective is to kill civilians. The PET did therefore not contribute to the military operation that led to the killing of al-Awlaki in Yemen.”

Asked if the Danish agency had been involved in the parallel operation that supposedly localized the terrorist leader, Scharf didn't want to comment further.

Storm remains unconvinced by the explanation of the parallel operation.

“It all fits with the plan we had made,” he says. “My trusted middleman in Yemen told me that the courier who came to pick up the USB flash drive was a young boy of 15, 17 years. And the time fits, too.”

In several news accounts after the attack, Western security officials are quoted as saying the CIA, or Yemeni agents working for the CIA, detained a junior courier close to Awlaki, and that it happened in early September—around the time that Awlaki's courier was picking up Storm's flash drive in Sana.

“The entire execution as described by the CIA is exactly as we planned it,” Storm says.

“I am convinced that the CIA caught the courier who came to pick up the USB flash drive on my orders, and that this event led them to Anwar's hiding place. But, apparently, the Americans do not want to recognize that it was a PET agent from a small country like Denmark who led them to Anwar.”

### Soft Targets Back in Focus

By Scott Stewart (Stratof, Vice President of Analysis)

Source: [http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/soft-targets-back-focus?utm\\_source=feedlist-f&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=20130214&utm\\_term=sweekly&utm\\_content=readmore&elq=b1c68f23ba1c4e83a9987eacaeaf88ba](http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/soft-targets-back-focus?utm_source=feedlist-f&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20130214&utm_term=sweekly&utm_content=readmore&elq=b1c68f23ba1c4e83a9987eacaeaf88ba)

From time to time, I will sit down to write a series of analyses on a particular topic, such as the fundamentals of terrorism series last February. Other times, unrelated events in different parts of the world are tied together by analytical threads, naturally becoming a series. This is what has happened with the last three weekly security analyses – a common analytical narrative has risen to connect them.

First, we discussed how the Jan. 16 attack against the Tigantourine natural gas facility near Ain Amenas, Algeria, would result in increased security at energy facilities in the region. Second, we discussed foreign interventions in Libya and Syria and how they

have regional or even global consequences that can persist for years. Finally, last week we discussed how the robust, layered security at the U.S. Embassy in Ankara served to thwart a suicide bombing.

Together, these topics spotlight the heightened and persistent terrorist threat in North Africa as well as Turkey and the Levant. They also demonstrate that militants in those regions will be able to acquire weapons with ease. But perhaps the most important lesson from them is that as diplomatic missions are withdrawn or downsized and as security is increased at embassies and energy facilities, the threat is



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going to once again shift toward softer targets.

### Soft Targets

Obviously, individuals desiring to launch a terrorist attack seek to strike the highest-profile, most symbolic target possible. If it is well known, the target can magnify the terror, especially when the operation grabs the attention of international media. Such extensive exposure not only allows people around the globe to be informed minute by minute about unfolding events, but it also permits them to become secondary, vicarious victims of the unfolding violence. The increased exposure also ensures that the audience affected by the operation becomes far larger than just those in the immediate vicinity of the attack. The attack on the U.S. diplomatic office in Benghazi and the killing of U.S. Ambassador Christopher Stevens led to months of media coverage that has included televised congressional hearings and fierce partisan and bureaucratic squabbles in the media. It was the terrorist equivalent of winning the lottery.

However, in the wake of terrorist attacks, increased situational awareness and security measures make successful attacks difficult to replicate. Targets become more difficult to attack – what we refer to as hard targets. When this happens, attackers are forced to either escalate the size and force used in their attack, identify a vulnerability they can exploit or risk failure.

In the August 1998 attacks against the U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, al Qaeda planners turned to the first option: a larger attack. They attempted to use large truck bombs to overcome the embassies' layered security. The embassies had decent perimeter security but lacked enough distance between the street and the buildings to protect them from a large blast. In both attacks, the attackers also tried unsuccessfully to get the bomb-laden trucks through perimeter security vehicle checkpoints to detonate them closer to the embassy buildings.

After those bombings, security enhancements made most diplomatic facilities more difficult to attack, leading militant groups to turn their attention to hotels. A strike on an international hotel in a major city can make almost the same kind of statement against the West as a strike on an embassy. Hotels are often full of Western business travelers, diplomats,

intelligence officers and, not insignificantly, members of the media. This has made hotels target-rich environments for militants seeking to kill Westerners and gain international media attention without having to penetrate the extreme security of a hard target like a modern embassy.

But increased security is not the only factor that leads those wishing to conduct a terrorist attack to gravitate toward softer targets. For the better part of a decade, we have chronicled how the global jihadist movement has devolved from an organizational model based on centralized leadership and focused global goals to a more amorphous model based on regional franchises with local goals and strong grassroots support. For the most part, these regional franchises lack the training and funding of the al Qaeda core and are therefore less capable. This means franchise groups are often unable to attack hard targets and tend to focus on softer targets – such as hotels or the U.S. ambassador while he is staying at a poorly protected office in Benghazi rather than at his residence in Tripoli.

### Changing Threats in North Africa

As hotels in places like Amman and Jakarta became harder to attack with large vehicle bombs, attackers began to smuggle in smaller devices to bypass the increased security. There was also a trend in which attackers hit restaurants where Westerners congregated rather than the more secure hotels.

The same dynamic will likely apply today in the Sahel. We believe that the attack at the Tigantourine natural gas facility in Algeria was greatly aided by the complacency of the security forces. The attackers did not demonstrate any sort of advanced terrorist tactics or tradecraft. It would be very hard to replicate the attack on another energy facility in the region today due to increases in awareness and security. The increase in security will be compounded by the fact that al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and its jihadist brethren in the Sahel lack sophisticated terrorist capabilities and have lost their bases in northern Mali. This means they will be hard-pressed to conduct a successful attack against a hard target.

Furthermore, having lost substantial quantities of men and materiel, and with French and African forces potentially interdicting their lucrative



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smuggling routes, these jihadist groups will be looking to refill their coffers. Kidnapping is a longstanding way for militant groups in the region to resolve precisely these issues. Although they have lost control of the towns they captured in northern Mali, these groups will continue to pose a threat of kidnapping over a wide swath of North Africa.

### Turkey and Lebanon

While the jihadist militants in Syria are currently fixated on attacking the Syrian regime, there is nonetheless a non-jihadist threat in Turkey – and perhaps Lebanon – that emanates from the Syrian intelligence and its proxy groups in the region. However, the Feb. 1 attack against the U.S. Embassy in Ankara demonstrated the limitations of the capabilities of one of those proxies, the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front.

Carrying on the operational legacy of its parent organization, Devrimci Sol, the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front aspires to conduct spectacular attacks, but its attacks frequently fizzle or fail. Successfully striking a hardened target such as the U.S. Embassy is beyond the group's capability. In fact, the group frequently botches attacks against softer targets, as in the attack against an American fast food chain outlet in May 2012 that failed when the explosive device malfunctioned.

The Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front's limited tactical capability supports the theory that the attack against the U.S. Embassy in Ankara was commissioned by the Syrian regime. The group has even failed in suicide bombings against Turkish police stations with far less security; it knew it was attacking something beyond its reach. But at the same time, the group's limited capability and the failure of the attack against the U.S. Embassy will likely result in a shift to softer

targets if the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front was acting at Syria's behest and the Syrians have asked for additional anti-American attacks.

As noted last week, Devrimci Sol conducted dozens of attacks against U.S. and NATO targets in Turkey during late 1990 and early 1991 at the behest of Saddam Hussein. The majority of these attacks were directed against soft targets such as U.S. corporate offices, nongovernmental organizations, hotels and restaurants. We believe these same targets are in jeopardy of attack by the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front now.

Syria maintains a number of proxy militants in Lebanon, including Hezbollah. Hezbollah has its own calculations and may not be as willing as Syria's smaller proxy groups to act on Syria's behalf. Hezbollah maintains a far more sophisticated militant capability than these small groups and is able to attack hard targets, unlike the smaller groups. Therefore, if the Syrians commission a terrorist attack in Lebanon and Hezbollah does not help them, the attacks their proxy groups will carry out will be quite limited – and will again focus on soft targets.

For the most part, soft targets are soft by their very nature. It is not only impractical to employ embassy-like security at a fast food restaurant, but it is inordinately expensive – too expensive to be economically feasible for a business. Still, there are some simple and practical security measures that can be taken to make them slightly more secure and hopefully cause anyone planning an attack to divert their operation toward an even softer target.

Additionally, individuals living in or traveling to these places can and should practice good situational awareness, review their personal contingency plans and mentally prepare to respond to any crisis.

HOW CAN YOU HAVE A  
WAR ON TERRORISM  
WHEN WAR ITSELF IS  
TERRORISM?

Howard Zinn



## The Rise of a New Nigerian Militant Group

By Matthew Bey and Sim Tack

Source: [http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/rise-new-nigerian-militant-group?utm\\_source=freelist-f&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=20130221&utm\\_term=sweekly&utm\\_content=readmore&elq=99e9bc1d237d4124a9f4f7ff70c6a1cb](http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/rise-new-nigerian-militant-group?utm_source=freelist-f&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20130221&utm_term=sweekly&utm_content=readmore&elq=99e9bc1d237d4124a9f4f7ff70c6a1cb)

In the past week, 14 foreigners have been kidnapped in northern Nigeria and Cameroon in two separate attacks. No group has claimed responsibility for the second attack, which occurred Feb. 19 in Cameroon, but the location is adjacent to Boko Haram's core territory in northeast Nigeria. Ansaru, a splinter group of Boko Haram, claimed responsibility for the first attack and could be responsible for the second since, unlike Boko Haram, it has a history of kidnapping foreign nationals. If Boko Haram conducted the second attack, it would signal a significant shift in the group's targets and tactics.

As Stratfor noted, Boko Haram's capabilities in 2012 were limited to soft targets near the group's base of operations in northeastern Nigeria. Ansaru has emerged over the past year and appears to have surpassed Boko Haram in its range of tactics and targets. Ansaru has relied on armed attacks for kidnappings rather than suicide bombings. Ansaru's targets have included foreigners and those involved with the intervention in Mali, while Boko Haram's targets have been Nigerian.

Nearly all of the Ansaru attacks since December 2012, as well as the unclaimed kidnapping in Cameroon, have targeted French nationals or those supporting French operations in Mali. This has raised the fear that widespread kidnappings will be fallout from the Mali intervention. A continuation of this violence could harm foreign interests in Nigeria and the surrounding countries and strengthen militant jihadism throughout the region.

### Ansaru's Origins and Connections

Not a lot is known about the origin of Ansaru, but following Boko Haram's attacks on Kano – a predominately Muslim city in Nigeria – that killed almost 200 people in January 2012, Ansaru publicly split from Boko Haram, denouncing the killings of innocent Muslims. However, the group's formation began earlier in connection to two kidnappings.

The first was in May 2011, when a group claiming to be al Qaeda in the Land Beyond the Sahel and a faction of Boko Haram kidnapped two engineers – one British and one Italian – in Bimin Kebbi, Nigeria. On Dec. 1, 2011, a video was sent to Agence Nouakchott d'Information, Mauritania's state media outlet, demanding a 5 million-euro (about \$6.7 million) ransom. Demanding millions in ransoms is a strategy employed by al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb; Nigerian militants' demands do not typically reach this level. Agence Nouakchott d'Information is known to have close contacts with al Qaeda's North African branch and served as the mouthpiece for Mokhtar Belmokhtar during the January 2013 attack on the Ain Amenas plant in Algeria. The mediator in the ransom negotiations, Mustafa Ould Limam Chafi, also negotiated many of al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb's previous hostage ransoms, including the release of U.N. Special Envoy to Niger Robert Fowler, the Canadian diplomat who was kidnapped in Niger in 2008. The connections to Agence Nouakchott d'Information and Chafi suggest that the group responsible for the May 2011 kidnappings in Nigeria – Ansaru or its predecessor faction within Boko Haram – has close ties with al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb.

The man behind the May 2011 operation was trained by Khalid al-Barnawi, whom the U.S. State Department designated a global terrorist in June 2012 because of his ties to Boko Haram and al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. Al-Barnawi's connection with North African jihadist groups includes time spent with the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat, where he worked with Belmokhtar. He also set up kidnapping training camps in Algeria. It is unclear what the link is between al-Barnawi and Ansaru. Some experts have told news media that Abu Usmatul al-Ansari, who claims to be Ansaru's leader, could be a pseudonym for al-Barnawi. Al-Ansari surfaced earlier as Boko Haram's commander in Nigeria's northeastern states,



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which has been Ansaru's primary area of operation.

The second kidnapping was the January 2012 abduction of a German engineer in Kano. Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb claimed responsibility in a video sent to Agence Nouakchott d'Information, but it is more likely that a local group kidnapped the engineer. The hostage was killed during a rescue attempt by German special operations forces in Kano; al

German special operations forces obtained relevant intelligence in the rescue attempt and acted on it. If such a piece of intelligence was found in Kano, then links between the group behind the operation and al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb must be fairly robust, which would mean that al-Barnawi was almost certainly involved with the operation.

Since the death of Boko Haram leader Mohammed Yusuf in 2009, internal tensions

**SELECTED ATTACKS IN NIGERIA AND CAMEROON: 2011-2013**



Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb typically transports hostages to the mountains of northern Mali. According to a Stratfor source, just two weeks after the rescue attempt, the same German special operations forces group targeted a convoy of four cars in northern Nigeria, possibly to disrupt a rumored meeting between a representative of al Shabaab and Abu Zeid, a prominent al Qaeda commander in the Sahel. It is likely that the

have risen between nationalist factions aligned with present Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau and transnational factions. Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb has long sought a connection with Boko Haram, and it appears that the group has established ties with Ansaru and that the tensions between national and transnational factions of Boko Haram led to the split.



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### Targets and Tactics

Ansaru's first claimed attack was in November 2012, when 40 gunmen assailed the Special Anti-Robbery Squad detention facility in Abuja. After claiming responsibility, al-Ansari stated that Ansaru would target foreigners. The next attack was by 30 gunmen on a French company's compound in Katsina, Nigeria, resulting in the kidnapping of a French engineer. Afterwards, al-Ansari said the attack was because of France's support for an intervention in Mali. This was also the first attack against a Western target in the region since the August 2011 Abuja U.N. bombing, which remains Boko Haram's only transnational attack.

In January, Ansaru ambushed a military convoy bound for Mali – its second consecutive attack with a transnational objective. Ansaru followed this with an abduction of seven foreign nationals in Bauchi, Nigeria, on Feb. 16. While kidnappings of foreigners are rare in northern Nigeria and Boko Haram has never claimed responsibility for one, Ansaru appears to be focusing on kidnapping operations similar to those carried out by al Qaeda's North African branch.

Boko Haram's tactics can be broken down generally into two categories: suicide bombings (typically using vehicle-borne explosives) and motorcycle ambushes. Boko Haram's target set typically constitutes churches, the police, the military, religious leaders and political institutions. Since November 2012, Boko Haram has attacked a church in a military compound in Kaduna state, made an assassination attempt on the emir of Kano and bombed two churches on Christmas Eve. In December 2012, vehicle-borne suicide bombers targeted offices of two international phone service providers, but this was because the companies were assisting authorities, not because Boko Haram was making a move toward international targets.

Ansaru's attacks, on the other hand, have consisted of raids by gunmen against hardened targets. A platoon-sized element typically assaults the compound where hostages will be abducted, or prisoners freed, before withdrawing. Explosives have not been used in Ansaru raids, except to breach barriers. Such attacks require different capabilities and preparations than Boko Haram's suicide bombings do.

It is becoming increasingly clear that Boko Haram and Ansaru have distinct agendas and different tactics and target sets. There is a long history in using militancy to achieve political ends in Nigeria. Boko Haram – or at least some of its factions – satisfies political objectives in the north against President Goodluck Jonathan's administration, and two northern senators have been accused of helping the group. At least presently, Ansaru does not appear to have any of these connections. Its operations do not appear to directly influence Nigerian politics.

Boko Haram's use of suicide bombs, car bombs and other attacks means that it remains the more dangerous group overall. However, Ansaru's more transnational scope of attacks means that the group could pose a greater danger to Western targets and could have the ability to coordinate with other groups operating in West Africa.

### Ansaru's Future

Documents recently found in Timbuktu, originating from al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb's leadership, describe how the group's contacts with local militants, such as Ansar Dine in Mali, are to be kept quiet. The same could be true for relations between al Qaeda's North African branch and Ansaru. Based on the history of those allegedly involved in Ansaru and the group's stated allegiances, it is very likely that al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb will in some ways attempt to direct Ansaru's activities in Nigeria. Ansaru offers the al Qaeda branch further reach into northern Nigeria, which it has long sought.

If ties between the organizations do exist, al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb may work more closely with Ansaru in an attempt to orchestrate its activities into a broader strategy. A Boko Haram offshoot with an aggressive stance toward foreign targets within Nigeria could attract like-minded Boko Haram leaders, such as Mamman Nur (the architect of the U.N. compound attack), and increase the complexity of the group's operations. Although Ansaru is not known to use Boko Haram's tactic of suicide bombings, shifting allegiances within Boko Haram-affiliated groups could bring elements into Ansaru that might expand on the current type of operations the group conducts.

Ansaru's development is significant, and while the group has not been



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responsible for a large number of attacks, its operations reach beyond Nigeria's borders. Ansaru could also extend al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb's network farther south, possibly into Cameroon, and the group's rise could easily negate the gains made against

militants in northern Mali. Regardless of eventual developments in the region, the risk of kidnappings near northern Nigeria is increasing.

**Major U.K. terrorism trial ends in three convictions**

Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-21534048>

Irfan Naseer, 31, Irfan Khalid, 27, and Ashik Ali, 27, all from Birmingham, were found guilty at Woolwich Crown Court of being "central figures" in a terrorist plot in which, as suicide bombers, they would have carried out an attack which would rival, in scope and destruction, the 7 July and 9/11 terrorist attacks.

The prosecution said the three planned to set off up to eight bombs in rucksacks, using timers to detonate the charges.

The three were arrested in 2011.

The BBC reports that detectives believe it is the most significant terror plot to be uncovered since the 2006 conspiracy to blow up transatlantic airliners using bombs disguised as soft drinks.

The three men were convicted on twelve counts of preparing for acts of terrorism between December 2010 and their arrest in September 2011.

Naseer and Khalid had trained in al Qaeda camps in Pakistan, and both had recorded martyrdom videos before returning to the

United Kingdom.

The three have also recruited other



Birmingham Muslims to engage in terrorism. Six of those recruits have already pleaded guilty to terrorism charges.

The judge told the men they would all face life in prison when they were sentenced in April or May.

Justice Henriques told Naseer he had been convicted on "overwhelming evidence" and that he faced "a very long minimum term".

He said: "You were seeking to recruit a team of somewhere between six and eight suicide bombers to carry out a spectacular bombing campaign, one which would create an anniversary along the lines of 7/7 or 9/11. It's clear that you were planning a terrorist outrage in Birmingham."



The men carried out fraudulent charity collecting on the streets of Birmingham

Karen Jones, specialist counter-terrorism prosecutor for the Crown Prosecution Service, said: "These men had dangerous aspirations and whilst the precise targets



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remained unclear, the potential for damage and loss of life from their plot should not be underestimated.

“The evidence we put to the court showed the defendants discussing with awe and admiration the attacks of 9/11 and 7/7. These terrorists wanted to do something bigger, speaking of how 7/7 had ‘gone a bit wrong’.”

Detective Inspector Adam Gough of West Midlands Police led the investigation into the men. “There’s no doubt whatsoever that they were the real deal,” he said. “They are committed, passionate extremists. They had a real stated intention to kill and maim as many people as they possibly can. More than that, they not only had that intention, but they had

the capacity and training to make that intention a reality.

“Naseer is a very devious and calculating man. He is someone who had a real hatred of western values, someone who wants to bring his influence to others and a compulsive liar. A very dangerous man.”

The BBC notes that Irfan Naseer told the trial that the hours of secret recordings of him talking about terrorism and bomb-making were all nonsense.

He said he had pretended to be a terrorist because he wanted to end rumors in his local community that he was a Pakistani spy. Ashik Ali denied wanting to be a terrorist. Irfan Khalid did not give evidence in his defense.

### Al-Qaeda’s 22 tips for dodging drone attacks

Source: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/al-qaeda/9886673/Al-Qaeda-22-tips-for-dodging-drone-attacks-the-list-in-full.html>

A document containing al-Qaeda’s 22 tips for dodging drone attacks has been found in a building abandoned by Islamists in Mali. Here, we list all 22 tips.

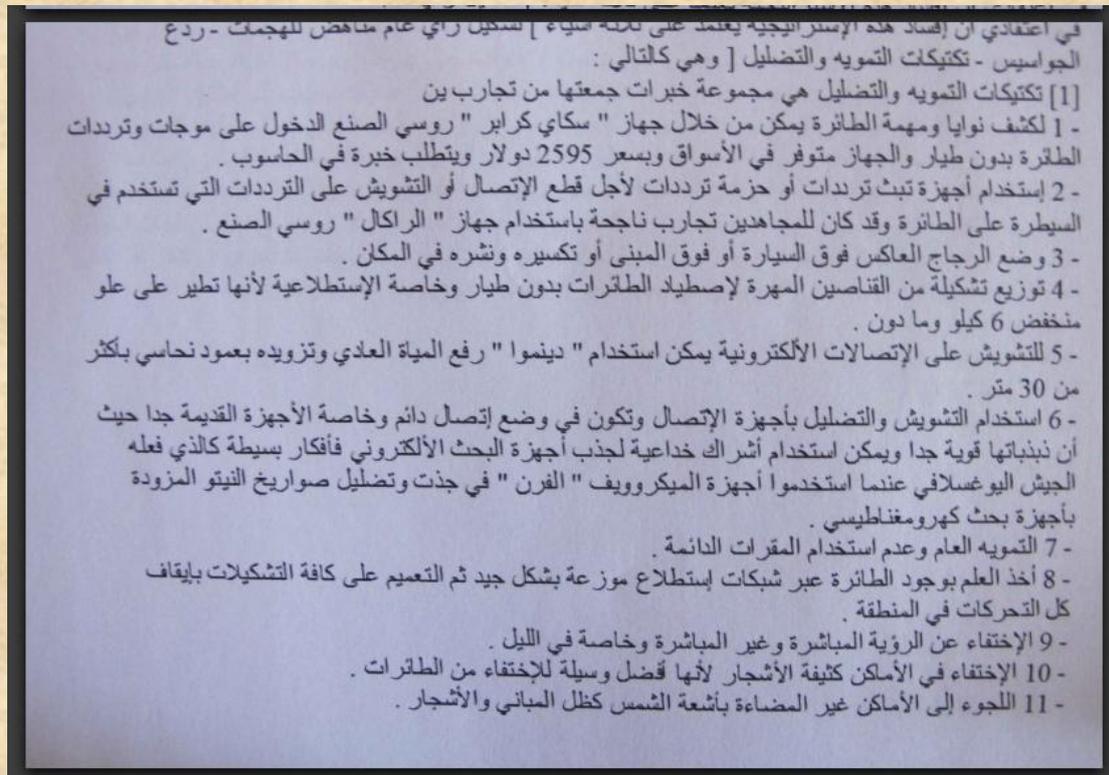


1. It is possible to know the intention and the mission of the drone by using the Russianmade “sky grabber” device to infiltrate the drone’s waves and the frequencies. The device is available in the market for \$2,595 and the one who operates it should be a computer know-how.
2. Using devices that broadcast frequencies or pack of frequencies to disconnect the contacts and confuse the frequencies used to control the drone. The Mujahideen have had successful experiments using the Russian-made “Racal.”
3. Spreading the reflective pieces of glass on a car or on the roof of the building.
4. Placing a group of skilled snipers to hunt the drone, especially the reconnaissance ones because they fly low, about six kilometres or less.



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5. Jamming of and confusing of electronic communication using the ordinary water-lifting dynamo fitted with a 30-metre copper pole.
6. Jamming of and confusing of electronic communication using old equipment and keeping them 24-hour running because of their strong frequencies and it is possible using simple ideas of deception of equipment to attract the electronic waves devices similar to that used by the Yugoslav army when they used the microwave (oven) in attracting and confusing the Nato missiles fitted with electromagnetic searching devices.
7. Using general confusion methods and not to use permanent headquarters.
8. Discovering the presence of a drone through well-placed reconnaissance networks and to warn all the formations to halt any movement in the area.
9. To hide from being directly or indirectly spotted, especially at night.
10. To hide under thick trees because they are the best cover against the planes.
11. To stay in places unlit by the sun such as the shadows of the buildings or the trees.
12. Maintain complete silence of all wireless contacts.
13. Disembark of vehicles and keep away from them especially when being chased or during combat.



14. To deceive the drone by entering places of multiple entrances and exits.
15. Using underground shelters because the missiles fired by these planes are usually of the fragmented anti-personnel and not anti-buildings type.
16. To avoid gathering in open areas and in urgent cases, use building of multiple doors or exits.
17. Forming anti-spies groups to look for spies and agents.
18. Formation of fake gatherings such as using dolls and statues to be placed outside false ditches to mislead the enemy.
19. When discovering that a drone is after a car, leave the car immediately and everyone should go in different direction because the planes are unable to get after everyone.
20. Using natural barricades like forests and caves when there is an urgent need for training or gathering.
21. In frequently targeted areas, use smoke as cover by burning tires.
22. As for the leaders or those sought after, they should not use communications equipment because the enemy usually keeps a voice tag through which they can identify the speaking person and then locate him.



