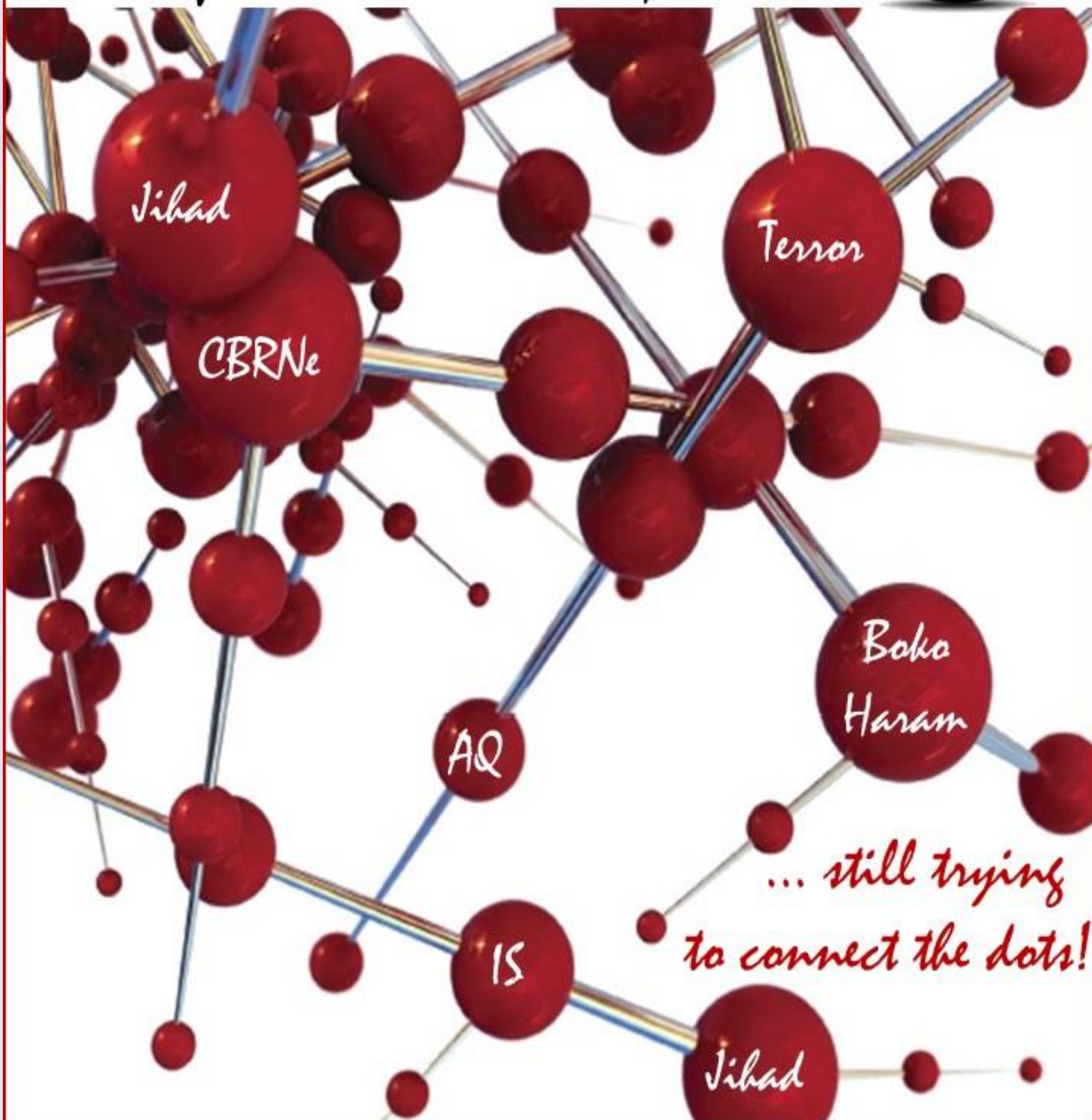


April 2016

CBRNE

NEWSLETTER TERRORISM

E-Journal for CBRNE & CT First Responders



*... still trying
to connect the dots!*

www.cbrne-terrorism-newsletter.com

After Brussels, Europe's intelligence woes revealed

Source: <http://www.cnn.com/2016/03/22/brussels-attack-why-europe-must-increase-terror-intelligence.html>



Mar 23 – **Europe must improve the regional sharing of intelligence to successfully combat the rise of homegrown militants**, policy experts told CNBC a day after deadly explosions hit Brussels.

Global terrorist organization ISIS claimed responsibility for Tuesday's attacks that killed at least 31 people, the latest episode in the group's campaign of large-scale violence on the international stage.

Recent offensives in Paris and Jakarta indicate ISIS is increasingly relying on local fundamentalists, typically trained in ISIS strongholds within the Middle East, to execute suicide bombings and shootings in busy metropolitan areas.

"The key question here is closing the intelligence gap," said Kevin Rudd, former Prime Minister of Australia and president of the Asia Society Policy Institute.

While ISIS is being defeated militarily in Syria and Iraq, foreign fighters who travel to the militant hotbed are returning to their home countries at a "disturbing" rate of about 30 percent, he noted, resulting in the spate of recent attacks. That calls for European governments to step up information gathering on radicalized individuals, which means channeling more funds and manpower to counter-terrorism operations, the 58-year old explained.

"When members of law enforcement approach us as members of parliament or political leaders, seeking more direct powers, I believe we have to be very attentive to their responses as long as we have judicial and parliamentary oversight."

Rudd's comments are at the crux of a hot-button discourse about the encroachment on civil liberties should governments ramp up surveillance and detainment tactics in the global war on terror.

Rudd believes it's a necessary cost to bear.

"This is not a normal set of circumstances, we've got to give our men and women in uniform and in the intelligence services the powers necessary to deal with this. This is no criticism of the Belgian government but a wake-up call to all of us who wrestle with this debate."

Others agree that European officials must direct more investment to counter-terrorism, despite strained finances for most countries in the region.

The fact that the perpetrator of December's Paris attacks was caught in Belgium four months after the event points to the overwhelmed state of European security officials, warned Ozzie Nelson, senior associate of homeland security and counter-terrorism at the Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS).

"There's significant issue of information sharing, not just within Belgium, but between European partners," he said, adding that countries must coordinate and communicate better instead of using limited resources to focus on protecting their own citizens.

"The underlying tension between the drive to communicate and the drive of nationalism will put Europe in crisis as long as the [terror] threat exists, and I expect this threat to continue for a number of years."



Throwing money at the problem isn't sufficient however; analysts say the European intelligence communist must refine their tactics. Nations may seek to increase security at transportation hubs and borders as a knee-jerk reaction to Tuesday's events but that may not be the solution.



"We need to see a different approach towards attacking the problem, looking for terrorists as they're conducting their pre-operational surveillance instead of hardening targets and preventing

them from attacking," explained Scott Stewart, vice president of tactical analysis at Stratfor.

For example, higher airport security may not deter terrorists as it just moves the intended target, i.e. people, to outside the building, he said.

Ultimately, the most effective weapons governments have at their disposal are sharing information, obtaining accurate intelligence, and working to change conditions supporting radicals, summarized Nelson.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: For sure this is a very complicated problem. But perhaps the root of the problem is not intelligence sharing but how to connect existing dots. A second problem is the fact that innocent citizens and suspicious/under surveillance individuals share the same rights. A third problem is the fact that police forces do not have enough people to conduct full 24/7 surveillance operations. The attitude dictating "it will not happen to us" represents a fourth problem (Brussels's airport did not have a response bombing plan! Belgian firefighters were about to go on strike when the massacre took place!). Finally, citizens' involvement is not as massive as it should be – still walking in the streets texting SMSs or listen to the music. "See something, say something" is more important than that is sounds! European countries with citizens fighting for IS in Syria and Iraq regularly report exact numbers (e.g. the next article) – if you know the numbers you know the people; if you know the people you know their IDs; if you know their IDs then you can remove citizenships and forbid return entrance – but when France attempted to do this the Minister of Justice resigned! And of course the "cover" problem of multiculturalism that although failed it will take years to reshape especially now that the illegal immigration/refugees' tsunami flooded Europe and nobody knows what would be the picture when waters will subside – if ever. If all the above are the pylons for a new European cooperative policy then there is hope that Brussels's multiple terrorist attacks can be the last of its kind! If not, be prepared. Terrorism is coming soon in your cities...

How vulnerable is the United States to a Brussels-like attack?

Source: https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/how-vulnerable-is-the-united-states-to-a-brussels-like-attack/2016/03/22/3a848992-f03e-11e5-a61f-e9c95c06edca_story.html

Mar 22 – **The apparently coordinated bombings that killed more 31 people in Belgium are unlikely to be duplicated in the United States, which is separated by an ocean from Islamist extremists fighting in Syria and Iraq and has seen far fewer of its people traveling there, former intelligence and counterterrorism officials said.**

The United States is not immune from terrorist attacks, as December's Islamic State-inspired mass shooting in San Bernardino, Calif., demonstrated. And its transit systems, particularly city subways, are vulnerable. But the United States is not grappling with the same volume of Islamic State recruits as its European peers, and sophisticated plots are far more likely to be ferreted out by law enforcement or neighbors, the officials said.

"In the U.S., for the most part, communities don't radicalize; individuals do," said Seamus Hughes, the deputy director at the program on extremism at George Washington University's Center for Cyber & Homeland Security and a former National Counterterrorism Center staffer.

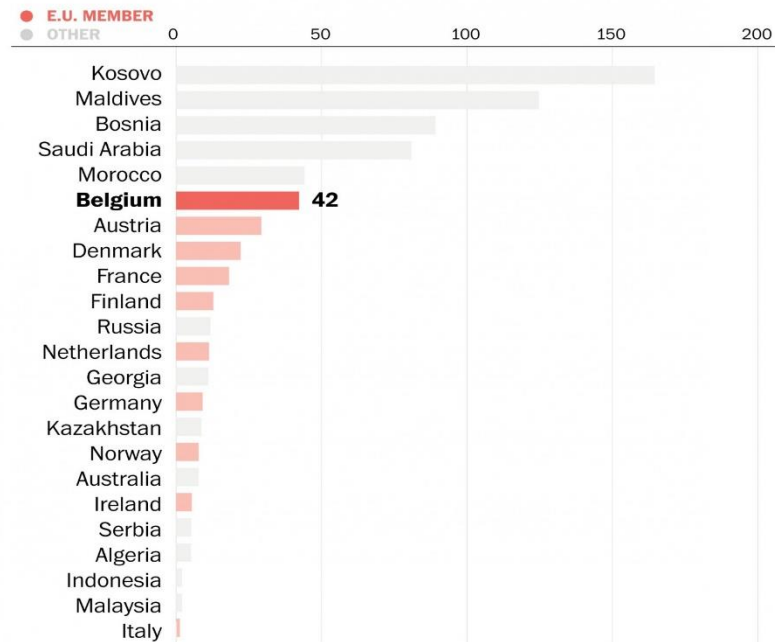
The Islamic State, also known as ISIS, claimed responsibility for the Brussels attacks — a series of bombings at the airport and a metro station. The incident sparked security fears across the globe, with police in Paris, London, Washington and elsewhere boosting patrols. The bombing followed earlier Islamic State assaults in France, Turkey and Tunisia, among other places.



Department of Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson said in a statement that there was “no specific, credible intelligence of any plot to conduct similar attacks here in the United States.”

Where Islamic State foreign fighters come from

Foreign fighters per 1 million people



Source: The Count of Emmejjihad/Guy Van Vlierden

THE WASHINGTON POST

Still, Johnson said that the Transportation Security Administration — wary of threats from lone actors and returning foreign fighters — was deploying additional security at U.S. airports and rail stations and that authorities were taking other precautions “not suitable for public disclosure.”

According to a report from the Soufan Group, a research and intelligence service, 470 people from Belgium had traveled to Syria as of October with plans to join militant groups fighting in the region. That figure, officials said, represents the highest per-capita number of foreign fighters for any country.

The United States has had about 250 citizens who have tried to travel to join the fighting, and that includes those who never made it. Charles Kurzman, a sociology professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill who tracks Muslim American terrorism suspects, said that he has found **only 42 who successfully traveled to join militants in Syria, Iraq or Libya, and that of those, only 16 remain in military territory. Six were arrested or otherwise taken into custody,**

and 20 died. Dozens have been prosecuted in the United States.

“I think it’s fair to say that Belgium authorities are overwhelmed with the numbers they’re dealing with,” Hughes said. “They have twice the number of foreign fighters than we have people who have attempted to travel.”

Republican presidential candidates struck a more alarmist tone. Ohio Gov. John Kasich called on President Obama to return from his visit to Cuba and suggested the United States “send teams of people immediately to Europe to begin to dig, in terms of what we need to do to address the vulnerabilities we have.” Sen. Ted Cruz (Tex.) said the United States should “empower law enforcement to patrol and secure Muslim neighborhoods before they become radicalized.” And Donald Trump predicted flatly, “This is going to happen in the United States.”

Democratic presidential front-runner Hillary Clinton said the United States should “intensify and broaden our strategy” in fighting the Islamic State. Her opponent, Sen. Bernie Sanders (Vt.), called the attack a “brutal reminder that the international community must come together to destroy ISIS.”

The United States is not without vulnerabilities. This month, Mohamad Khweis, an Alexandria, Va., man who was not previously on the FBI radar, was picked up by Kurdish forces in Iraq after he apparently fled the Islamic State.

A recently retired FBI counterterrorism official, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss recent bureau operations, said aspiring **jihadists are getting smarter and are no longer flying directly to Turkey** before making their way to the Islamic State in Syria. “Now they are using different countries,” the official said. Khweis said he traveled to London, Amsterdam and Turkey before sneaking into Syria.

Encryption, the official said, can also thwart the FBI’s efforts to track suspects. “Known targets have gone dark,” the official said. “That’s a huge blind spot for us.”

The FBI is still trying to decrypt the many communications that took place between an Arizona man named Elton Simpson and a senior Islamic State operative.

The two were trading messages just prior to the man’s attack last year on a “Draw Muhammad” cartoon contest in Texas.



Simpson and another man were killed by police outside the venue in Garland.

A third person involved in the plot, Abdul Malik Abdul Kareem, was convicted this month of providing material support to the Islamic State.

“People who are plotting to harm America and Americans are no longer a world away,” Justin Tolomeo, the FBI’s acting special agent in charge in Phoenix, said in a statement after a jury convicted Kareem.

U.S. law enforcement appears to have a robust network of **informants in places where terrorist plots might be incubated**, and American Muslims, unlike some communities in Europe, are well integrated and in many cases tip off the authorities, former counterterrorism officials said.

The main threat facing law enforcement is the individual who falls under the sway of Islamic State propaganda and then decides to carry out an attack without any direction from Syria, officials said. That has happened repeatedly since the rise of the Islamic State in 2014.

The most recent occurred in San Bernardino, where a husband and wife pledged their allegiance to the Islamic State on Facebook and then gunned down 14 people and wounded 22. The couple were killed in a shootout with police.

Most recently, the FBI said that a University of California at Merced student who stabbed four people in November was “self-radicalized” but did not have any ties to a terrorism a group. A

campus police officer killed the 18-year-old student.

Belgium, by contrast, has just begun coming to grips with its terrorism problem, and police and intelligence agencies there are dealing with an “overwhelming” number of matters to look into, said Matthew Levitt, a former U.S. intelligence and counterterrorism official who now directs the Washington Institute’s Stein Program on Counterterrorism and Intelligence.

Levitt, who was in Brussels last week meeting with top counterterrorism and intelligence officials, said the country’s open borders, lack of intelligence in isolated Muslim communities and subpar intelligence-sharing with European neighbors create a dangerous brew. He said that the arrest this week of Paris attack suspect Salah Abdeslam, who eluded capture for months, demonstrates “clearly there was a larger support network” than Belgian authorities anticipated and that their counter-radicalization efforts seem to be insufficient to address the depth of the problem.

“The Belgians, over the past year, have been caught by surprise a bit that they are a target,” Levitt said. “That’s not a surprise anymore. I think the realization now is that the pace of the response has to be picked up significantly, and that has to be both raiding safe houses and getting into these neighborhoods and addressing the things that make people feel so disconnected.”

Brussels attacks: how radicalization happens and who is at risk

By Frederic Lemieux

<http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160323-brussels-attacks-how-radicalization-happens-and-who-is-at-risk>

Mar 22 – Two bombings in Brussels have killed dozens of people and injured over 300, only days after one of the Paris attackers was arrested in the city’s Molenbeek suburb. The Islamic State (ISIS) has reportedly claimed the attack.

As they recover from the shock of the attacks, people are asking why this happens, and who the people carrying out these suicide missions are.

That such attacks could be launched from inside a European country once again calls attention to a serious crisis: the radicalization of citizens outside the Middle East by extremist groups.

A willingness to embrace violence

The actions of the shooters like those in San Bernardino, Paris, and very probably Brussels are difficult for most people to understand. But the work of scholars specializing in extremism can help us begin to unravel how people become radicalized to embrace political violence.

Security experts Alex Wilner and Claire-Jehanne Dubouloz **define radicalization as a process during which an individual or group adopts increasingly extreme political,**



social or religious ideals and aspirations. The process involves rejecting or undermining the status quo or contemporary ideas and expressions of freedom of choice.

Newly radicalized people don't just agree with the mission and the message of the group they are joining; they embrace the idea of using violence to induce change.

And some members of these groups become radical enough to actually get involved in violent operations personally.

So how often does this radicalization process happen in the United States?

A [recent report](#) published by the Program on Extremism at George Washington University provides troubling statistics on Islamic State (ISIS) support in America: "As of the fall of 2015, U.S. authorities speak of some 250 Americans who have traveled or attempted to travel to Syria/Iraq to join the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria."

The report goes on to say there are some 900 active investigations against ISIS sympathizers in all fifty states. As a result of these active investigations, seventy-one suspects have been charged for terrorism-related activities — and those charged share some interesting characteristics.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Put the two above articles together and make your own conclusions if the Brussel's incident can be replicated or not...

Brussels attacks: a throwback to pre-9/11 terrorism

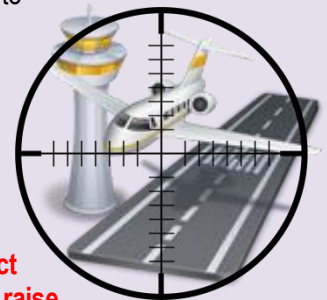
By Steve Hewitt

<http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160323-brussels-attacks-a-throwback-to-pre9-11-terrorism>

Mar 23 – **The terrible scenes in Brussels following a terrorist attack now claimed by Islamic State are a reminder of just how vulnerable airports can be.**

In the years since the September 11 attacks in the United States in 2001, a clear priority of Western security agencies has been to protect airlines from bombings and hijackings. And, of course, this threat is real and has been persistent.

This attack in Belgium is something of a throwback to the pre-9/11 era. The fact that it occurred in the unsecured section of a major airport is significant and will raise difficult questions for the authorities.



Soft targets

There is a long history of unsecured parts of airports being the targets of political violence. In the 1970s and 1980s, there were numerous high-profile attacks involving guns at airports. In 1972, members of the Japanese Red Army killed twenty-six people at [Lod Airport](#) (now Ben Gurion Airport) in Tel Aviv. In December 1985, terrorists simultaneously attacked the [Rome and Vienna airports](#), killing nineteen people in the process and wounding more than 100 more.

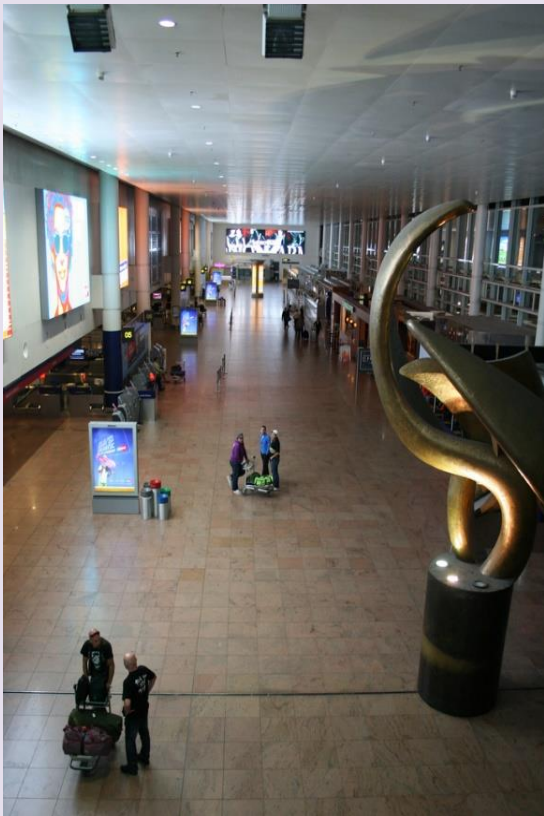
And indeed, there have been such attacks more recently. There is resonance with the 2011 suicide attack at Moscow's airport in which thirty-seven people were killed by a bomber while waiting for those arriving on flights. And with the [2008 Glasgow Airport attack](#) in which two men crashed a car containing a petrol bomb into an airport

building — although no one other than one of the attackers died.

And in 2013, [Paul Ciancia](#) walked into Los Angeles International, one of the busiest airports in the world with a .223 calibre assault rifle. He approached the security screening section of the airport — the area designed to prevent terrorists from being able to take weapons on airplanes — and attacked the Transportation Security Administration agents working there. One agent was mortally wounded and three others, including two TSA agents, suffered wounds.

Ciancia's attack was brought to an end when he was shot by TSA agents, but he survived and went to trial. A letter he carried with him on the day made it clear that he had intended to kill TSA agents and police in order to "instil fear in your traitorous minds."





Brussel's airport: before (left); after (right)

What now?

The horrendous damage done in Brussels Zaventem airport, and the number of people dead or injured, show just how vulnerable airports can be to terrorism. The primary focus of airport security, particularly since the attacks of 9/11, is preventing terrorists from being able to board airplanes. But airports, especially their unsecured areas, represent "soft targets."

This is a clear problem from a security perspective, particularly in democratic societies, as airports along with rail systems and underground/subway networks, including of the type attacked in Brussels are premised on the rapid movement of large numbers of people, particularly during rush hours. **In a single day, for instance, an estimated 4.3 million people use the New York Subway system.** It is simply not feasible to bring in mandatory security checks for all riders. The system would grind to a halt.

After the Glasgow Airport attack, the United Kingdom restricted access to airports to people

with vehicles. Passengers now have to be dropped a safe distance from the terminals. But the attack in Brussels shows that the vulnerability remains.

Some airports, such as the one in Beirut, require security screening before passengers can even go to check-in desks. Is that a feasible solution for major airports such as Heathrow whereby passengers and others are screened before they are even allowed to enter buildings? How far will a security corridor have to be extended and what happens when the new security barrier is attacked?

A more likely and realistic response is increasing security presence around airports with a greater number of random checks. There is no foolproof solution to this security issue, though, and that's something governments are going to have to admit. Terrorists have the ability radically to disrupt transportation systems, potentially causing loss of life and economic damage in the process, and there is little that can be done to stop them.

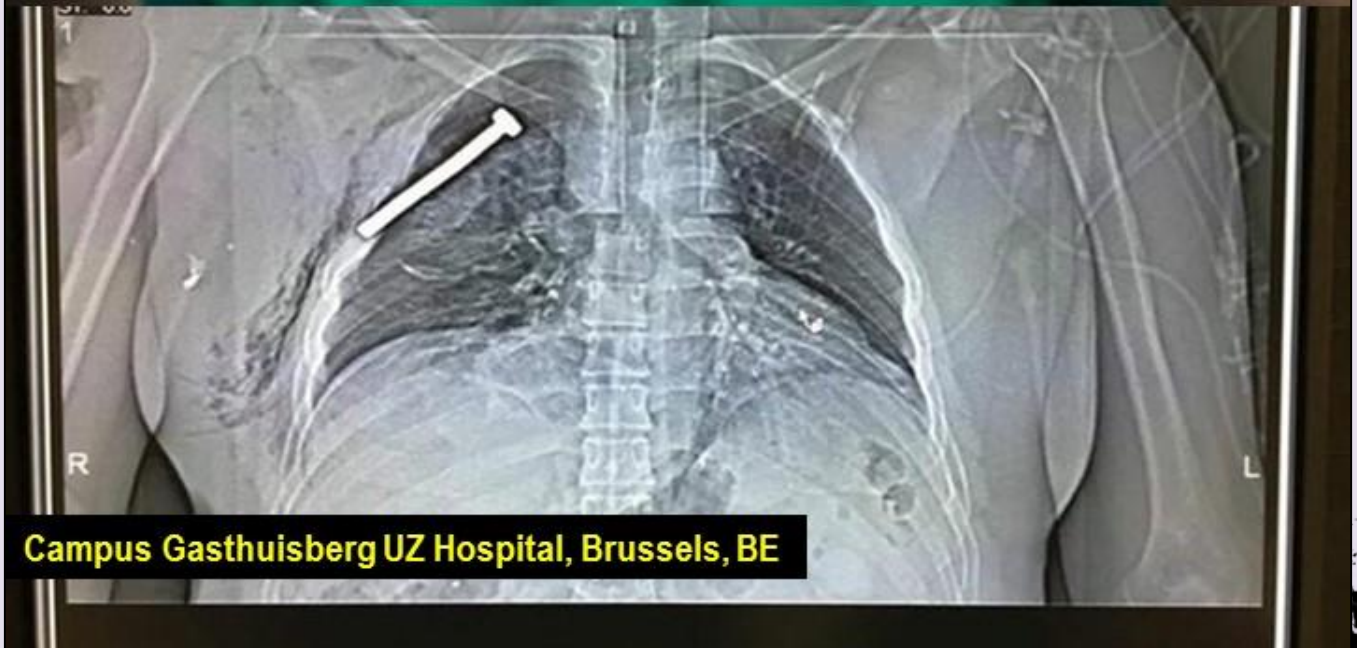
For some time, terrorists pursued the much more difficult task of attacking aircraft while largely ignoring easier targets. The attack in Brussels shows the reality of renewed efforts against "soft targets" with the potential to bring about chaos to transportation systems.

Steve Hewitt is Senior Lecturer in the Department of History, University of Birmingham.





Screws, nails and other metal objects used in Brussel's terrorist attack



Campus Gasthuisberg UZ Hospital, Brussels, BE



IS-inspired 'drive-by' terror plot: Two students guilty

Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-35884915>

Mar 23 – **Two men are facing life imprisonment after being convicted of plotting to kill police or soldiers in a shooting inspired by so-called Islamic State.**

Suhaib Majeed, 21, of west London, was convicted of conspiracy to murder and preparation of acts of terrorism.

Ringleader Tarik Hassane, 22, of west London, had admitted the same charges.

Two men who provided a gun were cleared of conspiracy to murder and preparing terrorist acts by an Old Bailey jury, but admitted firearms offences.

Nyall Hamlett, 25, and Nathan Cuffy, 26, had admitted their role in handing over a gun to Majeed and Hassane but denied knowing what it was going to be used for.

The trial heard that Hassane, a medical student who split his time between London and university in Sudan, was immersed in extremist ideology and aspired to kill in London months before the IS group urged supporters in the West to carry out such attacks.

He turned to his childhood friend, Majeed - a physics undergraduate at Kings College London - to help him put the plan into action, with the pair communicating secretly through social media apps.

Majeed agreed to get a gun and moped for what would be a drive-by attack. Hamlett, a known criminal, supplied the weapon to Majeed after first acquiring it from Cuffy.

Spotted by ISIS, Russian special forces officer called for fire on himself

Source: <https://www.rt.com/news/337224-russian-soldier-killed-syria/>

Mar 25 – “A Russian special operations forces [SOF] officer was killed near a town of Palmyra while guiding Russian warplanes to IS [previously ISIS/ISIL] targets,” a military source at Russia’s airbase Khmeimim told Interfax news agency on Thursday.

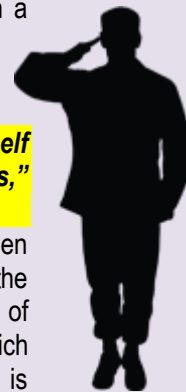
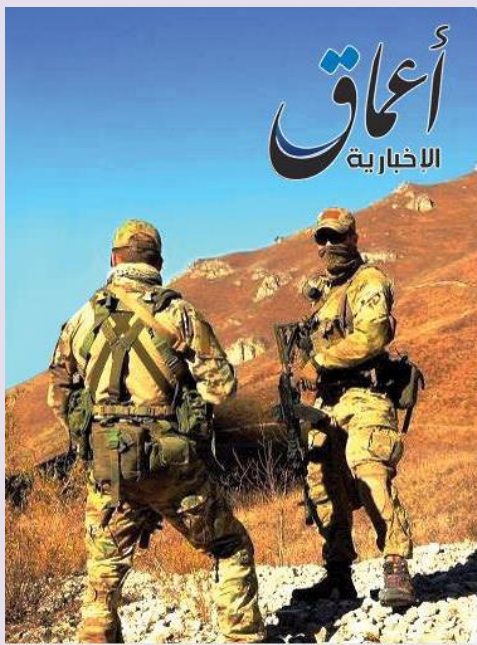
The source added that the special forces operator was on a mission near Palmyra for at least a week, detecting the terrorists’ most important targets and providing coordinates for Russian warplanes to strike.

“The officer died as a hero, calling a strike onto himself after he was compromised and surrounded by terrorists,” the source added.

Other details, including the officer’s identity, have not been disclosed. Previous reports from the battlefield said that the Syrian army is on the verge of retaking Palmyra – a cradle of ancient civilizations and UNESCO world heritage site – which has been held by Islamic State. The ground offensive is supported by Russia’s warplanes, while Russian-made weapons delivered to the Syrian military also help make further advances.

Russian SOF teams have been on Russian anti-IS operation started last Thursday, the chief of the Russian Aleksandr Dvornikov rare interview that

the ground in Syria since September. Earlier on contingent in Syria General told Rossiyskaya Gazeta in a special forces operators conduct long-range reconnaissance and act as forward air observers.



"They conduct ground reconnaissance of pre-selected targets for Russian warplanes, assist in targeting warplanes in remote areas and perform other missions."

Until today, four servicemen have been killed during the Syrian deployment, including Air Force pilot Oleg Peshkov, killed airborne after ejecting from a Su-24 bomber downed by Turkey as well as a Marine soldier Aleksandr Pozynich, killed during the search operation to rescue the surviving Su-24 pilot.

Names of the two other deceased Russian servicemen – Ivan Cheremisin and Fedor Zhuravlev – only became known to the public at the March ceremony in the Kremlin when President Vladimir Putin presented military awards and decorations to those involved in the Syrian operation. He stressed that the servicemen who sacrificed their lives in fight against terror "remained committed to their duty until the end."

Brussels attacks: 'Man in the hat' charged with terrorism and murder as nuclear security guard killed

Source: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/belgium/12204863/Brussels-terror-attacks-nuclear-isil-suspects-victims-latest.html>

Mar 27 – A security guard who worked at a Belgian nuclear medical research facility was murdered two days after the Brussels bombings, it emerged yesterday (Saturday), deepening fears that Islamist terror cells are plotting attacks against nuclear installations.



Didier Prospero, a guard with the G4S security company, was shot dead at his home in the Froidchapelle district of Brussels on less than 24 hours after Belgian authorities stripped several workers of their security passes at two nuclear plants this week.

The circumstances of 45-year-old Mr Prospero's death remained murky last night, with conflicting reports over whether or not the murder was linked to terrorism, or if his work security pass had been stolen.

News of the killing emerged as Belgian prosecutors announced on Saturday they have charged three men with terror offenses over the suicide attacks, as organisers cancelled a solidarity rally at the government's request because police are too stretched to cope.

Prosecutors said a man identified as Faycal C., who was arrested on Thursday, has been charged with "involvement in a terrorist group, terrorist murder and attempted terrorist murder."

Belgian media say he is Faycal Cheffou, the man in the light vest and hat pictured on security video with two men who blew themselves up at the airport. Cheffou is described as a local activist known to police for trying to rally asylum-seekers and homeless people to radical Islam.

Prosecutors would not confirm the Belgian media reports. A police raid was conducted at his home but no arms or explosives were found, they said.

Two other suspects detained on Thursday and identified as Raba N. and Aboubakar A. were charged with "involvement in the activities of a terrorist group."

In addition, a man named as Abderamane A. who was taken into custody on Friday after he was shot by police at a Brussels tram stop is being held for at least 24 more hours.

The arrests came after news emerged that **Mr Prospero was found dead in his bathroom by his three children when they returned home from school on Thursday afternoon. He had received four gunshot wounds. His sheepdog Beauce was also killed and lay next to him.**

Belgian prosecutors maintained last night that the murder was the result of a burglary gone wrong, but provided no detailed explanation as to why Mr Prospero, a respectable family man should suddenly have been murdered in a freak burglary.

The killing comes after a string of security scares and breaches around Belgium's nuclear infrastructure and the discovery last November an Islamic State cell in Brussels had kept a top Belgian nuclear scientist under video surveillance.



The report of Mr Prospero's murder heightened concerns that the Brussels bombers were plotting to build a radioactive "dirty" bomb — but apparently shelved the plan after security was stepped up at Belgium's nuclear plants this month following intelligence warnings.

Belgian authorities have played down the risk posed by jihadists to its nuclear facilities in the past.

Last November 10 hours of surveillance footage of a top Belgian nuclear scientist was discovered in a house belonging to a known jihadi, but the existence of the footage was only acknowledged by Belgian authorities on February 18 after it was leaked to a Belgian paper.

The film is believed by security forces to have been taken by Ibrahim and Khalid el-Bakraoui, the brothers who the authorities say were suicide bombers at the Brussels airport and subway station. They are understood to have removed a hidden camera from bushes outside the official's house.

After the news broke Jan Jambon, the Belgian interior minister, rejected a proposal to deploy troops saying that "nothing indicates a specific threat to nuclear power plants", but two weeks later, on March 4, changed his mind and deployed 140 soldiers to guard five nuclear facilities.

Belgium prosecutors told the Sunday Telegraph that Mr Prospero was not employed at a nuclear plant, but worked guarding a nuclear medical research facility in Fleurus, near Charleroi, about 30 miles from his home in Froidchapelle.

This was contradicted by G4S who said that Mr Prospero was a general patrol officer who did not have access to nuclear facilities or guard nuclear sites.

The company added that Mr Prospero's security pass had not gone missing in the attack, contradicting reports in Belgian local media that the security pass had been stolen.

"He was killed at gunpoint at his home. All indications are that it has nothing to do with his work, from what we understand," a G4S spokesman said, "There is no missing pass. All his uniform and his papers are accounted for. G4S are co-operating with the police investigation."

This is not the first time that fears of a terror threat to Belgium's nuclear power plants have been raised.

In 2013, an engineer from Doel 4, one of the nuclear reactors of a power plant near Antwerp, was sacked over concerns that he had been radicalised after he refused to shake his superior's hand.

The employee was later identified as the brother-in-law of Azzedine Kbir Bounekoub, a jihadist involved with Sharia4Belgium, who left Belgium to join Isis in Syria in 2012 and had frequently called on Isis sympathisers to launch terror attacks in Belgium.

In another disturbing incident, a turbine at the same Doel 4 reactor was sabotaged in 2014 when someone deliberately turned security cameras the other way and then emptied 65,000 litres of oil used to lubricate the turbine.

The incident, which nearly caused the reactor to overheat, has never been elucidated and there have been no arrests. The federal prosecutor is "seriously considering" the theory that was linked to terrorism, according to the French newspaper Libération.

Who are the Brussels terrorists?

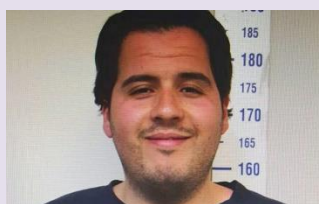


Khalid El Bakraoui

Khalid detonated a suicide bomb at Maelbeek metro which killed 20 people.

He is suspected to have rented a house under a false name in the Forest suburb of Brussels which was raided by police in connection with the Paris attacks.

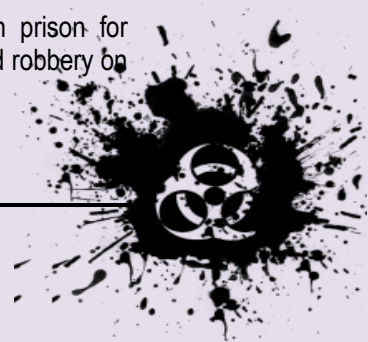
He and his brother Ibrahim (see below) were well-known to police and was sentenced to five years probation in February 2011 for car-jackings



Ibrahim El Bakraoui

Khalid's brother Ibrahim died in an attack at Zaventem airport that killed 11 people.

In October 2010, Ibrahim was sentenced to nine years in prison for opening fire on police with a Kalashnikov rifle during an armed robbery on a stockbroker.



**Mohamed Abrini**

Widely identified as the "man in the hat" at the airport before Cheffou's arrest, is a Belgian of Moroccan origin and is suspected of being part of the terror cell which attacked Paris.

Amine Choukri

A mystery figure who was arrested along with Salah Abdeslam before the attacks took place. The Belgian authorities are still unaware of his true identity

**Fayçal Cheffou**

Freelance journalist who was charged with terrorism offences and murder on Saturday. Belgian media suggest he was really "the man in the hat"

RELEASED**Najim Laachraoui's**

Laachraoui, a 24, was one of the airport bombers and is thought to have been one of the main bomb-making experts for the Paris attacks, with his DNA found on several suicide vests recovered at the Stade de France and the Bataclan Theatre.

Is Greece immune from international terrorism?

By the Editor of the Newsletter

Greece is a country blessed with a geostrategic gift – it is the meeting point of Europe, Asia and Africa. Its position resulted in a long lasting interaction with the Arab world. For decades Greece was kind of immune from international terrorism despite the occasional terrorist incidents experienced (i.e. cruiser City of Poros piracy – July 1988).

**The facts**

- Greece has a vast coastline (13,676.0 Km) – one of the biggest (#13) in the world, that is difficult to guard without enforcing excessive military power. Major Aegean Sea islands (Lemons, Lesbos, Chios, Kos, Rhodes, Kastelorizo) are close or very close to Turkish coastline – in some you can see traffic lights on the other side from shore.
- Greece is a passing-through hub for all those aiming to illegally travel to Europe. In fact it is the "Eastern Gate" of European Union.
- Bordering with rather unstable Muslim countries (Albania, FYROM, Bulgaria), Greece is also part of the illegal trafficking of arms, money, narcotics and human beings. And it is well known that animals never shit inside their nest!



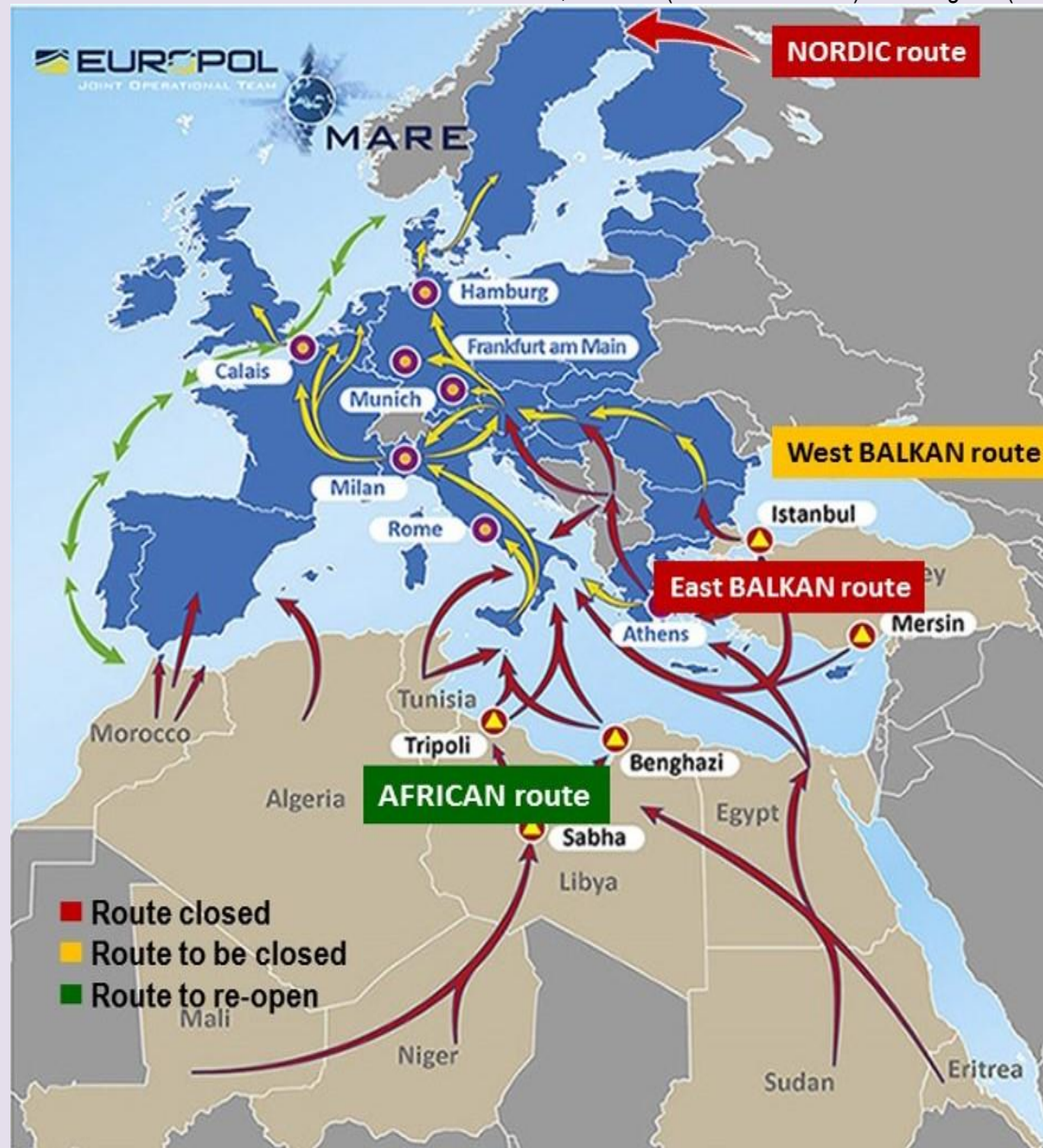
- For decades there was a solid 100,000 Muslim population in Northern Greece (Thrace) mainly of Turkish origin (many of which have the Greek citizenship).
- Greece does not – currently – participate in military missions abroad (e.g. Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan) but, as a NATO member, facilitates from time to time military operations mainly via its Souda Naval Base in Crete Island (i.e. airstrikes against Libya – 2011).
- Greece is an EU member state since 1981. Certain EU member states collaborate with US and participate in military operations in Syria (UK, France, Denmark, Belgium, The Netherlands).
- Greece faces an ongoing financial/political turmoil since 2010 with high rates of unemployment, capital controls, huge reductions in salaries and pensions and an astronomical national debt.
- There are no recorded Greeks that joined Islamic State.
- For decades and before the recent immigrants/refugees tsunami, illegal immigration in Greece progressively grew (initially from Albania but also from Lebanon, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia etc.). The vast majority of them are Muslims (it is estimated that more than a million is currently living in Greece now).
- There is a global connection of terrorism with organized crime while domestic terrorist groups occasionally collaborate with international counterparts.
- There is no sincere extensive intelligence sharing between EU member states and the US. There is rather a rivalry than true collaboration. In addition, inability to “connect the dots” was more prominent during the last two terrorist attacks in France and Belgium.
- The multiculturalism model clearly failed mainly in the UK, France, Germany and Scandinavia and those in favor currently try to heal their wounds and regain “no entrance” zones into their major cities (rather too late if I may say).

The new facts

- EU returnees from Syria and Iraq represent a major threat. German BND recently stated that 70 (out of 600) German jihadists with combat experience have returned from Syria to Germany. MI5 (UK) speaks for 50 out of 450 under close surveillance (having a 70 men strong special SAS unit standby).
- Terrorist attacks in Paris (2015) and Brussels (2016) but also in Istanbul and Ankara (2016).
- Islamic State is losing the war in Syria and (most probably) in Iraq but it seems expanding in Libya (facing Europe). Both Boko Haram and al Shabbab joined forces with Islamic State in Africa and despite existing rivalry with al Qaeda and affiliates, a possible collaboration cannot be excluded.
- Islamic State already used chemical weapons both in Syria and Iraq (mainly against Kurds) and already possess raw radiological material for improvised RDDs. The “chemical” threat was brought into surface after Paris attacks while the “radiological” threat revealed after the recent Brussels’ bloodshed. Perhaps the biggest worry is the fate of the left-over chemical stockpile still in Libya (~1000 tons) and the thousands of radiological “orphan sources” available worldwide.
- Change of Islamic State’s modus operandi from local to international (e.g. Sharm el Sheikh, Beirut, Paris, San Bernardino/USA, Istanbul, Ankara, Brussels). There is also a tendency to change from a ground force to an “idea” similar to that of al Qaeda – inspired lone wolves can execute operations without direct affiliation with Islamic State’s leading planners.
- There is an ongoing rhetoric/propaganda of new terrorist attacks against Western targets - usually there is no smoke without a fire! In 2015, Islamic State released a video threatening the sixty countries that have allied against them, including for the first time NATO member Greece. It is quite obvious that Greece is far down the food chain on the jihadists’ target list, even though it’s close connection to Russia might put it more at risk.
- Even if a country is not a target per se of international terrorists, it does not mean that there won’t be an attack on its soil. Bulgaria is the perfect example of this, with the July 2012 Hezbollah attack that targeted a bus transporting Israeli tourists, killing seven at the Burgas International Airport (including the suicide bomber).
- More than a million illegal immigrants and refugees passed to Europe from Greece (856,723 arrivals by sea in Greece [2015], an almost fivefold increase to the same period of 2014) and Italy (2015: 153,842).



- The borders of EU moved from Greece to Albania, FYROM (non EU members) and Bulgaria (EU)

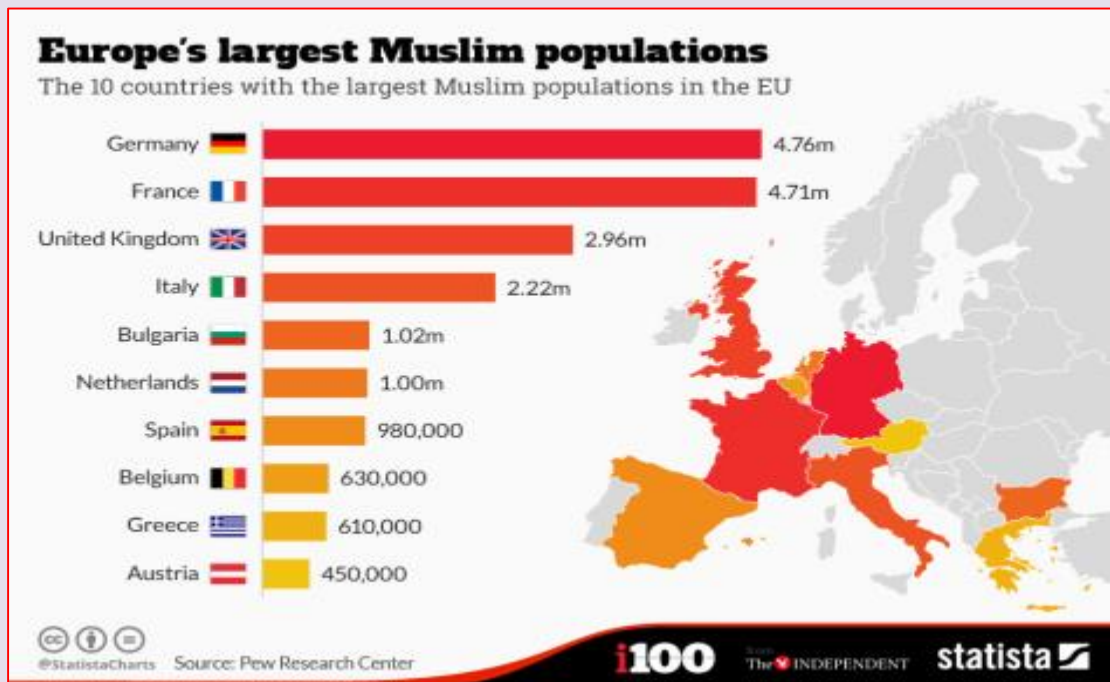


when the Western Balkan Route was closed and borders were sealed by both police and military forces. There is strong pressure from central EU member states to close the Eastern Balkan Route as well. In addition the Nordic Route (Finland-Russia) was also sealed. It is expected that the African Route will be re-activated by human traffickers towards Italy (26-30/3: 3.500 illegal immigrants).

- Without ability to move into European destinations both illegal immigrants and refugees, thousands of people were trapped in Greece (and most probably they will stay here for 1-2 years until all asylum applications are examined) – recent estimates: more than 100,000 (50,256 recorded). Due to lack of information but also due to the suspicious Turkish policies, the population movement will continue and peak during the coming months that weather condition will be much more favorable. Approximately 2.6 mil people are packed around Turkish coastline (especially opposite to Greek Chios Island), waiting to be guided to Greece.
- Uncontrolled activity of NGOs (mainly foreign); unknown funding – especially at Oidomeni temporary crossing camp (Greek/FYROM borders) and Aegean Islands.



- Fractioning of EU intelligence sharing: Europol, ECDC (new counter-terrorism center – The Hague), SIS (Schengen), VIS (visa control), PNR (airlines passengers' names), EES (Schengen).
- Europol and other security authorities warn that around 4.000 jihadists have already returned into their EU homelands. Depending on the outcome of the situation in Syria and coming elections in this country many more are expected to mix with war refugees and pass into the continent.
- New forms of terrorism (sex terrorism) has been introduced by new comers in certain EU countries (e.g. Germany, Sweden, Switzerland) while criminality significantly up rose making Stockholm the "rape capital of Europe".
- NATO's involvement in the current crisis is for the time being without any content – only four boats have been intercepted so far and around 100 people were returned back to Turkey. It is well recognized that NATO was looking for a legitimate way to be present in the Aegean Sea mainly to supervise the movements of Russian fleet operating/supporting operations in Syria. With existing rules of engagement it is impossible for a frigate to intercept 50 boats packed with people travelling towards the warship.
- Turkey – the key-nation for controlling the immigrants/refugees' tsunami – tries to get as many benefits as possible via negotiations with EU (support money [billions of euros], visa allowance, re-open negotiations' chapters with EU) while at the same time does nothing to control a very profitable reality – estimated to be 1 billion euros.



- Greek citizens' initial solidarity to refugees might change to overt or covert hostility if trapped people increase in numbers and new ethics and practices (mainly by the majority of illegal immigrants and refugees) become more prevalent or cause problems in their daily life.

The question posed

- Interception of human tsunami with peaceful means is impossible. Greece does not have the luxury of high seas where incoming fast boats can be easily stopped (at international waters) and returned to starting points (e.g. Italy-Libya sea fronts). This can be done only by applying military force – a solution that is easy to apply but hard to promote as opposing Western civilization and culture (despite the fact that this civilization/culture is directly or indirectly involved in the roots of current problem).
- Greece is no more the crossroad of radical elements towards Europe and this poses the threat to become a target itself.



- Symbolism might be not as strong compared to a terrorist attack against a mighty EU member state but will do the job – Greece is an EU and NATO member state.
- Proximity of Greece to current flamed Near East (Syria) and Middle East (Iraq) endangers the possibility of use of weapons of mass disruption. Means required (chemical/radiological agents and explosives) can be easily transported from coastline to coastline using refugees' sea pathways and methods.
- Domestic sleeping cells from previous illegal immigrants' flows with good knowledge of Greek reality can provide logistics and reconnaissance support along with safe heavens and escape routes (i.e. to Albania).
- The only heavy industry still alive in Greece – tourism, might be at stake. Trapped in Greece lone wolf attacks against hotels hosting international tourists during summer 2016 would not be a surprise but it will be by far more catastrophic than the terrorist attack itself. This is especially true now; since the attacks in Tunisia and Egypt, the usual Middle Eastern and North African vacation spots have been deserted. One of the countries that most profited from this change has been Greece, which has witnessed a significant increase of European tourists in 2015 and will likely also draw Russian tourists, who are avoiding Egypt and now Turkey. USS Cole-inspired attacks against NATO's warships cannot be excluded as well.
- Greece is rightly seen as the soft underbelly of the EU. There is serious talk about kicking it out of the Schengen zone, which allows free unmonitored travel within most of the EU. If this were to happen, Greece could become more of a target overnight. In fact, if jihadists were to be "stuck" in Greece, unable to go to France, for example, they might decide to pull off attacks against French interests within Greece.
- Radicalization represents an additional threat that despite the fact that is not prevalent for the time being, might grow (e.g. in prisons) and expanded, causing further problems in the near future.

Based on the above, one can easily conclude that Greece faces a visible/imminent threat for a conventional or non-conventional terrorist attack. Greek authorities should continue to hope for the best but they should also prepared for the worst case scenario that in turn will ignite an additional domestic turmoil or even become the grave stone for Greece. Yes it can happen to us as well and we better be prepared than (as always) sorry!

Romanian Intelligence Service keeps national terrorist alert level in Romania at blue cautious

Source: <http://actmedia.eu/daily/romanian-intelligence-service-keeps-national-terrorist-alert-level-in-romania-at-blue-cautious/62905>

Mar 23 – The national terrorist alert level in Romania is kept at blue, cautious, Romanian Intelligence Service (SRI) reported on Tuesday.



"The alert level under Romania's National System for Terrorist Alert is staying at blue, cautious. That means available information so

far does not indicate any direct connection between the events in Brussels and risks against national security in Romania. Nevertheless, SRI has taken all the necessary measures to ensure the safety of the Romanian nationals. Our hearts go out to the families of those who died in these criminal attacks and we are collaborating with our partners in the National Terrorism Prevention and Combat System as well as similar organisations in the Euro-Atlantic space," SRI Director Eduard Hellvig is quoted as saying in a press statement.

SRI is firmly condemning today's terror attacks in the capital city of Belgium.



"We are with the Belgian people and will continue to provide support to our organisational partners in our joint fight against terror. What happened in Belgium cannot but affect us. We are now talking about global terrorism. States as compact entities are no longer the targets of terrorists, but the citizens directly as individual entities. That is why I do not see as exaggerated any measure that can prevent any terrorist actions that could endanger national security. Our main goal is to prevent such terror threats. The law and intelligence are our main weapons. When the life of just one citizen is endangered, we act firmly using all the legal tools and means provided for by the law," added Hellvig.

Romania's President Klaus Iohannis said Tuesday in Istanbul that the attacks in Europe of late show terrorism is a presence in the entire human civilisation, but he voiced confidence that such problems can be solved through solidarity.

"Today is a bleak day for the European Union. Brussels is under terror siege; the European Union is under terror siege and unfortunately so is Turkey. All this shows that terror is a presence in the entire civilisation, that the world's problems are far from being solved, but we can step in, [and] with friendship among nations, with solidarity among us we stand a good chance of solving the problems. Solidarity is perhaps the aptest word to describe they

current situation and I believe everybody was left bereaving, impressed when there were attacks in Istanbul, Ankara, Paris and, unfortunately, in Brussels today," Iohannis told a meeting with leaders of the Romanian community of Istanbul.

He added that a wish for peace and solidarity should be the response to the terror attacks.

"We have to counterbalance these attacks with our wish for peace and collaboration, our solidarity in solving the big problems facing the region where both we and the Turks live. These are known issues - terror, migration, the war in Syria - as well as many other problems that, unfortunately, keep us busy more than we would have wanted. (...) I fully believe that, together with our partners, we shall overcome, we shall solve these problems," said Iohannis. Iohannis told the Romanian community of Turkey that it and the Turkish Tartar community of Romania are a bridge between Romania and Turkey.

He added that the bridge is not anything new and that there have been excellent ties for a long time between the two countries that have been materialised at official and personal levels, in the economic as well as the cultural areas.

"All this makes us believe that Romania and Turkey can continue to build together very many good things," said Iohannis.

Brussels: Another Wake-up Call

By Tarek Fatah

Source: <http://www.meforum.org/5919/brussels-wakeup-call>



Mar 22 – Another day, another city, yet the script that started unfolding in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in 1998 and that shocked the world on 9/11 in New York is the same — jihadi killers let loose on unsuspecting "infidels."

On Tuesday, Belgium's capital of Brussels fell in line with London, Madrid, and Paris as Western capitals brought to their knees by jihadi terrorists seeking the annihilation of Western civilization.

If the actions committed by the soldiers of international jihad were predictable, the reaction



of Western leaders was also familiar to ordinary, anxious citizens of North America and Europe – cowardice wrapped in political correctness.

When jihadis struck New York, president George Bush saw it as his duty to defend Islam

Western leaders respond to jihadist attacks with cowardice wrapped in political correctness.

and save it from any serious critique. "Islam is a religion of peace," he declared as his White House pandered to American Islamists.

As anger at the inability of Western countries to fight the spread of jihadi Islamism grows, the reaction of their leaders has numbed into cliché-ridden rhetoric.

U.S. President Barack Obama, whose administration has gone out of its way to avoid linking jihadi terrorism in any way with the words "Islam" or "Muslim", kept to his script once again, making no mention of Islamist terrorism.

In brief remarks while in Cuba, where he was making an address to the Cuban people, Obama said, "We will do whatever is necessary to support our friend and ally Belgium in bringing to justice those who are responsible. This is yet another reminder that the world must unite ... we must be together regardless of nationality or race or faith in fighting against the scourge of terrorism."

As if there was any doubt the Brussels attack was carried out by Islamist terrorists on behalf of the Islamic State, ISIS.

When the leader of the free world is careful not to name the entity that attacks the U.S. and its allies, how can we expect it to defeat this evil cancer that keeps spreading?

Imagine President Franklin D. Roosevelt not naming the Nazi regime of Germany as the enemy Americans fought and laid down their lives to fight against in the Second World War.

If Obama was ambiguous in his condemnation of the Brussels attack, our [Canadian] prime minister, too, was careful not to name Islamic State or the ideology of armed jihad. Justin Trudeau tweeted: "I strongly condemn today's deplorable terrorist attacks in Brussels. My thoughts are with the victims as we stand with Belgium & the EU."

But calling it a "deplorable terrorist attack" without naming who was responsible, just

Deploing jihadist attacks without naming who is responsible just doesn't cut it anymore.

doesn't cut it anymore. Our NATO ally, Belgium, deserves more than clichés. Trudeau's tweet, to me, reflects his earlier surrender to the forces of international jihad when he pulled Canada out of the air war against ISIS.

But Trudeau and Obama are not the only ones who dare not call a spade a spade. Across the West, few leaders were willing to utter the word "Islam" in connection with the Brussels attack, although Republican presidential contender Ted Cruz tweeted: "Radical Islam is at war with us. For over 7 years we have had a president who refuses to acknowledge this reality."

If there is one thing we can learn from Brussels, it is that our enemy is international Islamism. Trudeau should recognize this and change course.

If not, be prepared for a Brussels in Toronto

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

Legislation to Prevent Terrorist Travel Passed by House

Source: <http://www.hstoday.us/single-article/legislation-to-prevent-terrorist-travel-passed-by-house/>

Mar 28 – A bill that would help prevent terrorists from entering the United States was passed by the House Monday. The legislation, the [Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2016](#) (HR 4314), was based on recommendations made by the House Committee on Homeland Security Task Force on Combating Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel.

The bipartisan Task Force stated "glaring security gaps overseas allow terrorists to cross borders more easily, putting the US homeland in greater danger.



"Nearly 40,000 jihadists from around the world have gone to fight in Syria and Iraq with groups like ISIS," said committee chairman Michael McCaul (R-Texas). "Today the House acted decisively to shut down the jihadist superhighway that allows extremists to get to their safe havens—and return to the West, prepared to strike America and our allies. This legislation will streamline and elevate US efforts to combat terrorist travel and make sure we are focusing our attention where it is needed most."

The legislation would:

- Require federal departments and agencies—for the first time ever—to put together a joint plan to stop terrorist travel;
- Accelerate federal assistance to the highest-risk countries to better detect and disrupt extremists;
- Establish minimum international standards for combating terrorism and foreign fighter travel;
- Allow the Secretary of State to suspend assistance to foreign governments that fail to meet these standards; and
- Require State Department to produce an annual "score card" on how countries are fighting terrorist travel.

Brussels Attacks – Paris Revisited

By Kylie Bull (Print Managing Editor)

Source: <http://www.hstoday.us/single-article/brussels-attacks-paris-revisited/>

Mar 28 – Four days after the arrest of Paris attacks suspect Salah Abdeslam in Brussels, the Belgian capital has been hit by at least three explosions.

At the time of writing, 26 [35] people have been killed and over 100 [300] injured in two blasts at the departures area of Brussels International Airport and one at a metro station in the capital, close to European Union and European Commission headquarters. A Belgian prosecutor has said that the attacks were carried out by suicide bombers.

Borders were already on alert following INTERPOL advice in the wake of Abdeslam's arrest. All flights to the airport have been diverted with other European airports being placed on high alert. Eurostar has cancelled all trains to and from Brussels. The Thalys France-Benelux train operator says the entire network is closed.

It is strongly suspected that Abdeslam was planning, or part of the plans for, large scale attacks in Brussels or another European city. His arrest, the INTERPOL warning, and early reports that Abdeslam was cooperating with police and intelligence services, may well have led his cohorts to act sooner, rather than later.

As the airport blasts occurred in the departures area of the airport, it is not unreasonable to suggest that the intention may have been to detonate a device in the air, over a city. Alternatively, the attackers may have been trying to obtain passage to

Syria, as intelligence forces closed in on the operations surrounding Abdeslam.

Images suggest that the blasts occurred before security checkpoints, but this has not yet been confirmed. There are also unconfirmed reports of Kalashnikov AK-47s found at the airport following the attacks – the same type of weapon used in the Paris attacks last November.

Yesterday, before the attacks, Belgium's Interior Minister Jan Jambon warned of possible revenge attacks after the capture of Abdeslam. He told Belgian radio, "We know that stopping one cell can...push others into action. We are aware of it in this case."

Belgian police are now undertaking house raids in several areas of Brussels. The city is on lockdown and the whole country is on the highest level of alert. The Free University of Brussels says it has received a specific threat; consequently, access to the campus is being restricted by security.

The ease at which people can move between European borders came under great scrutiny following the Paris attacks, and some measures were put in place by a number of countries to bolster the security at their borders – in the wake of the attacks and also as a defense against the increasing number of migrants attempting to enter Europe.

Immediately after the Paris attacks, Abdeslam, and possibly others, were able to flee to their Belgian base in Molenbeek,



Brussels just as easily as they travelled into France, and indeed, even into Europe previously.

Much has been discussed regarding the Schengen agreement and its relevance in today's era of mass migration and terror cells. Schengen allows for travel between

participating European countries without the need for security, such as passport checks.

With another major assault on a European capital, the time for discussion is over. The time for action was yesterday.

Terrorism against Transportation in Belgium, Western Europe Not New

By Anthony Kimery (Editor-in-Chief)

Source: <http://www.hstoday.us/single-article/terrorism-against-transportation-in-belgium-western-europe-not-new-study-finds/>

More than 140 terrorist attacks took place in Belgium between 1970 and 2014, causing more than 40 deaths and 230 injuries, while more than 7,400 terrorist attacks worldwide between 1970 and 2014 targeted some form of transportation, including airports and aircraft, representing 5.3 percent of all attacks.

That's according to a new analysis of the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism's (START) Global Terrorism Database (GTD).

In the aftermath of the March 22, 2016 attacks in Brussels, Belgium, START compiled statistics from its GTD which shows that:

- More than 7,400 terrorist attacks worldwide between 1970 and 2014 targeted some form of transportation, including airports and aircraft, representing 5.3 percent of all attacks;
- More than 460 targets of terrorist attacks between 1970 and 2014 were airports, representing 6.4 percent of all transportation targets;
- More than 130 targets of terrorist attacks between 1970 and 2014 were subway systems, representing 1.9 percent of all attacks on transportation targets;
- Recently, attacks on transportation targets have been somewhat less prevalent. More than 1,400 such attacks took place between 2010 and 2014, comprising 3.0 percent of all attacks;
- More than 10,000 terrorist attacks worldwide between 2000 and 2014 (14 percent) were conducted in coordination with other attacks;

- ISIS under its current incarnation, carried out more than 750 coordinated attacks in 2013 and 2014;
- More than 1,600 terrorist attacks were committed by ISIS in 2013 and 2014;
- More than 41,000 terrorist attacks between 2000 and 2014 (58 percent) involved the use of explosives; and
- More than 3,600 terrorist attacks between 2000 and 2014 (5.1 percent) were suicide attacks.

According to START's study, "patterns of terrorism in Belgium generally reflected trends in Western Europe, where terrorist attacks were frequently non-lethal [and] took place primarily in the 1970s and 1980s and have declined since the early 1990s."

"The majority of these attacks (68 percent) and deaths (68 percent) took place during the 1970s and 1980s," and, "More than three-quarters (82 percent) of the terrorist attacks in Belgium were non-lethal," which is a number "slightly higher than the percentage of non-lethal attacks in Western Europe more broadly (75 percent)."

Historically, the START study showed, "the most active perpetrator group in Belgium was the Communist Combatant Cells (CCC), which was responsible for 24 percent of the attacks in Belgium during this time period, despite the fact that they were primarily active in 1984 and 1985."

Surprisingly, the START analysis revealed that worldwide between 1970 and 2014, "attacks on transportation targets have been somewhat less prevalent, comprising 3.0 percent of all attacks and 5.5 percent of attacks



against civilian targets between 2010 and 2014.”

The study also found that, “The tactic of targeting of transportation infrastructure was not used uniformly around the world,” and that “among countries that experienced at least 50 terrorist attacks against civilian targets between 1970 and 2014, the highest proportion of attacks against transportation targets took place in China (52.1 percent),” and that the lowest number of attacks was in the Central African Republic (1.1 percent).

The START analysis also revealed that, in Belgium, attacks against transportation

targets comprised 16.3 percent of all attacks between 1970 and 2014, and that terrorist attacks against transportation targets were slightly less likely to be carried out by suicide attackers (2.0 percent of attacks), compared to attacks against other types of targets (2.7 percent).

In addition, the START analysis showed that, “Terrorist attacks against transportation targets worldwide were slightly more likely to be part of coordinated, multi-part attacks (13.5 percent of attacks), compared to attacks against other types of targets (12.5 percent).”

► Read the full paper at:

https://www.start.umd.edu/pubs/START_BelgiumTransportationCoordinatedAttacks_BackgroundReport_March2016.pdf



Danish government considering plans to strip radical imams of citizenship

<http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160324-danish-government-considering-plans-to-strip-radical-imams-of-citizenship>

Mar 24 – **Denmark’s government is considering a proposal by an anti-immigration party to strip imams who preach ideas contrary to the Danish constitution of their citizenship.**

The right-wing Danish People’s Party (DPP), which currently has the second most seats in the country’s parliament, put forward the plans as **part of an effort to expel outspoken radical imam Abu Bilal Ismail**, the *Local* reports. Ismail is a leading imam at the Grimhoj mosque in the city of Aarhus. He has called for the killing of Jews, and also the stoning of adulterous women and the killing of apostates.

Additional legislation may expand the limits of the Danish constitution to restrict religious freedom in extreme cases.

Martin Hendriksen, the DPP’s immigration spokesman, said: **“The Constitution says that anyone can practice their faith so long as it is not contrary to morals, or disturbing to the public order,”** *Politiko* reports.

He continued: “When imams endorse or recommend stoning, or when an imam tells a woman subjected to violence by her husband that that’s okay, then that constitutes, in my

opinion, subversive speech that disturbs the public order. **Some of these imams are Danish citizens, and we think we should deprive them of their citizenship.**”

The *Local* notes that the proposals have apparently been backed by the Social Democrats, the coalition’s largest group, the Conservative Party, and the Liberal Party, thus securing a majority for the bill in parliament.

Marcus Knuth, the Liberal Party’s immigration spokesman, said it was “a really good idea.”

“You have to come down as hard as possible on these environments. You are not just talking about twisted old imams. These are the mosques that have shaped many Syrian fighters, and they can be a threat to national security.”

Ismail’s extremist views gained wider public attention after the airing last month of the TV2 program called [Moskeerne bag sløret](#) (Mosques behind the veil). His remarks on Jews, women, and apostates were caught by hidden camera.

In 2014, a spokesperson for the Grimhoj mosque said the mosque supported ISIS.



Japanese aspiring jihadi detained in Turkey

Source: <https://in.news.yahoo.com/japanese-aspiring-jihadi-detained-turkey-official-151719271.html?nhp=1>

Mar 24 — A Turkish interior ministry official says police have detained a Japanese national as he tried to cross the border to Syria with the intention of joining Islamic State extremists.

The man was intercepted on his way to the IS-held Syrian town of Jarablus and is now in custody. The official told the AP he had a Japanese passport on him and told interrogators that he wanted to join IS.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity in line with government practice.

Japanese officials in Tokyo confirmed Thursday that a Japanese national is being held and said they are seeking further details. The state-run Anadolu Agency said the man is 24 and has the initials M.M. It said he contacted the group over social media.

What the Brussels attacks tell us about the state of ISIS and Europe today

By Daniel Byman

Source: <http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/markaz/posts/2016/03/24-bombings-in-brussels-byman>

The attack in Brussels is another sobering indicator of the emergent European front in the fight against



the Islamic State. As I wrote in *The New York Times* on Wednesday, ISIS' recent battlefield defeats in Iraq and Syria threaten the narrative of success that has been the foundation of its tremendous popularity and power. If the Islamic State cannot triumph militarily against the increasingly successful U.S.- led coalition, the group will have to look elsewhere for victories. Unfortunately, Europe is a natural and attractive target for the jihadists, as it struggles with the refugee crisis, obstacles to cooperation

on counterterrorism, and longstanding difficulties with Muslim integration.

Grasping for new threads

The Islamic State's incredible military success in Iraq and Syria allowed it to seize the preeminent position in the broader jihadist movement. However, since its peak in the summer of 2014, the Islamic State has lost 40 percent of its territory, including major cities and thousands of fighters.

Now the group seeks alternative avenues of success, and Europe provides opportunities. More than 5,000 Europeans, including a disproportionate number of French and Belgians, have joined the Islamic State. Attacks conducted by extended networks in Europe allow the Islamic State to claim it is striking back against its enemies and avenging battlefield losses.

Failure to communicate

The Brussels attack, coming only days after the last remaining suspect in November's Paris bombings was captured in his Brussels

neighborhood, also demonstrates that European security services are overwhelmed. Despite modest growth in national security budgets, European intelligence and law enforcement officers are overstretched dealing with the scale of the jihadist challenge. The most egregious failure has been the lack of European intelligence cooperation, which wastes scarce resources on duplicative efforts and leaves gaping vulnerabilities between the open borders within the EU.

The most egregious failure has been the lack of European intelligence cooperation, which wastes scarce resources on duplicative efforts and leaves gaping vulnerabilities between the open borders within the EU.

A homegrown problem

Perhaps the greatest long-term European challenge in fighting the Islamic State is integrating the continent's alienated Muslim



population. This failure creates another dangerous rift in the European experiment. Far-right parties, championing anti-immigrant and nationalist messages, are growing more popular; a trend that is likely to only accelerate with the increasing incidence of terrorism and the unrelenting refugee crisis. The rise of European xenophobia facilitates the efforts of jihadist recruiters among Europe's alienated Muslim communities.

The U.S.-led coalition must continue to target ISIS in its core territory in Iraq and Syria. But the West must also be prepared for further jihadist efforts to strike back at home. And in the meantime, Western nations—particularly in Europe—must work to weaken the jihadist influence within their own populations by addressing core problems such as alienation among Muslim citizens.

Daniel Byman is the director of research and a senior fellow in the Center for Middle East Policy at Brookings. His research focuses on counterterrorism and Middle East security. He is also a professor at Georgetown University's Security Studies Program. He served as a staff member on the 9/11 Commission and worked for the U.S. government. His most recent book is "Al Qaeda, the Islamic State, and the Global Jihadist Movement: What Everyone Needs to Know" (Oxford University Press, 2015).

'Offer Kosovar Fighters "Jihadi Rehab" to Combat Extremism'

Source: <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/offer-kosovar-fighters-jihadi-rehab-to-combat-extremism>
-03-23-2016

Mar 24 – **Little was known about Kosovo's jihadi fighters until the summer of 2014, when the security services suddenly arrested dozens of suspected terrorists, including several imams. Since then, more than 100 locations across the country have been raided.**

Fighter numbers

More than **300** Kosovars have travelled to Syria and Iraq, according to the interior ministry.

The prime minister announced in February that around **70** Kosovars are believed to be currently fighting for ISIS or Al Nusra in Syria and Iraq.

Kosovo police sources previously told BIRN that **36 women are known to have left the country to live in ISIS-controlled territory.**

According to the latest estimates from the Kosovar Centre for Security Studies, KCSS, around **60** Kosovars are believed to have been killed in the conflicts.

While the government has not made public the number of returnees, the KCSS estimates **130** fighters have so far returned home.

Kosovars reported as having left for Syria and/or Iraq by year: *

2012: **68**

2013: **123**

2014: **19**

There are no figures available for 2015 but Shpend Kursani, KCSS associate researcher, estimates 16 Kosovars joined ISIS during the first quarter of that year.

* Source: *The Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (March 2016)*

Few were aware of how many ethnic Albanian Kosovars were believed to be fighting with Islamic State, ISIS or Al Qaeda-affiliate Al Nusra in Syria and Iraq. The government announced last November that an estimated 300 Kosovars were fighting with jihadi groups or living in ISIS-controlled territory.

The same month, Prime Minister Isa Mustafa and security officials announced a 'state of alert' on grounds Kosovo faced "real risks associated with terrorism". They declined to provide further details on the severity of the threat but confirmed it was directly related to Islamic extremism.

Three months later, Mustafa told attendees at a security conference in Pristina the number of Kosovar fighters in Syria and Iraq had "decreased to fewer than 70".

The government has not made public how many Kosovars have returned to the country after fighting with jihadi groups in the Middle East, but the Kosovar Centre for Security Studies, KCSS, estimates around 130 suspected former fighters have returned home.

More than 50 of those accused of committing offences related to fighting in Syria and Iraq are now facing trial and most have been charged with joining and participating in terrorist groups or inciting and assisting others to do so.

Kosovo adopted law reforms in March 2015 that made, in most cases, fighting in foreign conflicts a criminal offence punishable with up to 15 years in prison. As most



of the suspects currently on trial are accused of having fought in Syria and Iraq in 2013 or 2014, they cannot be tried under the new legislation. Instead, they have been charged under older anti-terrorism laws.

Despite a sharp decline in the number of Kosovars leaving for Syria and Iraq - thought to be the result of the new laws and greater awareness of ISIS's activities - it appears some are still trying to do so.

Two men and a woman, all in their 20s, were stopped by Turkish authorities late last year at the border with Syria and returned to Kosovo. They have since been charged with "participation in terrorist organisations". All three deny the charges.

Brussels attacks: why Islamic State is exporting terrorism to Europe

By Paul McGeough (Chief foreign correspondent)

Source: <http://www.smh.com.au/world/brussels-attacks-why-islamic-state-is-exporting-terrorism-to-europe-20160324-gnqq99.html>

Mar 25 – **It may sound grotesque as victims of the Belgian attacks are still being identified, and it is likely the carnage will get worse before there is calm – but the bombings that killed dozens and wounded hundreds in Brussels this week might be a good sign.**

Given that terrorists acting in the name of Islamic State have wrong-footed European intelligence and security services so spectacularly – the Belgians, this week and the French twice last year – it should be assumed there will be more such attacks in Europe.

And if the streets of European cities are to become as blood-soaked as those of Ankara, the Turkish capital, **it's useful to examine the rationale underpinning the IS decision to export terrorism to Europe.**

Violence in Turkey is attributable as much to proximity to the war in Iraq and Syria as to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's security policy failures – domestic and regional.

But analysts are reading something else into the IS attacks in Europe. Instead of the attacks being a display of strength, they are being read in some quarters as a cover for weakness.

In Iraq and Syria, there are signs that IS might be stagnating, that it's starting to lose more often than it wins.

Kurdish forces in the north of Syria and in the west of Iraq are taking back territory held by IS; by some counts, as many as a third of the movement's top-tier leaders have been eliminated; last year it lost between 15 and 25 per cent of the territory it held in Iraq and Syria; and some of its vital supply lines, like the road

between Raqqa in Syria and Mosul in Iraq, have been ruptured.

No one is writing off IS – yet. The movement still has many thousands of fighters and it is cashed up – analysts at the **RAND Corporation say that even as IS fights what has become its global war, the movement could run a surplus of up to \$US200 million this year.**

Karen Greenberg, director of the Centre on National Security at Fordham Law School in New York, wrote of the Brussels attacks: "The West should understand that this is what winning may look like in the battle against Islamic State ... [the attacks] could well stem [more] from a sense of weakness than strength."

And in the aftermath of the November 13 attacks in Paris, in which 130 people died, RAND analyst Seth Jones wrote: "If history is any guide, [IS] will resort to more terrorist attacks in the West as it loses ground, potentially making it a more dangerous and unpredictable enemy in the months to come."

Any loss of territory is a dilemma for IS – its foundational pitch is that territory under its control must expand to validate its self-declared caliphate, which it predicts will stretch from the Mediterranean to the Pacific.

Jones cites **a series of groups – al-Shabab in Somalia, the Armed Islamic Group in Algeria and the Iraqi branch of al-Qaeda – which repositioned themselves as they lost territory, turning more to terrorist activity, either to pressure foreign governments to withdraw from a conflict, to bait foreign governments to**



overreact or because, with the loss of territory, they had surplus resources that could be directed to terrorism.

What is remarkable about the IS attacks in Europe is their sophistication and discipline.

And though it was the Belgian security services that were being kicked this week for their failings, in November last year it was their French counterparts who were humiliated by the enormity of a terror plot apparently assembled under their noses – and without detection – in which 130 people died along with seven attackers.

Presciently, the minute detail of the planning and execution of the Paris attacks was revealed just days before this week's Brussels attacks, when a trove of French documents, including a 55-page report by the French anti-terrorism police, [was acquired by The New York Times](#).

The attackers travelled to and around Europe without detection – and in the aftermath, 19 people, three of whom were previously wanted on international arrest warrants, were being held in six countries in connection with the Paris network.

They were adept at making their own bomb vests and in the dark art of mixing shooting sprees with separate bomb detonations and a theatre hostage drama to disorient the emergency services.

One of the captured mobile phones contained layout plans of the Bataclan concert hall – where three gunmen killed 90 of the victims, some of whom were made to sit in front of exits as human shields in the event of a police assault.

The attackers used new throwaway phones, which were activated just minutes prior to the attacks across Paris. These phones were abandoned at will – one had been used for just a single call, to an unidentified number in Belgium.

As a further precaution, they communicated without detection by using their hostages' mobile phones. None of their emails or other electronic communications has been found – leaving French investigators to conclude that the attackers [used a sophisticated encryption software](#). And while there was great anxiety over IS terrorists masking their arrival in Europe by insinuating themselves into a flood of refugees fleeing Syria and Iraq, it transpired

that most of the attackers held European passports.

Despite the battlefield losses by IS, a reality in the Syria/Iraq crisis is that in the absence of genuine political reform in Iraq and a sustainable resolution of the Syrian conflict, the region will always be an incubator for the likes of IS or a successor movement.

Western and Arab intelligence on the interior of IS remains lean and Washington and its allies continue to struggle in their efforts to counter the IS ideology and its dissemination via social media – which has the effect of a powerful magnet drawing foreign volunteers to the fight.

Washington is sticking with a strategy of air strikes on IS targets; helping Iraqi troops and Syrian opposition forces, with an estimated 5000 Americans on the ground; and actively seeking to disrupt IS's financial network.

Progress is painfully slow and comes in fits and starts. Even when backed by US air strikes, it took Iraqi forces more than five months to regain control of Ramadi, a small city in the west of Iraq; and on Thursday, they launched what Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi described as "the first phase" of a campaign to retake the northern stronghold of Mosul.

In 2004 it required more than 13,000 troops, mostly American, to recapture Fallujah, a city between Ramadi and Baghdad – 95 Americans died and more than 500 were injured as an insurgent force of about 3000 was dislodged.

For IS to lose Mosul would be a staggering blow. And for Iraqi forces, who have inspired little confidence since fleeing Mosul in the face of an IS advance in 2014, to retake the city would be a staggering achievement. **Mosul is five times bigger than Ramadi and its recapture would require probably more than 30,000 troops – compared with the 8000-strong force that regained Ramadi.**

"Do I think it's going to be easy? No," Major-General Richard Clarke, commander of American land forces in Iraq, told reporters late in February. "It's going to be tough."

US President Barack Obama talks about escalating as need be, but for now he is sticking with what he said in 2014 was a policy to "degrade and ultimately destroy"



IS – but which these days looks more like a policy of containment.

After the November assault on Paris, MIT political scientist Barry Posen described containment as "a tough sell, because it requires patience and resilience, and does not promise an easy victory". On the other hand, he counselled: "US attempts to reorganise the politics of other countries by the sword have foundered on nationalist resistance to outsiders; unreliable local allies; deeply embedded cultural practices; and the inherent crudeness of the military instrument."

Absent a massive sea change in American political will, it's difficult to envision any US president dispatching the ground forces needed to take and hold indefinitely the territory now controlled by IS – especially given that as many as 170,000 US-led forces were unable to knock Iraq into a shape that satisfied Western thinking in the aftermath of the 2003 invasion.

Jessica Stern, lecturer in government at Harvard, states the obvious – yes, the West could defeat IS in the territory it now controls – before she acknowledges reality as she writes in *The Atlantic*: "But it would take a massive ground invasion and the results would be temporary at best."

Noting that it took 70 years of containment to bring about the collapse of the Soviet Union, she forecasts that IS "will no doubt eventually collapse", as a result of its equally false utopian promises. But unlike the "either or" reading of IS's options by RAND's Jones and Fordham's Greenberg, Stern sees the movement as having a dual nature: "[IS] is both a totalitarian proto-state that controls territory and is trying to spread its 'caliphate' into even more regions where state structures are weak, as well as a global terrorist organisation bent on goading the West to counterattack."

She sets out missteps by the West that would defeat a containment strategy :

- Failure to see that IS's most numerous victims are Muslims;
- Conflating IS's ideology with the religion of Islam;
- Conflating the victims of jihadist brutality, now seeking refuge in the West, with the

perpetrators from whom they are trying to escape;

- Urging Nuremberg-type laws for Muslims, requiring them to register with the state or denying them entry;
- Sending in 100,000 troops to defeat IS, while failing to address the underlying problems of disenfranchised Sunni Muslims.

Her advice is timely for European governments torn between what is sensible and what is populist as they grapple with the Brussels bombings.

Muslim communities, such as the much-publicised Brussels district of Molenbeek, described as an incubator of radicalism, have to be brought into the national community – not locked out.

But Stern's advice probably comes too late for Erdogan's Turkey.

In 2013, then prime minister Erdogan courted EU membership by boasting of his "zero problems with neighbours" policy and engaging Turkey's significant Kurdish minority in a peace process.

But Erdogan has jettisoned all that. Back on a war footing with the Kurds, literally, he's madly compiling "enemy lists" among the judiciary and the fourth estate. The temptation for some in Europe will be to follow Erdogan into this brutal nationalism, but this is a time for minorities to be embraced.

As the would-be nominees in the US presidential race attempt to outbid each other in the aftermath of the Brussels bombings, Republican Ted Cruz came in for withering criticism with his call this week for Muslim communities to be "patrolled and secured".

And at a press conference in Buenos Aires on Wednesday, Obama smacked down Cruz for another of his remarkable policy proposals, saying: "When I hear someone saying we should carpet-bomb Iraq or Syria, not only is that inhumane, not only is that contrary to our values, that would likely be an extraordinary mechanism for [IS] to recruit more people willing to die and to explode bombs in an airport or metro station."

"That's not a military strategy," Obama said. "Blowing something up just so we can go home and say we blew something up is not a foreign policy."



EDITOR'S COMMENT: Good Australian analysis but not a word on Russia's operations and their contribution on war against ISIS. No comment also on the role of neighboring Arabic nations!

The Changing Logic Behind Suicide Bombings

By Uri Friedman

Source: <http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2016/03/changing-logic-behind-suicide-bombings/126946/>

Mar 25 – In October 2015, two suicide bombers killed more than 100 people outside a railway station in the Turkish capital of Ankara. It was the deadliest terrorist attack in the country's modern history, but it was also something more, something not fully appreciated at the time, according to Robert Pape, a terrorism expert at the University of Chicago: The U.S.-led military campaign against the Islamic State—a mixture of air strikes and support for local ground forces—had turned ISIS into a “cornered animal.” And the animal was lashing out.

The group's suicide attacks in its sanctuaries of Syria and Iraq declined, displaced by complex acts of terrorism abroad: the Ankara attacks, followed by the October 2015 downing of a Russian plane over Egypt, the November 2015 Paris attacks, more explosions in Turkey, and most recently triple bombings, at least two of them suicide blasts, in Brussels. All have appeared meticulously designed to kill as many people as possible in countries that are all, to differing degrees, fighting the Islamic State.

The question is: Why is the animal suddenly flailing about? Why are bombs going off in Brussels now?

On display in Belgium this week, Pape argues, is what he calls the “[strategic logic of suicide terrorism](#).” Deciphering the logic of terrorists is maddeningly difficult, which is why the study of terrorism is an exercise in competing theories, all circling The Truth at varying distances.

Pape's theory is that suicide terrorism is fundamentally a response to military intervention—in the form of a rival occupying territory that the terrorists prize.

For “nationalist” reasons, the terrorists want to control that territory, as any state would, through a monopoly on force and exclusive political authority. The argument here isn't that

all territorial occupations produce suicide terrorism, or that every individual terrorist is chiefly concerned with contested land, but rather that terrorist groups that today practice suicide terrorism tend to be grappling with dynamic losses of territory. **Drawing on a [database of suicide attacks around the world](#) since 1982, Pape claims that his geopolitical paradigm has more predictive power than, say, explanations for terrorism that focus on religious fanaticism.**

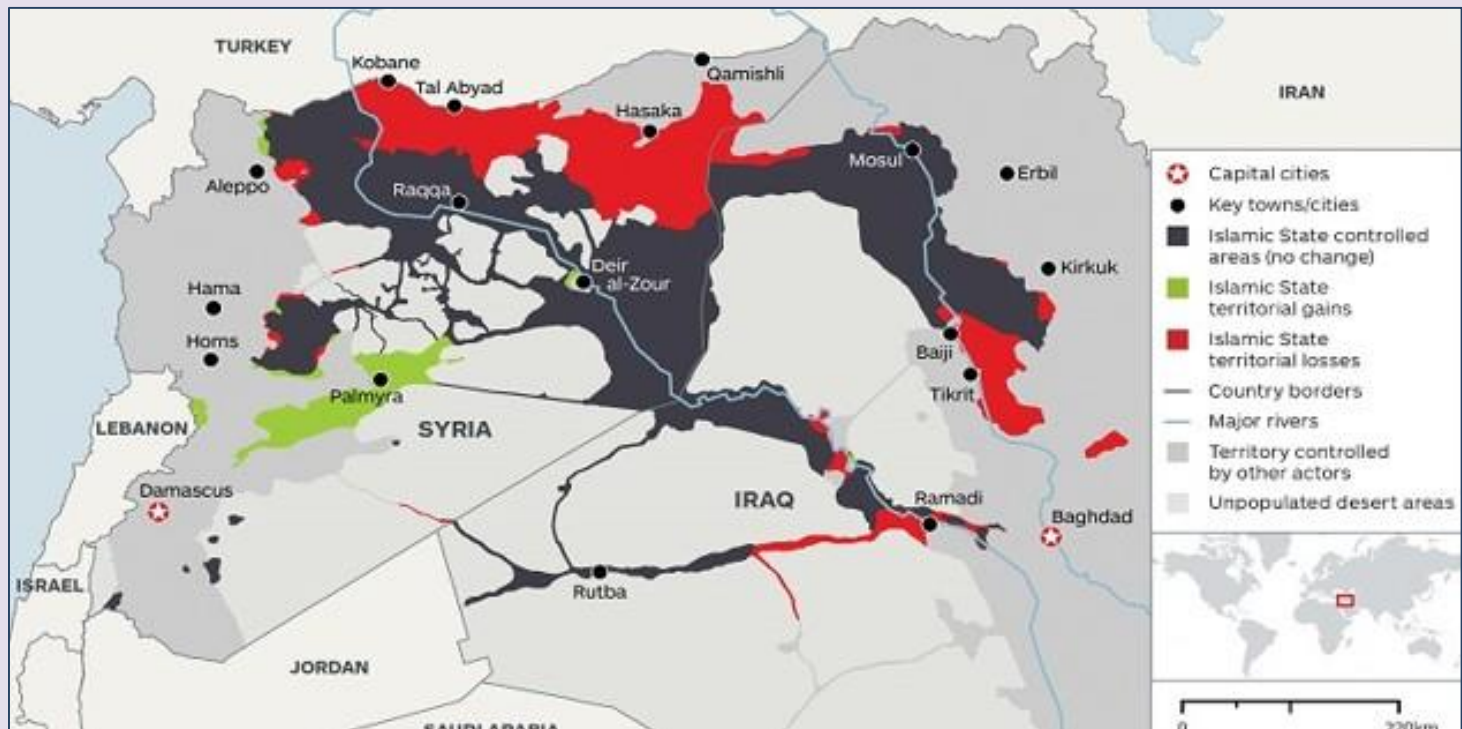
The idea that ISIS is primarily driven by extreme Islamist ideology suggests that “the targeting logic of a group comes right from its [religious] doctrine,” Pape told me. “Given that ISIS's doctrine has not changed—that is, it's still a religious group—then there should never have been a shift of its targeting tactics.” And yet a shift in who it targets seems to have occurred. Why?

In Pape's view, ISIS has trained its sights on countries like Belgium, France, Russia, and Turkey because the U.S. coalition's air and ground campaign, along with military operations by Russia and its ally, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, have significantly eroded ISIS territory in Syria and Iraq in recent months (Belgium has participated in air strikes against ISIS in Iraq, but not Syria).

According to one recent estimate by IHS Jane's 360, the Islamic State lost control of 14 percent of its territory between January and mid-December 2015, and an additional 8 percent in the last three months (in the map below, red represents losses, green gains, gray no change).

ISIS Territorial Gains and Losses: January 1, 2015–March 14, 2016





IHS Conflict Monitor

In other words: In response to Ted Cruz's statement on Tuesday, following the bloodshed in Brussels, that "radical Islam is at war with us," Pape might agree that ISIS is a radical Islamist group. But he likely wouldn't agree that the precepts of radical Islam are determining the course of the war that ISIS is waging.

"The ebbs and flows of territory are predictive of the group's targeting logic," Pape told me, and the evolution of that logic over the last six months might be the key lesson from the Brussels attacks, even if the violence may have more proximate causes as well, such as the arrest last week in Brussels of one of the plotters of the Paris attacks. "ISIS is now losing in Iraq and Syria—they're losing actually quite badly—and so they're now in a position where they're trying to change a losing game," he said. The less in control the organization is at home, the more it strikes at targets abroad.

Pape argues that interpreting incidents like the Brussels attacks as a sign of weakness rather than strength is critical. He worries that if people conclude from the Belgium bombings that ISIS is stronger than ever, they'll be more likely to support a major American or European ground offensive against the group. Such an offensive, he believes, will greatly

increase the risk of suicide terrorism against Western targets beyond what's likely to result from the current air campaign, without offering a higher probability of success in the fight against ISIS.

In defending the link between fierce struggles for territory and the use of suicide bombing as a strategy, Pape cites historical examples ranging from Chechen terrorists in Russia to the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka. In 2010, he applied the theory to America's occupations of Afghanistan starting in 2001 and Iraq starting in 2003. "From 1980 to 2003, there were 343 suicide attacks around the world, and at most 10 percent were anti-American inspired," he wrote in *Foreign Policy*. "Since 2004, there have been more than 2,000, over 91 percent against U.S. and allied forces in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other countries." The invasion of Iraq, he has argued in the past, "produced the largest suicide campaign in history."

But if the occupation of territory spurs terrorism, why does it take the form of suicide terrorism specifically? Suicide attacks, Pape explained, are particularly well-suited to accomplishing two goals.

One is "to coerce the target government to pull back its military forces, and suicide attacks kill more people—it's the lung cancer of terrorism—than non-suicide



attacks by a factor of ten.” The public will be terrorized by the scale of the carnage and the sinister nature of the suicidal act itself, the logic goes. Under pressure, their government will be forced to retreat from the territory that the terrorists desire.

Second, in the regions where terrorist groups operate, “suicide attacks are excellent against security targets to hold territory.” Those security forces—be they American or Iraqi or Sinhalese—are usually better armed and equipped than the terrorists. “Suicide attacks are a way to level that tactical advantage,” Pape explained.

“If you’re just going to go up against a tank with a handgun, it’s a lot less effective than some coordinated suicide attacks,” he continued. “That’s why, when there was a pitched battle for [the Iraqi city of] Ramadi last May, there were complex suicide attacks [by ISIS] used in coordination with other non-suicide attacks to basically seize and hold territory against an opposing force. That’s not something that we see in El Salvador with the [guerrilla group] FMLN [during the Salvadoran

Civil War]. We don’t see that with the [Viet Cong] in South Vietnam [during the Vietnam War]. They’re not holding territory in a pitched way. ... Suicide attack allows for more aggressive, coercive punishment and it allows for more aggressive territorial strategies.” While these strategic considerations have remained fairly constant across time and place, he says, what’s changed in the last 10 or 15 years is that in countries like Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, suicide bombing has increasingly been used as a *tactic* to take and hold territory. On Tuesday, ISIS justified its suicide attacks as retaliation against “the Crusader states” for “their aggression against the Islamic State,” adding that it had targeted “Crusader Belgium” in particular because it would “not stop targeting Islam and its people.” **The statement had all the trappings of a religious message, but its essential argument echoed Pape’s secular thesis: Brussels was being targeted for the participation of Belgium, and European countries more broadly, in the anti-ISIS coalition.**

Uri Friedman is a senior associate editor at The Atlantic, where he oversees the Global Channel. He was previously the deputy managing editor at Foreign Policy and a staff writer for The Atlantic Wire.

ISIS second-in-command killed by U.S. Special Forces in Syria

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160325-isis-secondincommand-killed-by-u-s-special-forces-in-syria>

Mar 25 – **ISIS second-in-command Abd al-Rahman Mustafa al-Qaduli, aka Haji Imam, was killed by U.S. Special Forces operating inside Syria.**



Secretary of Defense Ash Carter and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen Joseph Dunford, in a Pentagon press conference, said al-Qaduli was targeted and killed as part of the broader U.S. campaign to take down ISIS leaders. Al-Qaduli, a former Iraqi physics teacher, was the deputy of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the leader of Al-Qaeda in Iraq, who was killed by U.S. forces in 2006. **He was designated as a global terrorist by the United States in 2014, and there was a \$7 million reward on his head.**

This is the second time this month that a top leader of ISIS is killed by U.S. forces. ISIS “minister of war,” and the third most senior ISIS leader after Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and the now-dead al-Qaduliin, died in a hospital two weeks ago after being seriously injured in a U.S. airstrike. Tarkhan Batirashvili, better known as Omar al-Shishani or “Omar the Chechen,” was in a coma in a hospital for five days after the house where he was meeting with other ISIS leaders was destroyed.

“We are systematically eliminating ISIL’s cabinet,” Carter said at a news conference. He made clear that the challenge was not that simple.



“Striking leadership is necessary,” he said, “but as you know it’s far from sufficient. As you know leaders can be replaced. These leaders have been around for a long time — they are senior and experienced and eliminating them is an important objective and result. They will be replaced and we will continue to go after their leadership.”

“The removal of this ISIL leader will hamper the organization’s ability for them to conduct operations both inside and outside of Iraq and Syria,” Carter said.

The Brussels Attacks: What is True, What is Fake? Three Daesh Suspects at Brussels Airport

By Prof Michel Chossudovsky

Global Research, March 25, 2016

Source: <http://www.globalresearch.ca/the-brussels-attacks-what-is-true-what-is-fake-three-daesh-suspects-at-brussels-airport/5516269>

The Mysterious Photo: Three Daesh Suspects at Brussels Airport Caught on the CC Surveillance Camera?

A review of official police statements suggests **that the still photos allegedly from the Airport CC Surveillance Camera were not initially released by the Police, they were first published by Dernière Heure, DH.be**, which is part of Belgium’s media giant Groupe Multimédia IPM S.A.

It is worth noting that DH.be together with La Libre (also part of Groupe IPM) (mistakenly) published **the fake CC surveillance video of the Brussels airport bomb attacks by using the footage of the Moscow terror attack of January 2011.**

The “real” video footage from the airport CC surveillance cameras has so far not been made public.

Below is the picture of the three Daesh suspects walking in Brussels airport. There is no mention as to when (at what time) the still video picture was taken.



Apart from this still image, no official CC surveillance video footage was released. ([See our analysis on the fake CC videos](#)).

As mentioned above, there are contradictions regarding the time of release and the source of the above images.

Dernière Heure DH.net.be published the still photo from the CC camera **at 10.27am**, two and a half hours BEFORE its alleged official release by the Brussels

police: at 12.58pm.

The airport was closed shortly after the 8am attack: there are three possible answers:

- 1) that the airport security authorities made the video images available to DH.be prior to releasing it to the police.
- 2) that the Brussels police authorities released the images to DH.be as an exclusive, prior to their official release. Unlikely.
- 3) that the source of the still image did not emanate from the airport surveillance CC cameras, but from another source which was used by Dernière Heure DH.be

Most media reports acknowledged that the mysterious photo of the alleged suicide bombers was released by the Brussels police.

The twitter entries below confirm the exact time at which the airport photos were released:

First Release by DH.be at 10.27am (entitled “Photo Exclusive” by DH.be)





@ladh

Follow

Attentats de Bruxelles : la photo de deux suspects possibles à l'aéroport ! [dhnet.be/actu/faits/exc...](https://www.dh.be/actu/faits/exc...) #brusselsattack

10:27 AM - 22 Mar 2016

613 125

Second Release by Politie Brussel/Police de Bruxelles: 12.58pm

The [press release of the federal prosecutor's office](#) on March 23rd confirms the identity of one of the suspects, Ibrahim El Bakraoui and mentions the photo. The time of its release is not mentioned.

https://5052.fedimbo.belgium.be/sites/5052.fedimbo.belgium.be/files/explorer/persbericht_23_mars_2016_FR.pdf

Une photo montrant les trois suspects a été diffusée. L'auteur au milieu de la photo, qui est l'un des deux kamikazes, a été identifié grâce à ses empreintes. Il s'agit de Ibrahim EL BAKRAOUI, né à Bruxelles le 9 octobre 1986, de nationalité belge.



Politie Brussel HOOFDSTAD Elsene - Police de Bruxelles CAPITALE Ixelles

March 22 at 12:58pm ·

TERRORISME - Suspect à identifier

La police cherche à identifier cet homme. Il est suspecté d'avoir commis l'attentat à l'aéroport de Zaventem le mardi 22 mars 2016.

Si vous reconnaissez cet individu ou si vous avez des informations concernant cet attentat, veuillez prendre contact avec les enquêteurs via le numéro de téléphone gratuit 0800 30 300.

Discrétion assurée

[See Translation](#)



Analysis: Are the airport images genuine?

In other words, can we trust DH.be which published a fake surveillance video of the bomb attack (using footage from Moscow January 2011) on March 22 at 09.07 (one hour after the bomb attack). ([See our earlier report on this issue](#), see summary in the text box below)

The Moscow Airport January 2011 and the Minsk, April 2011 terror attacks

The CC surveillance videos of the attacks in real time published by Belgium's media on March 22 at both the airport and the metro are fake,

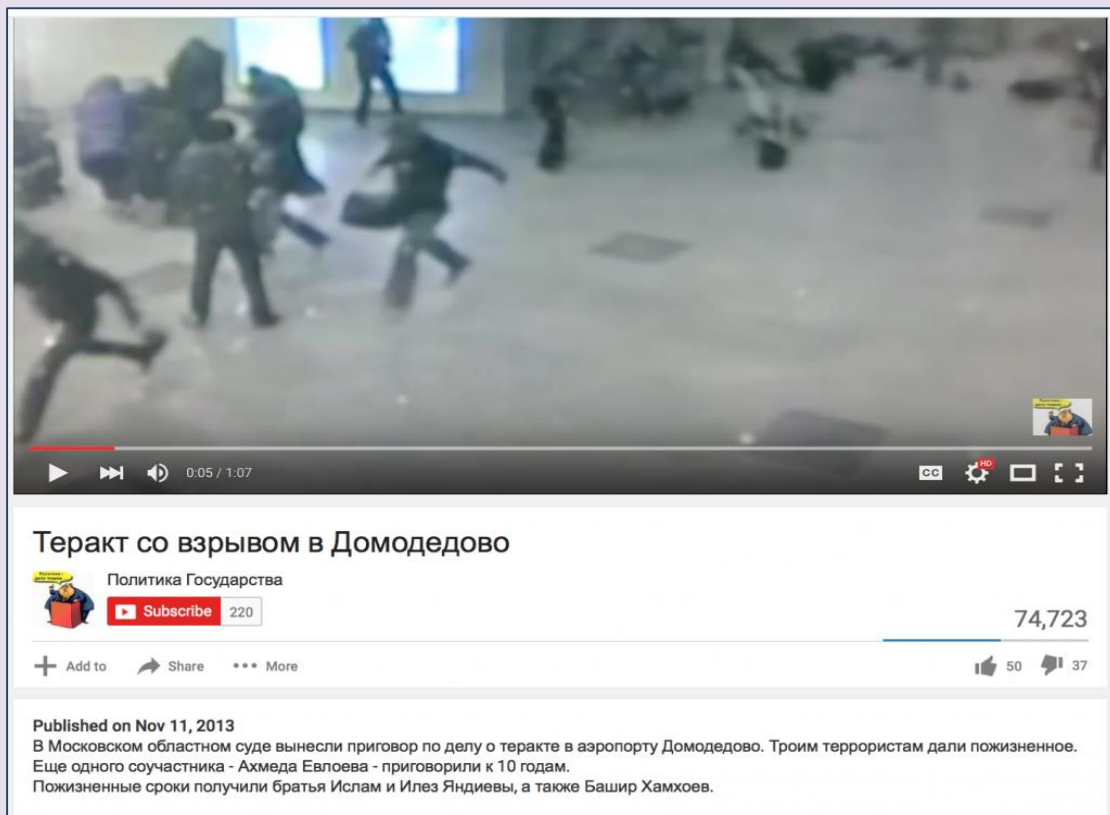
This is confirmed by [an earlier Global Research report](#). The

Belgian corporate media published footage from the Moscow airport attacks (January 2011) and the Minsk Metro terror attack (April 2011).



Video 1 scan (Moscow airport, January 2011)

Video 2 scan (Minsk Airport, April 2011)



Here is a screenshot of the Minsk 2011 video footage broadcast on Belgian network TV and on the internet depicting the explosion in the Metro in Brussels, March 22, 2016



For full report see:

[Fake Video Used in News Coverage of Brussels Terror Attacks](#) By [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#), March 22, 2016

[Media Manipulation: More Fake Video Reports of the Brussels Terror Attacks](#) By [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#), March 23, 2016



Contradictions

In contradiction with the official Prosecutor's press release which identifies only one of the suspected terrorists, namely Khalif , several media reports identified the three men as Khalif and Ibrahim el Bakraoui at Brussels airport together with Najim Laachraoui. The quoted source was the official surveillance camera.

Khalif allegedly committed the suicide attack at the metro station. So why was he walking together with his brother at the airport? The airport was closed down immediately after the bomb explosions. [The Prosecutor's press release](#) (March 23) quoted above gives a superficial explanation.

In this regard, several media changed their stories, first Khalif died at the airport as the second kamikaze. The media subsequently clarified quoting The Belgian Federal Prosecutor "that one detonated at the airport and the other at the Maelbeek metro station."

In a subsequent statement emanating from the Prosecutor's office, Najim is confirmed as the second kamikaze at the airport. In turn, media reports then confirmed that **Najim Laachraoui** was the second attacker at the Zaventem Airport. Subsequent reports confirm the death of Ibrahim and Najim at the airport, without any substantiating evidence.

According to Le Monde "a **second man, carrying a large bag, was seen on CCTV in the Brussels metro with Khalid el-Bakraoui**" (quoted in the Guardian).

News reports say that "authorities identified" brothers Khalid el-Bakraoui, 27, and Ibrahim el-Bakraoui, 30 as the suicide (Kamikaze) bombers."Ibrahim el-Bakraoui [died at Zaventem Airport while Khalid el-Bakraoui died at the Maelbeek Metro Station](#)"

But where is the evidence, where are the bodies? Has a post mortem (autopsy) been conducted which confirms the identity of the kamikaze bombers. Is there a coroner's report?



Najim Laachraoui était bien le second kamikaze de l'aéroport, où il s'est fait exploser au côté d'Ibrahim El Bakraoui. Le frère ce dernier, Khalid El Bakraoui, s'est lui fait sauter dans le métro, à la station de Maelbeek. Photo AFP

Ibrahim's Computer and Will Found in a Rubbish Bin

According to the Prosecutor's press release, a computer was found abandoned in a rubbish bin which contained the will of Ibrahim. This was discovered thanks to the testimony of the taxi driver who took Ibrahim to the airport. In addition to the explosives, a flag of the Islamic State was also found.

Un chauffeur de taxi s'est présenté à la police pour déclarer avoir pris en charge trois personnes à Schaerbeek, 4 rue Max Roos. Une perquisition a été effectuée à cette adresse et a permis de découvrir 15kg d'explosif de type TATP, 150 litres d'acétone, 30 litres d'eau oxygénée, des détonateurs, une valise remplie de clous et de vis ainsi que du matériel destiné à confectionner des engins explosifs (bacs en plastique, ustensiles divers, ventilateurs, etc.).

Deux autres perquisitions ont été effectuées rue max Roos et se sont révélées négatives.

Dans une poubelle de la même rue, les enquêteurs ont trouvé un ordinateur contenant le testament de Ibrahim EL BAKRAOUI dans lequel il déclare être « dans la précipitation », « ne plus savoir quoi faire », « être recherché de partout », « ne plus être en sécurité » et que « si ils s'éternisent, ils risquent de terminer à côté de lui dans une cellule ».

The full text of the alleged will (testament) is not available.



Some media call it a “letter”. From what has been released to the media, the alleged will does not say anything. In fact it is not a will but a text focussing on Ibrahim’s personal fears. Daesh is not mentioned, neither is the planned bomb attack.

Suspects were Known to Police and Intelligence

What is of significance is that all the suspects were on the radar of police and intelligence.

The two el-Bakraoui brothers “were already being sought by police due to suspected links to the November terror attacks in Paris.”

Ironically, Brussels police categorizes Ibrahim as unknown suspect (suspect inconnu)

The screenshot shows the official website of the Belgian Police (Police Fédérale). The header includes the police logo and the text "Appellez le 101 pour une assistance policière urgente." Below the header is a navigation bar with links: "Actualités", "Questions", "Avis de recherche", "A propos", and "Contact". The main content area is titled "TERRORISME - Suspect à identifier (2)". It includes a sidebar on the left with various search categories like "Disparus", "Recherchés", "Suspects connus", "Suspects inconnus", "Personnes décédées", "Personnes inconnues", "Meurtres ou décès suspects", "Attaques à main armée", "Moeurs", "Accidents de circulation", "Autres", and "Propriétaires recherchés". The main text area contains the following information:

- Date:** 22.03.2016
- Lieu:** Zaventem
- Description:** La police cherche à identifier cet homme. Il est suspecté d'avoir commis l'attentat à l'aéroport de Zaventem ce mardi 22 mars 2016.
- Request:** Si vous reconnaissez cet individu ou si vous avez des informations concernant cet attentat, veuillez prendre contact avec les enquêteurs.
- Discretion:** Discretion assurée
- Publication:** Publié le 23/03/2016 à la requête du des autorités judiciaires.

There are three photographs of the suspect: a large one on the right and two smaller ones at the bottom left.

Unknown suspects at Zaventem airport?

Foreknowledge of the Attacks

Not only were the suspects known to police authorities, the government had advanced information, foreknowledge of a possible attack in Brussels:

“The Belgian security services, as well as other Western intelligence agencies, had advance and precise intelligence warnings regarding the terrorist attacks in Belgium on Tuesday, Ha’aretz has learned. The security services knew, with a high degree of certainty, that attacks were planned in the very near future for the airport and, apparently, for the subway as well.” (Haaretz, March 23, 2016)

EU Emergency Response Drill Simulating a Terror Attack in a Metro Station Held Three Weeks Before the Attacks

Three weeks before the Brussels attacks, an EU terror emergency drill was held in the UK, simulating an attack on the London underground tube. Seven countries including Belgium participated in the exercise.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3469066/Dead-bodies-strewn-tube-trains-tower-block-collapses-station-emergency-services-carry-drill-Europe-s-biggest-disaster-response.html#ixzz43IMRQ1Re>

Is it relevant?

“Exercise allows workers to practice skills they would need in the event of a major disaster such as terror attack”.



'Dead bodies are strewn over tube trains after a tower block collapses into a station' as emergency services carry out a drill for Europe's biggest disaster response

- Hundreds of emergency workers from four countries are taking part in Europe's largest disaster drill this week
- Seven Tube carriages have been partially buried in thousands of tonnes of rubble in a disused power station
- More than 1,000 'dead' and 'injured' bodies were today strewn across the chilling scene, ready to be recovered
- Exercise allows workers to practise skills they would need in the event of a major disaster, such as a terror attack

By STEPHANIE LINNING FOR MAILONLINE

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Source Daily Mail

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3469066/Dead-bodies-strewn-tube-trains-tower-block-collapses-station-emergency-services-carry-drill-Europe-s-biggest-disaster-response.html#ixzz43IMRQ1Re>



Michel Chossudovsky is an award-winning author, Professor of Economics (emeritus) at the University of Ottawa, Founder and Director of the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG), Montreal, Editor of Global Research. He has taught as visiting professor in Western Europe, Southeast Asia, the Pacific and Latin America. He has served as economic adviser to governments of developing countries and has acted as a consultant for several international organizations. He is the author of eleven books including The Globalization of Poverty and The New World Order (2003), America's "War on Terrorism" (2005), The Global Economic Crisis, The Great Depression of the Twenty-first Century (2009) (Editor), Towards a World War III Scenario: The Dangers of Nuclear War (2011), The Globalization of War, America's Long War against Humanity (2015). He is a contributor to the Encyclopaedia Britannica. His writings have been published in more than twenty languages. In 2014, he was awarded the Gold Medal for Merit of the Republic of Serbia for his writings on NATO's war of aggression against Yugoslavia.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Crisis communication management is a very difficult thing to accomplish. But there is a general universal rule: The biggest the problem is, the biggest the TRUTH should be! Was it?

Would The UK Be Safer From Terrorism After Brexit? What The Experts Say

Source: <http://dailycaller.com/2016/03/25/would-the-uk-be-safer-from-terrorism-after-brexit-what-the-experts-say/#ixzz44BPB18XR>

Mar 24 – The terrorist attacks on Brussels that killed 30 people Tuesday and left hundreds dead sparked a furious debate about whether a British exit from the European Union would leave the country more or less vulnerable to similar attacks.



Politicians, policy scholars, and former intelligence officials have weighed in to share their views, and the debate is set to intensify in the run-up to the UK's June 23 referendum on EU membership.

Dalibor Rohac, Research Fellow, Foreign Policy Studies, American Enterprise Institute

"It is simply wrong to assert, that EU membership is making the UK more vulnerable to terrorism," says Dalibor Rohac.

"The UK is not part of the Schengen area and has full control over who enters the country. At the same time, it has access to the Schengen Information System, an EU-wide database missing and wanted people, and to Europol's resources. The UK can also have suspects extradited rapidly through the European Arrest Warrant. Overall, those strike me as important and unambiguous benefits, which would in all likelihood be gone should the UK decide to leave."

Sir Richard Dearlove, former head of the UK's secret intelligence service MI6

Writing in Prospect magazine, Sir Richard Dearlove the former head of MI6 gave a boost to pro-Brexit supporters, arguing the UK would not be less secure if the electorate decided to leave the EU.

"Whether one is an enthusiastic European or not, the truth about Brexit from a national security perspective is that the cost to Britain would be low. Brexit would bring two potentially important security gains: the ability to dump the European Convention on Human Rights — remember the difficulty of extraditing the extremist Abu Hamza of the Finsbury Park Mosque — and, more importantly, greater control over immigration from the European Union," Dearlove wrote.

"Would Brexit damage our defence and intelligence relationship with the United States, which outweighs anything European by many factors of 10? I conclude confidently that no, it would not. The replacement of Trident, the access to overhead satellite monitoring



capabilities, the defence exchanges that are hidden from public view, the UK-US co-operation over signals intelligence, the Central Intelligence Agency/Secret Intelligence Service/Federal Bureau of Investigation/MI5 liaison and much more would continue as before.”

Michael Fallon, UK Secretary of State for Defense

Debating on the BBC program Newsnight, Michael Fallon argued the UK benefitted from its membership of the EU and remaining a member was not a risk to security. “We’re not jeopardising the security of our citizens, that’s a ridiculous argument,” said Fallon. “We’re trying our best to keep our own citizens secure but where there is intelligence that we can share across Europe, where we can tap into important information about the movement of terrorists, surely it makes sense to do so.” “This is not the time for us to be leaving an international partnership like the EU, to be walking out. On the contrary, we should be sharing more and more information with each other.” Fallon emphasized that the UK is not a part of the EU’s open-borders Schengen agreement.

“We keep control of our borders but we benefit because we share the intelligence, the flight information and the co-operation that there is between security forces across Europe.”

Robin Simcox, terrorism and national security expert at the Heritage Foundation

“I thought he made a very convincing case, it is absolutely the case that key intelligence sharing relationships are the via the five eyes of which the United States is a key member,” Simcox told the Daily Caller News Foundation, commenting on Dearlove’s Prospect article. The five eyes is an intelligence alliance made up of the UK, US, New Zealand, Australia and Canada. “I’ve never been convinced by the scaremongering stories that a British exit from the EU would be cataclysmic for security. What kind of allies would they be if because Britain left the EU one of our European allies then stopped giving us information that may avert a mass casualty attack on British soil. That’s the logical end conclusion of their argument. I just don’t buy it.”

Simcox argued there would be no major change in the security relationship between the EU and the UK if the British people voted for Brexit. He attributes the prevention of major terrorist attacks in the UK to the police, the government communication headquarters and Britain’s natural advantage of being an island making it more difficult for ISIS operatives to bring weapons into the UK.

EDITOR’S COMMENT: Do they really believe that? If yes, it is another proof that currently there is no sincere collaboration and intelligence sharing between the UK and EU. UK intel is strong with the US but EU is the one facing the biggest problem regarding terrorism. Being an island is not a barrier and given the vast Muslimization of the country, the threat is already there. If Scotexit becomes a reality in the near future then UK will become just a nation and most probably will request to return to the EU pit. So why leave?

Islamic State Better Resourced Than Al-Qaida for Long Terror Campaign

Source: <http://www.voanews.com/content/islamic-state-better-resourced-than-al-qaida-for-long-terror-campaign/3254745.html>

Mar 25 – European intelligence officials say they don’t know exactly how many assassins and bombers the Islamic State terror group has trained to conduct deadly attacks in Europe like Tuesday’s in Brussels. Officials fear, however, they are facing hundreds of potential assailants, either trained in camps in Syria or recruited through kinship and crime networks in Europe by returning IS volunteers.

Estimates of IS jihadists ready to carry out attacks range from as low as 200 to up to 400. “We just don’t have any real precision on

how many dedicated and trained operatives they have on the continent,” a senior French intelligence official told VOA. “The estimates in the end are guesses,” the official admitted.



Last year, a smuggler on the Syrian-Turkish border claimed to U.S. news-site Buzzfeed that the terror group "had sent some 4,000 fighters to Europe." Belgian and French Intelligence officials say they doubt the figure is that high of fighters plotting attacks in Europe; but, they are acutely aware that more than 5,000 Europeans have over the last few years joined the terror group and that as they trickle back, the danger of terrorism increases exponentially.

The officials say IS is better placed to wage a sustainable and deadlier terror campaign than al-Qaida was able to manage after the attacks on New York and Washington on September 11, 2001. And analysts agree with that assessment.

"It has many more resources, capacities and experiences compared with those of al-Qaida," according to Omar Ashour, a senior lecturer in security studies at the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies at Britain's University of Exeter. "These are not only demonstrated by ISIS's control of territory stretching from parts of Aleppo in Syria to parts of Salah al-Din province in Iraq, in which about 10 million people live, but also by the capacity of ISIS to strike in areas where they do not have that control," he said, using another acronym for Islamic State.

Al-Qaida has had little success with complex operations against targets in the West since 9/11. The group's highly active Arabian Peninsula branch has made several efforts to bomb Western airlines but seen them all foiled or botched. In contrast, since August 2014, IS and its affiliates have conducted at least 25 plots against Westerners, either in nearby North Africa or on European soil. Before then, it was behind just three attacks on Western targets.

The rapid increase in the tempo and complexity of IS attacks is alarming and fulfilling exactly what the group intends them for, says Shashank Joshi, a senior research fellow at the Royal United Services Institute. "The purpose of any of these attacks is get the headline, show the capability of the network and provoke fear among European public," he says.

Rising fear

And that fear is rising. So is the political and public clamor for a rapid fix to the lapses in the continent's security services.

As the IS terror campaign has morphed abruptly from so-called lone-wolf attacks and simpler hit-and-run shooting sprees - such as the Brussels museum attack in May 2014, in which a single gunman killed four people - into coordinated assaults targeting multiple locations simultaneously involving several assailants, the opportunities for leaks increase as do the chances for electronic or human intelligence to pick up outlines of plots.

Even so, the Belgian and French security services were unable to prevent last November's attacks in Paris or Tuesday's deadly terrorism. It took the Belgians 125 days to capture Salah Abdeslam, who oversaw the logistics for the Paris attacks, and was wounded and apprehended after a brief shoot-out, even though he had remained holed up in a Brussels suburb.

Much of this week's criticism of the Belgian security services has focused on perceived lapses in intelligence-sharing.

Ibrahim and Khalid El Bakraoui, the two suicide bombers at Brussels' Zaventem airport, were on the terrorism watch list in the United States. Ibrahim El Bakraoui was able to skip parole after serving part of a nine-year sentence for armed robbery, leave for Syria and be deported from Turkey as a "foreign terrorist fighter" without Belgian authorities flagging him as an Islamic militant.

"If you put all things in a row, you can ask yourself major questions," Belgian's interior minister, Jan Jambon, said this week.

Intelligence sharing

As in the wake of the Paris attacks, plotted on Belgian soil, Belgium's government has vowed to overhaul the security services and improve intelligence-sharing among the country's federal and local law-enforcement agencies divided between Flemish and French speakers and with European neighbors.

Meeting Thursday, European Union justice and interior ministers pledged, as they did before in November, to improve joint intelligence-gathering and push through measures to share airline passenger information.

The challenges don't only rest with failures in intelligence-sharing. Resources are crucial, too. All European security services are overwhelmed - short of the necessary skilled analysts



needed to sift through and make sense of the huge amount of information provided by electronic data surveillance. They are also short of the intelligence manpower needed to investigate and monitor suspects.

In November, former French intelligence counterterrorism chief Louis Caprioli told the Financial Times in an interview that 18 to 20 officers were required to monitor any one terror suspect for 24 hours a day. French authorities have watch lists of 20,000 people considered to have ties in varying degrees to radical Islam. "Materially, physically, you cannot keep watch on 20,000 people round the clock," he said. Using Caprioli's ratio, It would need 400,000 intelligence operatives to do so

Likewise, British intelligence has around 4,000 officers employed by the country's domestic intelligence organization, MI5, as well as 6,000 employees at Britain's electronic eavesdropping agency, GCHQ. Britain has more than 3,000 suspects on its

watch list - for all to be under surveillance 24 hours a day would require up to 60,000 intelligence officers.

Belgium currently employs about 700 people in its civil intelligence service with about 800 working in military intelligence.

Those intelligence officers also have to help provide security for the government and EU institutions and assess and counter other threats including a highly active Russian intelligence operation focused on NATO, analysts say.

Belgian authorities plan to hire an additional 1,000 police, prosecutors and security agents to focus on the IS threat.

According to the country's justice ministry, about 117 Belgians are estimated to have returned from fighting in Syria and to keep tabs on them they would require at least 2,340 intelligence officers, leaving no one to monitor hundreds of others on watch lists who have closely-knit kinship ties or other connections to radical Islamists.

Enough with Teddy Bears and Tears: It's Time to Take Our Civilization Back

By Raheem Kassam

Source: <http://www.meforum.org/5925/time-to-take-our-civilization-back>



Mar 23 – Teddy bears, tears, candles, cartoons, murals, mosaics, flowers, flags, projections, hashtags, balloons, wreaths, lights, vigils, scarves, and more. These are the best solutions the Western world seems to come up with every few months when we are slammed by another Islamist terrorist attack. We are our own sickness.



Since the world learned of the dozens dead, hundreds injured, and hundreds of thousands

Teddy bears symbolise our response to our way of life being threatened: inanimate, squishy, and full of crap.

affected by Monday's attack on the NATO and European Union capital, we have seen an outpouring of what is commonly known as "solidarity."

This word – most commonly associated with hard-left politics, trades union activism, socialism, and poseur indie rock bands – has come to mean very little in reality. In effect, "standing in solidarity" with someone now means that you have observed the situation, changed your Facebook profile picture accordingly, and patted yourself on the back.

And if like dead bodies Facebook profile pictures lost heat, it would be accurate to say that the Tricolores that adorned the social media profiles of many had hardly become cold before we were all changing the colours of the bands on the flags. From blue to black. From

terrorist migrants. Our borders are as porous as our brains. We refuse to realise that there are now [literally millions of people amongst us who hate us](#). Who hate our way of life, and who will, one day, dominate our public life.

But of course, such statements are dismissed as fear-mongering, alarmist, or "out of touch with reality." As if the [data](#) doesn't exist, or the demographics aren't shifting quickly enough to notice.

As if vast parts of our towns and cities haven't become ghettos, or no-go zones, or hubs of child grooming activity, or terrorism.

As if mosques, schools, prisons, and universities aren't used as recruiting grounds for radicals.

As if the blood of our countrymen hasn't even been spilled at all.

Instead, we will now think deeply about how we can "reach out" to these populations. How we can "co-exist" and "be tolerant" of one another. As if toleration – which is actually the permittance of what is not actually approved or desired – is a healthy aspiration for a society.

It is as if we model our countries on the practice of bending over and "taking one for the team", chastising those who fail to "tolerate" the most barbaric traditions of alien cultures. It is everything [this cartoon – obviously branded "racist" – suggests](#).

"But come on, Raheem, not all immigrants, or Muslims, are criminals, or rapists.... you're not!"

Yeah – and look at me. Excoriated daily by Islamists on Twitter. Why? Because I've integrated and I love my country. Because I refuse to

believe that an Islamic caliphate is the best thing for Britain, or anywhere, quite frankly. Where is my white (or brown) knight? Where are the voices of the moderate Muslim world defending *me*?

Not that I need protection, or defence, but some people aren't as hard headed or resolved as I am.



white to yellow. The blood red remains.

Because nowadays, teddy bears are the new resolve. They symbolise everything we have become in response to our way of life being threatened, and our people being slaughtered on our streets: inanimate, squishy, and full of crap.

Our security services and our police, hamstrung by political correctness, are just as interested (or more?) in rounding up Twitter "hate speech" offenders than criminal, rapist, or



Thusly, the albeit minority evil amongst British Muslims is thriving because good Muslims are doing nothing. At some point, we have to question why. I'm not sure most people are ready for the answers to that one.

So continue to sit there with your head in your hands. Mourning only to make yourself feel better. Missing people you never knew. Exclaiming, as the most immature of minds does: "Why can't we all just get along?"

Expressing sympathy is no bad thing. But to be truly sympathetic towards someone under attack, one must be chivalrous, gallant, and unafraid.

Watching someone getting raped, and tweeting your solidarity with them is not enough. Human nature and goodness calls upon us to intervene. To assist. To free someone from their torture, and to save them from their demise.

The albeit minority evil amongst British Muslims is thriving because good Muslims are doing nothing.

It is not enough to scrawl "no fear" on a post it note, and stick it onto some £3 flowers.

We must be fearless in electing leaders who we feel will best keep us safe. It is one of the few areas of our lives in which we should be able to feel comfortable. We pay our taxes, you keep us safe.

If not, then we must arm ourselves. If our governments refuse to protect us, or even begin to use the tools with which we empower them against us: surveillance, counter-terror laws, detention, then we will need to take the law back into our own hands. We cannot be afraid of doing so. It is where our societies all sprung from.

The defence of ourselves as individuals. The defence of our families, our properties, our means of production, our communities, and our neighbours.

It is why arms sales to individuals has shot up since the migrant crisis in Europe. Many Germans are losing their faith in their elected leaders to protect them. The same applies in Sweden, and in Austria. Some people refuse to take being wiped out laying down. How quaint.

It is also time to start to make serious, wide-reaching demands of our politicians on the subject of immigration and Islamism.

...

Do we leave cities with soldiers on patrol. With "peace" signs scrawled onto bomb-struck buildings? Or do we leave them safe places, with real promise for the future. Like our parents, or at least our parents' parents, left us. In order to confront this question, we have to get to the root cause of the problem. There is too much immigration, or at least, not enough hand-picked immigration, into the Western world today.

People of my age had no choice that our post-war leaders felt the heavy hand of post-colonial guilt on their shoulders, and decided to open up our countries, and flood us with "diversity."

But we do have a choice to not make the same mistakes again. And we have a duty to correct the ones that were made.

And yes, that does mean exactly what you think it means. It means ending mass migration. It means smashing apart ghettos and no go zones. It means repealing laws that allow for Sharia councils. It means asserting what it means to be British, or European, or American, without fearing a

It is time to start making serious, wide-reaching demands of our politicians on the subject of immigration and Islamism.

backlash from the political left, or the media classes who scarcely see a face my colour let alone darker.

Let them riot. Let them cry.

I would far rather be subjected to ceaseless "direct action" by the scourges of my own society than import others.

At least if my fellow countrymen are deplorable, I won't get called a racist for pointing it out.

So put down the teddy bears, burst the balloons, and let's start demanding again that our countries are safe and civilised. And if we can't find people who'll make that happen for us... let's do it ourselves.

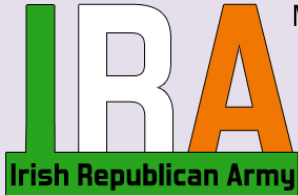
Raheem Kassam is a Shillman-Ginsburg fellow at the Middle East Forum and editor-in-chief of Breitbart London.



IRA, ISIS and the Fate of Great Britain

By JC Dash

Source: <https://www.clarionproject.org/analysis/ira-isis-and-fate-great-britain#>



Mar 25 – The first time I was invited to Belfast I have to admit I was terrified. After a lull with relatively few bombings in the 80's the 90's there was a resurgence of bombing campaigns. I was travelling in the wake of a double bombing in London in several other places on mainland Britain. At the time the Irish population in England was forced to live in the shadows. The Irish communities came under enormous amounts of surveillance and Irish residents were viewed with the same suspicion.

The United Kingdom was not bound by the constraints of political correctness and threats from the Irish community. The government was concerned with the safety and security of its citizens. That's not to say Britain did not make mistakes. Many were made but Britain recognized the problems and dealt with them.

So what changed?

On July 7, 2005 a series of deadly bombings hit London. 'Traditional terrorism' died and radical Islam took up the terror reigns.

There are many differences between the terrorism of the IRA and today's radical Islamists. Let's not fool ourselves, both are cruel and heartless with no respect for human life. But the Irish conflict itself was stalled by a peace initiative. The IRA stopped the bombing, even the splinter groups have been relatively quiet for 15 years.

Let's put one myth to bed. Islamist extremism has no political or religious agenda. It is about world domination under a man-made system of laws perverting the religion of Islam to suit their own means.

They kill without prejudice. Men, women, children of all nationalities and all religions, even Islam, are targeted. They do not bomb to force a political process they bomb to dominate.

It is not just the terror that is forcing Britain to its knees but the hyper-successful way Islamists have penetrated the government, intelligentsia and liberal elite controlling political correctness to breed a generation of apologists. Schools, municipalities, government officials and influencers all willingly feed on their Islamist agenda.

In the wake of the attacks by ISIS in France and Belgium, Britain needs to wake up. David Cameron, the UK's prime minister, is among the few with the guts to speak out. Britain needs to decide what is more important, protecting the people, cultural identity and the rule of law or appeasing radical Islam and just giving up.

Make no mistake, Islamist extremism is also alive and well across the Atlantic. In fact it's a global problem.

Oh, and by the way, it's time the U.S. admitted there is a problem, joined the dots and make sure it doesn't repeat the same mistakes as the United Kingdom.

JC Dash is a commentator on European affairs for Clarion Project.

Counter-terrorism is a relentless challenge to spot the critical intelligence

By Mark Townsend

Source: <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/mar/27/counter-terrorism-battles-to-spot-the-critical-intelligence>

Mar 27 – It is the eternal conundrum facing every intelligence official. How to filter which of the tens of thousands of snippets of information, the terabytes of chatter, tipoffs, sightings or wiretaps, to prioritise. How to decipher the weak signals of embryonic plots

or telltale tradecraft of Islamist operatives. Such decisions underpin the safety of every European state. During the aftermath of the November Paris attacks, western intelligence officials suspected



that Brussels was both a probable source and target of a follow-up atrocity. The failure to thwart Tuesday's attacks exposed serious weaknesses in Belgium's intelligence assessment capability. Effective intelligence work requires intensive manpower, both to analyse data and to gather it. Counter-terrorism experts believe Belgium can do neither adequately.

Yan St-Pierre, counter-terrorism adviser for the Modern Security Consulting Group, a private intelligence firm with headquarters in Berlin, articulates the scale of the relentless data challenge facing Europe's security services. **In Germany, he said, the federal police alone are bombarded with around 10,000 items of intelligence every day – email, sightings and telephone tipoffs concerning potential criminal suspects.**

"If you start combining the other agencies, plus the wiretapping, the electronic surveillance, then you are talking about hundreds of thousands of terabytes of information every day on a 24-hour scale," he says.

Sifting through such huge amounts of information requires, according to experts, a lot of skilled individuals. Belgium's intelligence agency has 600 staff (only a third as many as neighbouring Holland) monitoring a population of 11.25 million, and the country has the highest per capita number of foreign fighters in Syria of any European nation. According to Belgium's justice ministry, 451 fighters have left the country, of whom 117 have returned. One senior US official has briefed, however, that there could be several hundred more people who are not known.

Meanwhile, around 820 Britons have left to fight in Syria, of whom around half have returned. Yet the security apparatus monitoring them is vast compared with Belgium's – almost 20 times the volume of people are employed in the UK to examine intelligence compared with Belgium. The workforce of the security services, MI5 and MI6, stands at around 7,000, with another 9,000 employed by the government intelligence agency GCHQ, and these, together with SO15, Scotland Yard's counter-terrorism unit, yield a total of around 18,000 individuals.

Even then, prioritising intelligence is a demanding business. Michael Clarke, former director of the Royal United Services Institute, said: **"All intelligence agencies have fairly**

acute resource shortages; trained human resource is, by definition, short compared to the size of the problem".

"Anything that gets very high priority will be acted on immediately, but even things given a fairly high priority may get left for 48 hours or a week because there aren't enough analysts. In the case of Belgium, information can bounce around before it is picked up."

Following a single suspect covertly 24 hours a day requires a team of up to 36 security service officers. Even in the UK, only a finite number of suspects – surprisingly low, according to sources – can be placed under such intensive surveillance at any particular time.

St-Pierre said a lack of manpower had bred an over-reliance on technology, which is unable to decode the constantly evolving language, codes and behaviour of the latest generation of terrorists.

"Terrorists adapt," he says. "We're missing out on the undercover agent who has infiltrated or the double agent within the cell who is able to analyse the information and feel the more subtle inflections of terrorism, radicalism and preparation. By not having that human component, you end up with a flood of information and not enough people to analyse it. You either oversee information or do not react to it, even if only by a few hours."

The lack of sufficient human resources and the use of technology to plug the gaps has one particularly glaring consequence: a reliance on past attacks as an indicator to future atrocities. A sudden change in tactics can sidestep all known warning signs.

"Prioritisation is based on the implicit algorithms you have as to what has happened in the past, or what you think is building out there," says Clarke. "By definition, every time there is a radical change in tactics – as with 9/11 – it undercuts all the prioritisation that you previously had as indicators."

St-Pierre said the dependence on algorithms meant pressured intelligence officials might miss clues. "A lot of it [intelligence] is filtered through keywords. Five or 10 years ago, you had one person in charge of 10 cases; now, that same person would be in charge of double that and, overworked and overwhelmed, things will be overlooked."



One disturbing element of the new Islamist threat is the ability of Isis to inspire lone wolves or “clean skins” – individuals who are not known to the intelligence agencies – to commit attacks.

Clarke said: **“Because they are an inspiration to amateurs, the sheer numbers that could commit acts of barbarity is an issue. The fact they are suicide bombers is problematic; 60% of all the planning [before a terror attack] goes into trying to get away afterwards. They have not great tradecraft but are popping up everywhere.”**

St-Pierre said the recurring theme of terror suspects having been previously known to European police forces, often for petty

offences, underlined the problems of prioritising individuals who had previously come to the attention of the authorities.

“They say: ‘Well, we knew about him but he was a small fish.’ If you had the manpower and resources to pay more attention to that small fish, you would be able to do more effective work. A lot of them are small-time criminals who are dismissed.”

St-Pierre recommends that Belgium’s intelligence agency should be increased fivefold to around 3,000, while other analysts believe that the £300m of extra spending to upgrade the country’s security capabilities in the wake of the Paris attacks may need to be increased further.

Mark Townsend is Home Affairs Editor of the Observer.



How family bonds are being exploited by terrorists to create brothers-in-blood

Source: http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/14386247.How_family_bonds_are_being_exploited_by_terrorists_to_create_brothers_in_blood/

Mar 27 – **The family bonds of trust amongst brothers are creating new obstacles for intelligence services seeking to infiltrate and disrupt terror cells linked to Islamic State intent on bringing murder and mayhem to European capitals.**

Terrorist groups are deliberately recruiting families - especially brothers - to ensure that attacks are carried out successfully and in utmost secrecy, intelligence experts have told the Sunday Herald.

Two of the suicide bombers who carried out attacks in Brussels that killed 34 and injured more than 270 on Tuesday were named as brothers Khalid and Brahim el-Bakraoui.



It is the latest example of how terrorist groups are exploiting family bonds to create the covert and clandestine cells bound not only by ideology but also by blood. These deep family attachments mean related extremists can share complete devotion to, and secrecy about, planned attacks.

It is understood the brothers who attacked Brussels airport were listed in US databases as potential terror threats.

Belgium's interior minister Jan Jambon and Koen Geens, the justice minister, offered their resignations over security failures surrounding Ibrahim el-Bakraoui who was deported from Turkey to the Netherlands in July, last year amid concerns that he was a militant but was not being monitored by Belgian intelligence.

The trail of so-called brothers-in-arms involvement in terror attacks goes back as far as the 9/11 attacks, 15 years ago.

Both American Airlines Flight 11 piloted by Mohammed Atta into the World Trade Center and Flight 77 piloted by Hani Hanjour into the Pentagon, involved sets of brothers. Wail and Waleed al-Shehri and Nawaf and Salem al-Hazmi served as the 'muscle' needed to take over the aircraft.

Brothers Ibrahim Abdeslam and Salah Abdeslam - the latter now in custody - were



both reportedly involved in the November Paris attacks and seem to have become radicalized together.

Ibrahim Abdeslam was the suicide bomber who blew himself up outside the Comptoir Voltaire restaurant – while his brother, who appeared to have been principally a logistician and organizer was on the run until March 18, when he was captured in Brussels, and charged with terrorist murder.

A third brother, Mohammed, was arrested in Brussels on Monday and spent several hours

in custody before being released without charge.

Two other brothers Cherif and Saïd Kouachi entered the offices of the French satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo in January 2015 and gunned down 12 people in and around its offices, including eight of its journalists and cartoonists.



Chérif Kouachi (left) and Saïd Kouachi (right)

Cherif, 32, appeared to be the more hardline of the pair, and to have influenced his brother.

The brothers of Algerian descent, who were orphaned as children, were reportedly radicalized as they began attending the Adda'wa mosque in Paris in 2003.

They were killed two days after the attack when police closed in on their hideout north-east of Paris.

Brothers Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev also carried out the 2013 bombings at the Boston Marathon, which killed three people and injured more than 260.



Tamerlan Tsarnaev (left) and younger brother Dzhokhar Tsarnaev were ethnic Chechen Muslims

Tamerlan, 26, died of gunshot and blast wounds at a Boston hospital on April 19 after a firefight with police in Watertown, just outside of Boston. Dzhokhar, then 19, was found that same night, hiding in a dry-docked boat behind a home.



The brothers had detonated two backpacks with household pressure cookers loaded with explosives, nails and ball bearings at the marathon. Dzhokhar was sentenced to death by execution in June 2015.

Mohammed and Abdelkader Merah were linked to the 2012 terror attacks in Toulouse and Montauban in France.



Mohammed (above), 23, was the gunman in the attacks which killed seven people from March 11 to 19 before he was killed by police on March 22. His 29-year-old brother, who was under surveillance for links to radical Islamist groups, is suspected of having indoctrinated his sibling.

Ali Ghuftron and younger brothers Amrozi and Ali Imron were involved in the 2002 bombings in Bali, Indonesia, that killed 202 people.



Ali Ghuftron (left) and brothers Amrozi and Ali Imron

Ali Ghuftron was the operational chief of Jemaah Islamiyah, a militant Islamist group in Southeast Asia. He is said to have recruited his two brothers.

In 2003, Ali Imron was sentenced to life in jail while Amrozi and Ali Ghuftron were executed by firing squad in 2008.

Tricia Bacon, a former US State Department intelligence analyst said that from an organisational standpoint it makes sense to recruit family members as kinship ties make infiltration far more difficult.

"In addition, brothers can help one another to sustain their commitment when they have doubts," said Bacon, who is now a public affairs lecturer.

"In general, terrorist groups encourage family bonds through existing family ties or inter-

marriage to solidify the ties and secure the commitment to the group/cause.

"Therefore, it will be particularly difficult for security services to infiltrate such tight-knit circles, which will necessitate other ways to tap into these networks to gain intelligence.

"Officials would need someone close to the family to inform authorities of the brothers' activities and then an investigation or intelligence collection in order to identify their plans and the broader network, if there is one. In some of the prior cases, other family members and friends were well aware of the brothers' radicalisation."

Research by New America, a non-partisan thinktank in the United States, revealed that one in three western fighters have a familial connection to jihad, whether through relatives currently fighting in Syria or Iraq, marriage, or some other link to jihadists from prior conflicts or terrorist attacks.

The research also found that of those western fighters with familial ties to jihad, three-fifths had a relative who has also left for Syria.

Another study, at Pennsylvania State University, examined the interactions of 120 supposed "lone wolf" terrorists from all ideological and faith backgrounds, and found that, even though they launched their attacks alone, in a large majority of the cases others were aware of the individual's commitment to a specific extremist ideology. In 64 per cent of cases, family and friends were aware of the individual's intent to engage in a terrorism-related activity because the offender verbally told them.

Jeff Gardner, a retired US Army lieutenant colonel who became an assistant professor of homeland security studies at the American Military University, said terror groups were exploiting kinship because the bonds are forged far deeper in Islamic communities than in the west.

"These brotherly influences are nothing like in western culture and are also exponentially greater than what a school friend or neighbour would have," he said. "It goes without saying that the brothers are all exposed to the same conditions that brought on radicalisation and subsequent violence, but the bonds they have as family members can, and appear to in these cases, become an irresistible force."



Former US Army intelligence officer Erik Kleinsmith says family members are easier to recruit and drew parallels with the US Army where soliders in basic training buddy-up.

However, unlike many of his peers he also believes the family links can actually help agencies in tracking terror cells, when there is already reliable intelligence.

"It is important to have someone to watch out for the other guy, both physically and mentally. It's easier to go through that process with someone else that you know. Identifying brothers is an advantage both in the training aspect and for bonding them within the operation, because they will move and work together.

"These operative cells, as they prepare for their missions, as they do their reconnaissance and get themselves mentally ready for attack, they have to have a bond, a life or death bond with other members of the cell, very similar to military units. Men who have been in combat together form lifelong bonds but with family there is already an established bond.

"So operative cells using brothers or sisters are much easier to form and maintain. When you already have these life or death bonds in members of your cell, brothers are willing to

endure and sacrifice more than they would if they were operating alone.

Kleinsmith says analysts work to identify friends, family, romantic partners, superiors, underlings, supporters, sympathizers, classmates, or colleagues as part of an endless search for connections between terror group members.

And the appearance of brothers and other family members within an organisation can provide counter-terrorism analysts with potential patterns and trends for further analysis.

Radicalisation is said to be more acceptable to a new recruit once a family member is already involved in the process.

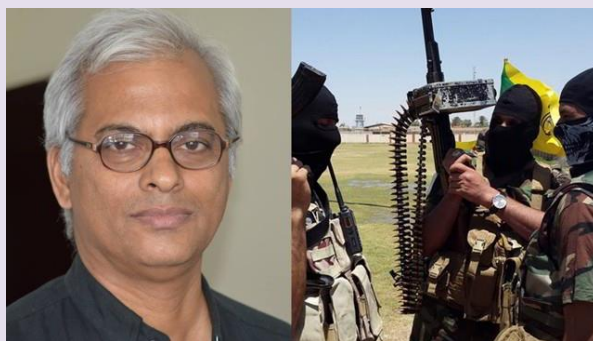
"In an intelligence operation, you can't break the bonds, but what you can do is identify them more easily, because two people have a larger signature than a lone wolf operating by themselves," he said.

"Because they are operating together, it may be tougher to get information, but once you find a pair of brothers, there are some distinct advantages. If you have a pair of brothers you know about, you have a large portion of a cell identified."

Indian priest Tom Unzhunnalil crucified by ISIS on Good Friday

Source: <http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-indian-priest-tom-unzhunnalil-crucified-by-isis-on-good-friday-report-2194971>

Mar 28 – According to a report in [Washington Times](#), Thomas Uzhunnalil, an Indian priest who was kidnapped in Yemen in March was crucified by ISIS on Good Friday.



His execution was done in the same method that Romans were believed to use on Jesus on Good Friday. The report claims that his execution was confirmed at the Easter Vigil Mass by Cardinal Christoph Schonborn of Vienna.

Earlier, the Indian government had confirmed the capture of Father Tom Uzhunnalil, the Indian priest from Bangalore, who was kidnapped by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) in Yemen and said that efforts were underway to ensure that he is released.

"Fr Tom Uzhunnalil - an Indian national from Kerala was abducted by a terror group in Yemen. We r making all efforts to secure his release," External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj tweeted. Her reaction comes after a growing alarm among the Christian community following an ominous report by the terror outfit to crucify him around Easter

Tom Unzhunnalil was kidnapped from the Missionaries of Charity's home for the elderly in Aden where he serves as a chaplain on March 4. A spokesman for the Bangalore province of the Salesians was quoted saying that no group has taken any



responsibility yet. A post on the group's South Africa page has been taken down. Earlier, the Yemen authorities blamed ISIL for the attack on March 4. The External Affairs Ministry had said only one Indian nurse was killed in the terrorist attack in strife-torn Yemen's Aden city.

16 people were killed in Aden when a group of terrorists stormed an elderly care home run by a Kolkata-based Missionaries of Charity and sprayed bullets at the residents. There are around 80 residents living at the home, which is run by Missionaries of Charity, an organisation established by Mother Teresa.

Missionaries of Charity nuns also came under attack in Yemen in 1998 when gunmen killed three nuns in the Red Sea port city of Hodeida. Pope Francis already had honored the slain nuns as martyrs.

Turkey deliberately “unleashing” ISIS terrorists into Europe: King Abdullah

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160328-turkey-deliberately-unleashing-isis-terrorists-into-europe-king-abdullah>

Mar 28 – **King Abdullah of Jordan asserted that Turkey is exporting ISIS-linked terrorists to Europe.**

The king made the remarks in a meeting with members of Congress, in which he said that Islamist militants were being “manufactured in Turkey” and “unleashed” into Europe.



He also used the briefing with lawmakers, which was held after the king's meeting with President Barack Obama was cancelled, to remind the American politicians of Turkey's complicity in buying ISIS oil.

“The fact that terrorists are going to Europe is part of Turkish policy,” said King Abdullah. “Turkey keeps on getting a slap on the hand, but they are let off the hook.”

The king, saying that the Turkish president Tayyip Erdoğan believe in a “radical Islamic solution to the region,” added that “Turkey sought a religious solution to Syria, while we are looking at moderate elements in the south and Jordan pushed for a third option that would not allow a religious option.”

Middle East Eye reports that the meeting took place on 11 January, but that details of the King's remarks have been shared with the newspaper only now.

Analysts say that the Syrian refugee crisis is a source of tension between Jordan and Turkey, which are nominal

allies. Jordan is angry that the EU has made a generous offer of cash, diplomatic ties, and one-for-one refugee formula to Turkey if the latter stemmed the flow of refugees into the EU zone.

Jordan's population is only 10 percent of Turkey's population, so, proportionally, Jordan hosts many more Syrian refugees, but it has not benefitted from outside support to the degree Turkey has.

The king, whose audience on the Hill included Senators John McCain and Paul Ryan, also told lawmakers that Jordanian special forces with “some balls” were involved in covert operations in Syria. Military analysts note that as the involvement of Jordanian forces in Syria increases, so is the likelihood of friction with two other countries involved in Syria: Turkey and Russia, both of which use their military involvement in Syria not to fight ISIS, but to weaken anti-ISIS forces supported by the United States and Jordan. Turkey is using its airstrikes to target Kurdish forces who have proven themselves effective in fighting ISIS, while Russia used its heavy military strikes against anti-Assad Syrian rebels and the Sunni civilian communities supporting them.





US Capitol shooting

Source: <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/03/28/politics/u-s-capitol-and-white-house-on-lockdown/>

Mar 28 – **U.S. Capitol Police shot a Tennessee man Monday afternoon after he pulled out what appeared to be a weapon at the Capitol Visitor Center, law enforcement officials said.**

A female civilian bystander was injured by shrapnel, but no U.S. Capitol Police officers were injured.

"We believe this is an act of a single person



who has frequented the Capitol grounds before, and there is no reason to believe this is anything more than a criminal act," U.S. Capitol Police Chief Matthew Verderosa said.

Police said the suspect, Larry Russell Dawson, faces charges of assault with a deadly weapon and assault on a police officer while armed. He underwent surgery and was in stable but critical condition Monday.

Once released from the hospital, the 66-year-old will be presented to the District of Columbia Superior Court, U.S. Capitol Police said.

The police chief described the woman's injuries as "minor" and said she was taken to a hospital.

The suspect attempted to go through the metal detectors at the Capitol Visitor Center entrance. When those magnetometers beeped, he was stopped by security and then pulled out what appears to be a weapon. A Capitol police officer then shot him, sources told CNN.

Verderosa said an object that appeared to be a weapon was recovered on the scene.

Dawson was arrested on a charge of assaulting a police officer in October after

an outburst in the chamber of the House of Representatives. Court documents from that 2015 incident describe Dawson as a 66-year-old man from Tennessee. In that incident, the documents state, Dawson "loudly stated to Congress he was a 'prophet of God.' "

The Capitol complex was locked down for nearly an hour following the incident. The Senate sergeant at arms has told staffers and others to "return to normal operations."

"Per USCP, shelter in place has been lifted and the Capitol is open for official business only. Capitol Visitor Center remains closed," the Senate sergeant at arms tweeted.

There were no other suspects involved, according to a notice sent to Senate staffers.

"There has been an isolated incident at the U.S. Capitol. There is no active threat to the public," the D.C. Police Department tweeted.

Police and firefighters swarmed the entrance of the visitor center, which is packed this week with tourists, spring break visitors and school groups.

Congressional staffers were sent a notice to shelter in place, instructing them to lock doors and move to assigned shelter areas. Those outside the buildings on the Capitol complex were told to "seek cover away from the area."

Most lawmakers were away from the Capitol on Monday.

House Speaker Paul Ryan, who is not currently in Washington, has been briefed on the incident, according to his spokesman.

"Today we are reminded of the courage and daily sacrifice of the United States Capitol Police," he said in a statement. "The Capitol is our greatest symbol of democracy, and these officers serve to protect not just those who work there but also the millions of visitors from all around the world who travel each year to see it."

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell is in Louisville and his staff is safe, his spokesman said.



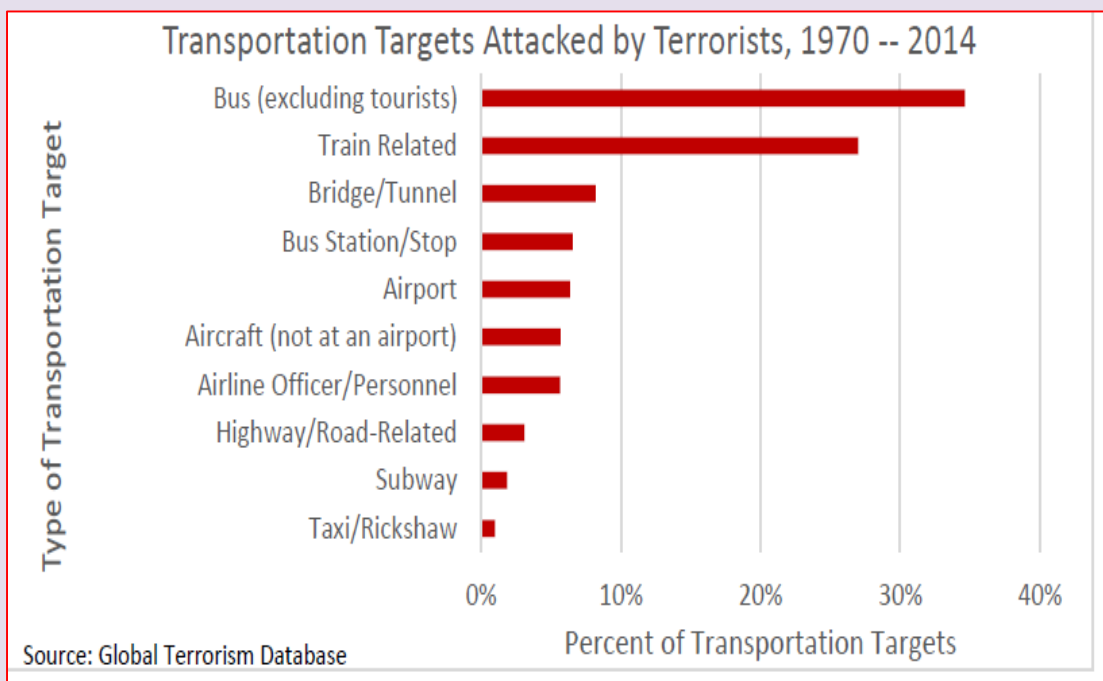
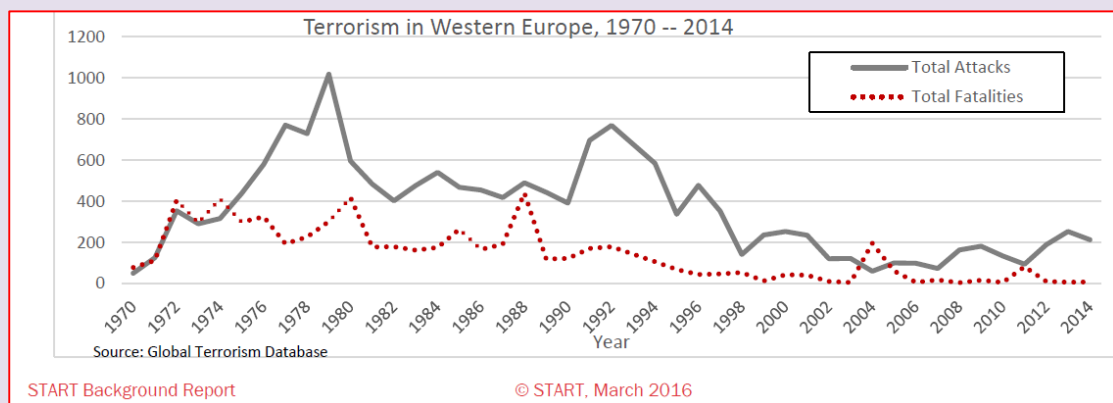
The White House also briefly closed its North and South fence lines as a precautionary

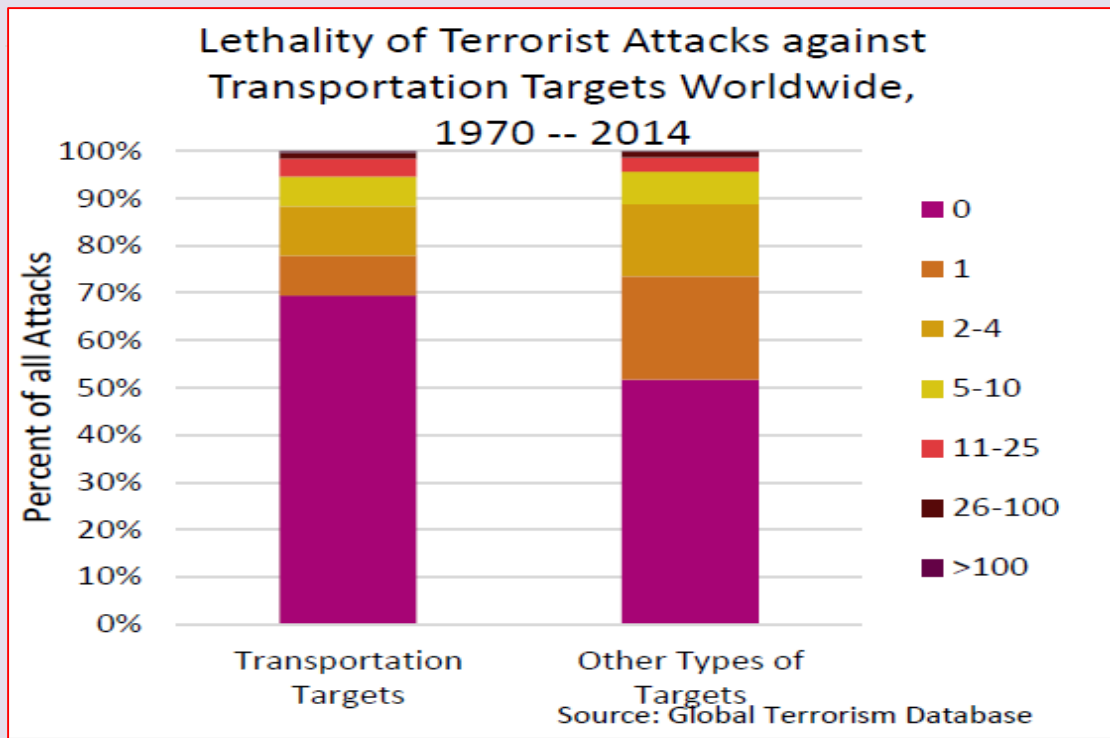
measure after the Capitol incident.

The United States Capitol shooting incident of 1998 was an attack on July 24, 1998 which led to the death of two United States Capitol Police officers. Detective John Gibson and Officer Jacob Chestnut were killed when Russell Eugene Weston, Jr., entered the Capitol and opened fire.^[1] Chestnut was killed instantly and Gibson died during surgery at George Washington University Hospital. Weston's exact motives are unknown, but he does suffer from a mental disorder and maintains a strong distrust of the federal government. He remains in a mental institution due to paranoid schizophrenia and has yet to be tried in court.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Despite the good words spoken for Capitol Police there is a big issue here: following his previous arrest Dawson was ordered by court "to stay away from Capitol's premises". He ignored this order but it seems that Capitol Police failed to identify him among the visitors. Is this a problem or not? He could make a much bigger damage well before being intercepted! Perhaps now problems identified (1998 and 2016) will become a lesson learned. Hopefully!

Transportation terrorism





The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) is supported in part by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Science and Technology Directorate's Office of University Programs through a Center of Excellence program led by the University of Maryland. START uses state-of-the-art theories, methods and data from the social and behavioral sciences to improve understanding of the origins, dynamics and social and psychological impacts of terrorism. For more information, contact START at infostart@start.umd.edu or visit www.start.umd.edu.

EgyptAir hijack ends with passengers freed

Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-egypt-airplane-hijacking-idUSKCN0WV0CP>

Mar 29 – An EgyptAir plane flying from Alexandria to Cairo was hijacked and forced to land in Cyprus on Tuesday by a man with what authorities said was a fake suicide belt, who was arrested after giving himself up.



The passengers and crew were unharmed. Eighty-one people, including 21 foreigners and 15 crew, were on board the Airbus 320, Egypt's Civil Aviation Ministry said in a statement. Conflicting theories emerged about the



motives of the hijacker, an Egyptian. A senior Cypriot official said he seemed unstable and the incident did not appear related to terrorism. The Cypriot state broadcaster said he had demanded the release of women prisoners in Egypt. In the midst of the hijack, witnesses said he threw a letter on the apron at Cyprus's Larnaca airport, written in Arabic, and

asked that it be delivered to his Cypriot ex-wife (photo below).

After the aircraft landed at Larnaca, negotiations began and everyone on board was freed except three passengers and four crew, Egypt's Civil Aviation Minister Sherif Fethy said.



cockpit window and running off.

The hijacker then surrendered to authorities.

Cypriot Foreign Minister Ioannis Kasoulides said the hijacker had threatened to blow himself up and demanded that the aircraft be refueled and head to Istanbul.

"It looks like he realized his demands would not be met, allowing the last two hostages, Britons, to flee the aircraft. He also tried to leave, running out. He was arrested," said Kasoulides.

"The explosives on him were examined. They weren't explosives, but mobile phone covers."

Egyptian Prime Minister Sherif Ismail said the hijacker would be questioned to ascertain his motives. "At some moments he asked to meet with a representative of the European Union and at other points he asked to go to another airport but there was nothing specific," he said.



EDITOR'S COMMENT: Despite the "happy end" of this incident, there are many questions that require certain answers. Airport security in Egyptian airports still a problem despite recent incidents. Same for metal detectors that cannot identify suicide vests (fake or real). Was there an airmarshal on board? Was he armed? Inability of air crew to identify if the vest was real or not – they had the chance to do this since they were taking "selfies" with the hijacker. And a few more! The fact is that if even this unstable man was able to hijack a plane what if serious terrorists were attempting the same or one of the modern variations of hijacking (e.g. 911) and not in Cyprus?

Forensic Psychiatrist: 'Crazy' Has Nothing to Do With Terrorism

By Ryan Mauro

Source: <https://www.clarionproject.org/analysis/forensic-psychiatrist-crazy-has-nothing-do-terrorism>

Mar 29 – Dr. Michael Welner, a forensic psychiatrist renowned for work both in cutting-edge legal cases



and research on criminal evil, explained to the *Clarion Project* why it is a mistake to describe Islamist extremists as "crazy" and to attribute the conflict to cultural miscommunication, as if their actions are caused by a false impression of the West that can be rectified through talking and passivity.

Dr. Welner also discussed one of the major obstacles

we face in fighting Islamic extremism -- lack of freedom of the press. Islamists control



major media outlets in the Muslim world that reflexively demonize the Dr. Welner testifies on Capitol Hill West. They consistently reject any blame for the human rights abuses and societal failures and refuse to facilitate meaningful retrospection.

If Islamist extremism is to be defeated, there must be enough intellectual freedom in the Muslim world for alternatives to be offered, he posits.

Below is a fascinating interview with Dr. Welner conducted by Clarion Project's Ryan Mauro:

1

Ryan Mauro: How do you approach these issues as a forensic psychiatrist?

Dr. Michael Welner: My conclusions are based on an appreciation of research and scientific method, as well as facts on the ground. My experience includes examination of Islamist terrorists and a familiarity with literature related to them and all of its scientific shortcomings. It also includes examination of mass killers who acted upon ideological motivations, religious zealots of a range of stripes and training in psychotherapy and how to use humor as a therapeutic device. Forensic psychiatry embeds research understandings in a fact-based context. This is referred to as ecological validity. Without ecological validity, a claim based on forensic psychiatry has no grounding in the real world. For instance, researchers on crime have demonstrated poverty to be an important predictor of crime, but the conflation of this understanding to mean that poverty causes terrorism has long been debunked. This is because terrorism is more than a crime. The application of forensic psychiatry to terrorism requires appreciation of the terrorist entities, their aims and where they operate. Ecological validity does not allow broad generalization, but reflects specific adaptation.

2

Mauro: "Crazy" is the term that is often thrown around by Americans to describe Islamist extremists because that's the closest we can come to rationalizing their behavior. Based on your

expertise in mental health and psychiatry, is there a significant correlation between mental instability and Islamist terrorism?

Welner: The infrastructure assembled by large-scale Islamist organizations—Hezbollah, Hamas, Al-Qaeda, ISIS, and others, speaks to the very rational actors, thinkers and planners involved. They have succeeded because of

highly-functioning, very organized individuals with exceptional people skills and capable management, administration and military strategy.

Crazy has nothing to do with the terrorism we see. Those who believe it does ignore what we have learned of the Guantanamo detainees and what Israelis have learned from their study of suicide bombers. They confuse actions that shock—actions that create a spectacle—with actions that are irrational.

Islamist terrorism is cold-blooded violence. It is proactive and planned, as opposed to a hot-blooded violence that is reactive and impulsive. The attacks are carefully crafted. The leaders are selected based on how their planning resonates with those who finance them. The supporting elements are chosen by how efficiently and reliably they provide logistical support. The perpetrators are selected based on how disciplined, dedicated, ruthless and in-control they are while carrying out destruction.

3

Mauro: Are there any signs we can see in a person's psychology or behavior as the radicalization process occurs? Average citizens know they should get worried when someone starts talking

about murdering innocents and buying weapons, but what happens in the stages before that?

Welner: Those indoctrinated into terrorism within the United States are following a different vector than those overseas.

In Muslim countries and even in Western Europe and parts of Africa, extremely devout followings of Islam are widespread and intertwined with political and sectarian affiliations. In secular countries like the U.S. and Canada, where Muslims are only a small portion of the population and they have little political standing, enlisting in terrorist groups is out of step with the general environment, even for Muslims.



In America, a high proportion of those implicated in Islamist terror plots are either converts or recently became devout. Part of what drives this psychologically is that the newer conscript feels the need to prove his bona fides, just as do newer conscripts in hate groups like white supremacists.

This is part of what makes the U.S. and Western world's prison population so vulnerable to radicalization. Radical Islam connects with those who are already alienated from the host country that incarcerated them. For those ensnared and leave prison as disenfranchised ex-cons, violence is not as taboo as it would be for less-hardened peers.

All of those who are involved in Islamist terrorism are devout or believe they are devout. However, those who gravitate towards a more devout religious observance include many who do not have political aims and are merely following their faith. Others may be sympathetic to co-religionists who act for the cause of advancing the [Caliphate](#) (as ISIS is doing), or otherwise attacking the symbols of apostasy or the "apostates" themselves but would never personally act criminally.

Clearly, there are far more sympathetic followers of terrorist organizations' social media than there are those who actually participate in terror. And so the challenge becomes, who among the devout goes the terrorism route?

The process of radicalization is an intimate one. It reflects one's personal relationship with one's spirituality. In some instances, a cleric may be involved, but many self-radicalize because of their own curiosity and find fellow travelers online. Sometimes it is the company one keeps. Travel itineraries reveal exposure to training, rather than visits to family or sightseeing. Weapons training, when a recreational passion, is common to the devout who later reveal to be terrorists.

4

Mauro: How do you respond to those that argue that the conflict with Islamist extremists is just a misunderstanding between cultures due to a lack of heart-to-heart

communication and self-esteem issues among recruits?

Welner: One can only achieve understanding, under ideal conditions of conciliation, between

two humans of differing perspective. If one party dehumanizes another as a fundamental threat, then conciliation is not possible because the uncompromising goal—as in the case of ISIS—is that the other party is its enemy and submission or extermination is required.

For ISIS, understanding with others is an existential threat to the purity to which they lay claim. It is ISIS' and, more broadly, radical Islam's dehumanization of non-believers that feeds their cause and entitlement to brutalize. Likewise, this mindset demands that the only understanding we reach is submission, just like all fascisms before it and since.

Spectacle crime, such as terrorism, is a choice made by those with high expectations of themselves to do great but who are painfully aware of their underachievement. The ideology they choose is the bromide of their disappointment; the enemy they choose the projection of their shortcomings; and the terrorism they leap into a transcendence they would never otherwise achieve.

What ISIS' recruitment in the U.S. and elsewhere has achieved is the seduction of idealistic young recruits drawn to utopian religion. The recruits feel good about themselves, in some cases pursue the ISIS dream with their spouses and want to be a part of something greater.

These are a whole different group from the hardened, angry, dead-ended ex-cons who have violent histories and, often, previous drug problems that we've seen implicated in terror plots. The San Bernardino massacre was the birth of ISIS in Americana, reflecting the organizational signature of how far a couple would go for their faith—indeed they would die together -- and leave their baby an orphan.

5

Mauro: Let's talk about solutions. Is there any information from psychology and psychiatry that can help us understand what will de-radicalize someone? What has to happen for an Islamist extremist to change their mind about the cause they've embraced?

Welner: Because the problem is a religious one, its treatment is religious as well. And, just like cult treatment, terrorist treatment is difficult because the patient does



not accept treatment willingly. And how can you "treat" a belief that is shared by one's physical or social media peer group? Psychiatric treatment for cult survivors requires isolation from other influencers. Isolation is impossible when you're dealing with a widespread community of believers, as is the case with radical Islam.

The results of deradicalization programs are still actively debated. High-profile failures demonstrate that the programs can be gamed by the terrorist "patients." There are some success stories, however, but not enough transparency is available to allow us to become fully informed as to whether terrorists have reprogrammed themselves ideologically, become pacifist or simply matured to other passions.

Deradicalization programs aiming to re-educate the violence-oriented with a more peace-oriented Islam are part of a broader psychosocial strategy that integrates family influences and external life priorities like vocational developments. The programs of Asian countries with large Muslim populations and little Islamist influence, Singapore specifically, are particularly informative.

The intellectual freedom in these countries allow for introspection that is not possible, for example, in the Arab world or other Islamic countries. In those countries, discussion about defining Islam in a way that does not threaten the national interest is reflexively regarded as blasphemy. It is a form of political-correctness of the Muslim world that undermines well-meaning deradicalization programs.

6

Mauro: There's a common claim that the more we kill Islamist terrorists, the more hate will exist and the surrounding population will become terrorists as well.

What's your take on the notion that killing terrorists is counter-productive and there must be a better alternative?

Welner: The claim that the "more we kill, the more they hate us" is vacuous, as if the Islamists were Tibetan monks set upon by Chinese occupiers. We are at war because our enemy has acted to murder us and to eliminate a way of life different from its own. And if the enemy uses a religious ideal to justify killing us,

if we do not eliminate that enemy, that ideology will use its very survival to claim God's will to protect it in order to continue to kill us.

No matter how we as a nation pursue the Islamist threat, the United States will be portrayed as a devil deserving of destruction. Therefore, the "more we kill, the more they hate us" premise is irrelevant; we are hated not because we kill, but because we exist.

Were we not to kill, the U.S. would be slandered and propagandized against for any number of grievances, including for being a secular and pluralistic society. Those who control mass opinion in the nations where radical Islam is highly represented use the media to propagandize no matter what we do. Those who concern themselves with making the right impression among our enemies overlook the reality that our enemies control the messages to their populations.

7

Mauro: We've seen the power of political satire through Bassem Youssef in Egypt and now an Arab version of "SNL" is airing in the Middle East.

Can you explain the importance of comedy, satire and being able to laugh at one's own identities (sect, religion, nationality, political party, etc.) in relation to Islamism?

Welner: Comedy is so powerful because humor's ability to disarm penetrates defensiveness, and thus is one of the most effective ways to cultivate introspection.

The Islamic world is unusually defensive about the inhuman shame of Islamist violence, responding with rage and pride that blames non-Muslims. Undermining such self-deception is extremely difficult. The West makes it worse by accepting ingrained bigotry, be it the whitewashing of widespread rape by Muslim immigrants in Europe or silence in the face of Islamic misogyny or overlooking homicidality towards non-believers.

I am not convinced that there is enough freedom of the press in Muslim countries to allow for satire to confront the entrenched pathologies of radical Islamism. In other words, is the satire that currently exists truly humbling? Or is it simply another medium in which a comedian can make fun



of Donald Trump and the Zionists like everyone else? Our own American satirists, sadly, incise in one political direction only and never take on Islamism. Even the rare outspoken humorists like Bill Maher only go so far as to offer criticism and political commentary, but not actual *humor*.

The U.S., the acknowledged beacon of free speech, touts "The Book of Mormon" for its comedic merit, but allows its creative types to be intimidated from satirizing Islam with equal

treatment. *Charlie Hebdo* was decimated with no rejoinder to protect the capacity to satirize.

Since we do not set an example of protecting and promoting the full potential of comedy, because of our own self-censorship, what can be expected of the Muslim world? Until comedy is truly protected as free speech—without neither violence nor professional ostracism—we will reap the consequences of censoring free speech by failing to give example to peoples we should be inspiring.

Forensic psychiatrist Michael Welner, M.D., is chairman of The Forensic Panel. He has examined terrorists in cases in Guantanamo and elsewhere, perpetrators of mass killing, and religious extremist offenders spanning the criminal and civil case spectrum. Dr. Welner's landmark Depravity Standard research, standardizing the distinction of criminal evil, is applicable to such contexts as war crimes. It is the first sentencing research to involve survey input of the general public to refine sentencing standards, and you can likewise participate, at www.depravistandard.org.

Ryan Mauro is ClarionProject.org's national security analyst, a fellow with Clarion Project and an adjunct professor of homeland security. Mauro is frequently interviewed on top-tier television and radio.

Secrets and Lies: Turkey's Covert Relationship With ISIS

By Meira Svirsky

Source: <https://www.clarionproject.org/analysis/secrets-and-lies-turkeys-covert-relationship-isis>



Mar 29 – A hot warning received by intelligence officials revealed that the Islamic State (ISIS/ISIL) is planning an "imminent attack" on Jewish children in Turkey. Officials believe the most likely target is in the Beyoglu district of Istanbul, where a Jewish school is attached to a synagogue and community center. The information was obtained after Turkey arrested

six ISIS operatives in the southern city of Gaziantep last week.

"This is a more than credible threat. This is an active plot," a Turkey source said.

Less than 10 days ago, a suicide bomber stalked Israeli tourists in Istanbul before blowing himself up near them, killing five people (four



of them Israelis) and wounding many more. "The so-called Islamic State is believed to be behind both sets of attacks and the organization continues in determined efforts to perpetrate further attacks in Turkey and elsewhere," reported *Sky News*, quoting from an intelligence report seen by the news outlet. In addition to the six arrested, another three ISIS operatives were arrested last week. Turkey, it seems is scrambling to protect itself from attacks the terror group has threatened to execute all across Europe.

After the Brussels attacks, Turkish President RecepTayyip Erdogan shocked the world by saying that Turkey had captured one of the perpetrators of the massacre last June and send him back to his country. Erdogan specifically said that Ibrahim El Bakraoui, one of the suicide bombers in the Brussels airport, was detained in Turkey and sent back to Belgium with a warning (that was ignored) that he was a militant.

Yet, new documents obtained by Kurdish YPG fighters (People's Protection Units) and the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) who are fighting together, refute the claim made by Erdogan that Turkey is preventing ISIS and Al-Nusra (Al Qaeda's official affiliate in Syria) from travelling through Turkey to reach Syria.

The documents seized from Islamic State headquarters in seven locations, including Kobane, show that ISIS fighters from all over the world – and particularly from Kazakhstan, Indonesia, and Tajikistan -- were given passage through Turkey to Syria.

The Firat News Agency (ANF), a Kurdish outlet whose websites have been repeatedly blocked in Turkey by Turkish courts, reports that the hundreds of documents show that since 2013, ISIS fighters have used the Istanbul and Adana



airports and have received permits from the Turkish government to reside in Turkey until they cross over to Syria.

The documents also include bus tickets, electronic Turkish visas, residency permits, and documents with stamps from Turkish immigration officials.

Chillingly, the documents show that chemical and explosive materials was transferred from Turkey to Syria. One such document was signed by the manager of Istanbul's Police Foreigners' Department Erkan Aydogu. Manuals in Turkish as to how to use these materials were also given to the jihadis. A sample of the documents can be viewed [here](#).

Turkey, as has been previously reported, is playing a dangerous and duplicitous game with the West. As Clarion Project has wrote, Turkey's arms transfers to al-Qaeda-linked Islamist jihadis in Syria have been long-documented, yet largely ignored by the Western media. **A major raid by the U.S. on an Islamic State safe house in Syria in the summer of 2015 gleaned large amounts of intelligence undeniably linking Turkey to the Islamic State.**

Similarly, the fact the Turkey has been the top financial sponsor of Hamas since 2012, with Erdogan arranging for the transfer of \$250-300 million to this U.S.-designated terrorist group annually, is another oft-ignored inconvenience.

Similarly, the West has brilliantly avoided confronting Turkey on its abysmal [human rights record](#).

Using air-tight documentation, Nafeez Ahmed, editor of *InsurgeIntelligence*, writes about the [many reasons the West has chosen to look the other way](#) while Turkey facilitates oil sales for the Islamic State, which guarantees its strength and viability.

"There are many explanations," writes Ahmed, "but one perhaps stands out: the West's abject dependence on terror-toting Muslim regimes, largely to maintain access to Middle East, Mediterranean and Central Asian oil and gas resources."

Since 2013, the Turkish government has been [building a \\$100 million mega-mosque](#) in Lanham, Maryland, taking Turkey's "outreach" in America out of the realm of the subtle.

This week in America, U.S. President Barack Obama will join Erdogan at the opening of the mosque, the largest in the U.S.



The show, it seems, must go on.

Meira Svirsky is the editor of ClarionProject.org

Military chiefs of 34 Islamic countries vow to dry up terrorist resources

Source: <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Military-chiefs-of-34-Islamic-countries-vow-to-dry-up-terrorist-resources-426417>

Mar 28 – **Military chiefs of 34 Islamic countries vowed on Sunday to dry up the resources of terrorism**, Al Arabiya News reported. The chiefs of staff of member states in an Islamic military coalition against terrorism made the pledge during their first meeting in Riyadh.

The meeting discussed "ideological, media, financial and military" aspects to combat terrorism, spokesman for the alliance Brig. Gen. Ahmed Assiri said.

The spokesman said the attendance of 39 Muslim nations, not all of which were members of the alliance, "sends a strong message on importance and nature of the alliance," adding that the force is needed in the face of the Islamic State group.

The meeting aims to draw up a unified strategy against terrorism, he said, adding that Saudi Arabia presented a paper to follow the resources of terrorism funding.

He emphasizes that the coalition will work in line with the international law and standards.

The coalition was announced in December last year by Saudi Defense minister Prince Mohammed bin Salman in a bid to establish a unified Muslim body to fight terrorism. It started through the establishment of a joint operations center in Riyadh.

ISIS plotting 25 terror attacks on Britain as MI5 says it's 'not a case of if but WHEN'

Source: www.express.co.uk/news/uk/656127/ISIS-25-terror-attacks-Britain-MI5-terrorism-Paris-Brussels



Mar 28 – Security officials are tracking up to 50 British jihadists 24 hours a day with "intense scrutiny" amid fears they could be about to unleash a wave of terror in Britain.

The terrifying claims by intelligence sources come as a former British intelligence officer admitted it was "a case of not if but when" ISIS terrorists strike at home.

MI5 is tracking the plots by "hardcore jihadists" but are struggling with limited resources.

The counter-terror officers are working around the clock to prevent an attack on the scale of Paris or Brussels taking place in Britain.

Investigators fear " sleeper cells " could be awaiting orders at a moment's notice to carry out plots.

These cells are often small, tight-knit groups that can more easily evade MI5's network of tipsters monitoring mosques and radical meetings.



Militants in these cells are usually simply awaiting a green light to strike and could attack without any warning to security forces.

Security experts fear in the wake of Paris and Brussels atrocities that London could now be next.

A former British intelligence officer said: "Everyone in the counter-terrorism community believes an attack in Britain will take place."

There are about 450 extremists "of concern to counter-terror officials" throughout the UK.

Some have returned from the conflict in Syria and others have been radicalised at home.

The intelligence source added: "The pace of investigations to try and stop this happening is extremely dynamic and fast-moving."

"There is no respite and no sign of the threat to Britain going away."

"The shocking thing about what happened in Paris and the ongoing situation in Brussels is their ability."

"They have shown a high degree of organisation – more than was previously suspected – a strong logistical chain, the ability to get the material needed, guns, explosives, planning."

Since 2014, Britain has been as a "severe" threat of an attack from extremists, meaning a bombing or shooting on our streets is "highly likely".

This threat level is one stage away from the top alert state of "critical" which means there is credible intelligence that an attack is imminent.

ISIS released a sickening new video last week claiming the Brussels bombings were "just a warning" and "only a taste" of what is to come.

NATO Should Fight ISIS in Europe

Source: <http://acdemocracy.org/nato-should-fight-isis-in-europe/>

Mar 28 – **Europe is in a war, but it has yet to acknowledge it.** Neither does NATO which



has not been called upon to fight the war. All of this is very strange because the turmoil being caused by ISIS in Europe poses a considerable threat to peace and security everywhere.

President Obama, as is well known, belittles ISIS's threat as non-existent. European cities and citizens reeling from ISIS's attacks know otherwise. Moreover, we know ISIS was planning an attack on a Belgian nuclear reactor and was collecting data on other nuclear installations. Extensive ISIS-made surveillance film captured by police shows dramatic evidence that ISIS was well along on organizing such action. We also know that members of the Brussels cell are on the loose.

There are different theories about ISIS's nuclear objectives. These include: (1) blowing up a nuclear facility; (2) stealing radioactive material for a "dirty" bomb; (3) kidnapping nuclear officials and holding them for ransom; (4) sabotaging power plants and causing them either to go off line or unrepairable; (5) crashing an airplane or a drone into one of the power plants in Belgium.

Two of the bombers who attacked Brussels international airport Zaventem apparently were airport employees who with employee pass had free access to the facility. Had they chosen to do so, they could have allowed hijackers into the airport and the airplanes.

That ISIS has penetrated critical infrastructure facilities in Belgium is clear. These include nuclear power plants. We know of at least two Jihadists employed at the Doel nuclear plant who left Belgium for Syria to fight with ISIS. One of them, Ilyass Boughalab, is believed to have been killed in Syria, and another was briefly jailed for terrorism in 2014 before disappearing. And in November 2015, there was an unexplained explosion at the Doel Nuclear Power Station, which caused significant damage.

The security situation overall in critical infrastructure facilities in Belgium is terrible. Israeli security



had warned the country about the airport's voluntarily, to no effect. Turkish authorities repeatedly warned about the suicide bombers and their colleagues, who they twice deported. Again nothing. It is likely Brussels got many other warnings and just sat on its hands.

The abysmal security situation in Belgium and to other European nations is a major threat not only to all their neighbors but also to the United States and many others countries, especially if there was a nuclear incident. After the Chernobyl melted down in Ukraine, the radiation fallout has spread all over Europe.

Even this year, 29 years after the disaster, forest fires in Ukraine have spread radioactive debris into Europe as far north as Scandinavia and to Italy in the south. The danger of a local nuclear plant explosion in the heart of densely populated Europe could effect hundreds of millions of people.

It is fairly clear that police and law enforcement authorities in Belgium, as in the rest of Europe are unreliable because they lack any real ability to deal with the local terrorist threat posed by ISIS and other Jihadists who flood into Europe. The Europeans' lack of political will to invest in manpower, know-how and training to handle the situation, has turned Europe into a ticking time bomb.

What is needed is a military intervention managed by NATO. It is odd that NATO members have no lack of enthusiasm for the bombing of Libya, Iraq and Syria, but have nothing to say about the threat at their very doorstep. NATO has yet to hold a meeting on confronting ISIS's threat in Europe or even declaring war on this terrorist organization.

How could NATO help? There are five major steps a NATO intervention can achieve:

1. Supply a multinational force to fight ISIS within Europe. This is important because a multinational force is less likely to be swayed by corrupt politicians and weak administration.

The force has the equipment in the form of armored vehicles, drones, helicopters, and communications to carry out all the needed tasks. Putting NATO in charge will put professionals on the job and commit everyone to the goal of eliminating ISIS.

2. Assures far better targeting and coordination by bringing professional military command and control assets into play to fight the threat. This will immediately result in a huge improvement in going after targets and neutralizing them.

3. Assures more professional and decisive action against terrorists including emergency military courts to try those who are captured and incarcerate them for very long prison terms. The Nuremberg Military Tribunal is a good precedent to charge ISIS, as were the Nazis in 1945, in crimes against humanity. The International Criminal Court's definition of "Crimes against humanity" to include "any of the following acts committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack:

- murder;
- extermination;
- enslavement;
- deportation or forcible transfer of population;
- imprisonment;
- torture;
- rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity;
- persecution against an identifiable group on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious or gender grounds;
- enforced disappearance of persons;
- the crime of apartheid;
- other inhumane acts of a similar character intentionally causing great suffering or serious bodily or mental injury.

4. NATO will use professional military protection over critical infrastructure assets including nuclear power plants, nuclear industry, railroad, metro and airports, communications hubs, water supply and food distribution, and other critical government agencies. Thus, NATO will guard essential facilities and issue alerts and warnings of all threats. NATO would also carry out background checks on employees and others with access to critical infrastructure to ferret out ISIS infiltrators and spies.

5. NATO would deploy forces and intelligence assets across national borders to shut down ISIS links and break the back of their organization. This stands in contrast to national law enforcement groups that fight among themselves and not surprisingly fail to cooperate across national boundaries.

Fighting ISIS should be the priority of any self-respecting



European government, and it should be the first duty of NATO to go after ISIS within its

jurisdiction. Indeed, this is the only practical way to get rid of this menace.

Radical Islam Creates Terrorism: Daniel Pipes

Source: <http://www.meforum.org/5927/daniel-pipes-interview>

Mar 21 – Daniel Pipes is founder and president of the influential American think tank, the Middle East Forum. As Donald Trump's recent remarks on Islam leave America in a tizzy, Pipes spoke in New Delhi with P Ramesh Kumar about US views of "radical" versus "moderate" Islam, whether America's added to religious extremism globally – and who he's backing in the US presidential contest.



Please tell us about your organisation.

The Middle East Forum was founded in 1994. We have three main activities: intellectual, or guiding people on how to win, for example, in Syria; operational, which includes activities on campus, in Congress or the courtroom; and philanthropic, raising money for allied individuals and organisations.

A think tank is applied scholarship, just like engineering is applied science. We do applied history, politics, and so forth. I'm a medieval historian by training – I apply my knowledge of west Asia's past to current circumstances.

We provide ideas and information to the public and to policy makers.

Your organisation is termed Islamophobic by some.

It's a silly accusation. For more than a decade, I've said that "radical Islam is the problem, moderate Islam is the solution." As that implies, I do not fear or hate Islam. But I do hate a certain extremist form of Islam – just as many Muslims do. I work against that radical version of Islam.

But some analysts are deeply critical of your views on Islam – given the current political backdrop, how do you define your position?

In the US today, there are three major positions vis-à-vis this issue.

The establishment position says the problem is terrorism or violent extremism – in other words, it has nothing to do with Islam but comes out of nowhere. That's the position of politicians, police, prosecutors, press, and professors because it's easier not to talk about Islam.

The other two positions agree it has something to do with Islam – with one important difference between them. Mine, the second position, holds it is a form of Islam – but not Islam in its

entirety. Only anti-Islamist Muslims can defeat this form of Islam and we should work with Muslim allies to defeat Muslim enemies..

The third position says Islam itself is the radical version.. It confuses the temporary with the permanent, the part with the whole.

You make a distinction between radical and moderate Islam – but your position on issues like the Muhammad cartoons controversy hasn't clearly supported moderates. Could you explain?

In the West, we have freedom of speech that very much includes the right to blaspheme. If you want to [make fun of Moses, Jesus, Ganesha, or Buddha](#), you're free to do so. But when it comes to Muhammad, the rules are different. I reject that discrepancy and insist on the same rights regarding Islam.

In the West, the right to attack religious figures has been established since the time of Voltaire in the 18th century – Muslims need to adapt to that.

In the US, you may burn a Bible – but burn a Quran and you get a call from the president telling you not to do that. If Islam gets special protection, it means it's superior. I – and many others – don't accept that.

But in a global context, hasn't the West's often contradictory policy created an environment conducive for ultra-extremist groups like Islamic State?

There's a tendency in west Asia to blame western powers for whatever happens – be it as large as Islamic State or as small as a traffic jam. In contrast, I hold that the people of west Asia make their own destiny, they are responsible for themselves. Yes, the US, Britain, and others do have some role but it's small compared to that of the west Asians



themselves, who must learn to own their problems.

Didn't the West stoke extremism by propping up Osama bin Laden during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan?

The US government did not support Osama bin Laden during the fight against the Soviets in Afghanistan. I challenge anyone to show otherwise.

Speaking of support, who are you backing in the US presidential race?

I'm against Trump – he's a buffoon, a megalomaniac, and unacceptable.

I'm against Hillary Clinton – the whole Clinton apparatus is repugnant, dishonest and greedy. I'm against Sanders who is resurrecting failed nineteenth century socialist ideas.

That leaves Cruz. I generally agree with his views and consider him a fine human being.

The Burqa Challenge to Europe

By Paul Cliteur and Machteld Zee

Middle East Quarterly (Spring 2016)

Source: <http://www.meforum.org/5878/the-burqa-challenge-to-europe>

In the summer of 2014, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) upheld previously



passed French legislation, popularly known as the "burqa ban."^[1] In doing so, it accepted the argument that the public wearing of this Islamically-connected full-body and face veiling violated a core value of French society, the principle of "living together" (*le vivre ensemble*). A review of how the court arrived at this conclusion, and what other arguments against the burqa it chose to ignore, may offer clues as to what forebodes for European Union societies and their relations with burgeoning Muslim populations.

To Cover or Not to Cover?

The ECHR's decision originated in an application against the French Republic lodged with the court under Article 34 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms on April 11, 2011.^[2]

The applicant, known only by her initials, S.A.S., is a Pakistani-born French national, who, according to her testimony, is a devout Muslim and wears the full-body and face veil. She claimed to do so in accordance with her

Islamic faith, her culture, and her personal convictions, and she emphasized that neither her husband nor any other member of her family put pressure on her to dress in this manner.^[3]

The burqa is a recent phenomenon in the West, virtually unseen before the year 2000, but, some ten years later, donned by approximately 1,900 women in France. The practice is controversial, not only due to its extreme nature but also because some Muslims question whether it is truly Islamic. The four Sunni schools of jurisprudence differ regarding the obligation for women to cover their face, with the Hanbali school, prevalent in Saudi Arabia, the strictest observer. For their part, Shiite Muslims do not believe that the face of a Muslim woman is a part of the body that needs to be covered in public although Iran's current theocratic rulers insist that women wear the chador, a cloak that leaves the face open, in public. In Turkey, Lebanon, Tunisia,

The burqa was virtually unseen in the West before 2000 but now is donned by approximately 1,900 women in France.

Malaysia, and before the civil war, in Syria, the face veil has been subjected to bans, mostly in public and educational institutions, as it is considered to run counter to national values and traditions.^[4] Yet while women in Muslim-majority countries had been progressively unveiling for most of the twentieth century, this practice has reversed due to the Islamist resurgence of the last four decades.



It is in the West that the most outspoken Muslim critics of full-face veiling are active. Sihem Habchi, for example, president of the French feminist movement *Ni putes ni soumises* (Neither whores nor submissivees)^[5] has stated passionately and categorically: "As a woman, as a French citizen, and as a Muslim woman, I demand that the Republic protect me from the vilest fanaticism that is infecting our public space."^[6]

These sentiments were echoed by French Muslim women's rights activist Fadela Amara



who wrote that it "is a mistake to see the veil as only a religious issue. We must remember that it is first of all a tool of oppression, alienation, discrimination, and an instrument of men's power over women. It is not an accident that men do not wear the veil."^[7] Thus in the eyes of burqa opponents, the state must fulfil its positive obligation to protect human rights: Women should be made safe from severe pressure to cover.

At the same time, women, including many converts, voluntarily choose to cover their faces. When the French burqa prohibition came

into force on April 11, 2011, S.A.S. found herself in a dilemma: Either obey the ban and compromise her personal beliefs, or ignore it and risk criminal charges in the form of a €150 fine. Instead, she decided to put her faith in Strasbourg.

"Vivre Ensemble"

When the ECHR rendered its decision, it essentially echoed the reasoning found in the "Gérin report" of 2010. This derived from a June 2009 decision by the conference of presidents of the French National Assembly, which established a parliamentary commission comprising members from various parties and presided over by the left-wing politician André Gérin, with the task of drafting a report on "the

wearing of the full-face veil on national territory." In January 2010, the commission published its findings on the topic based on

To establish a social bond, every person must be able to see everyone else's face.

interviews with more than two hundred witnesses and experts.

The report criticized the practice as being "at odds with the values of the Republic," as expressed in the maxim "*liberté, égalité, et fraternité*" (liberty, equality, and fraternity), and of violating the fundamental French value of *laïcité* or secularism.^[8] Full-face veiling, it argued, infringed on the principle of liberty by being a symbol of subservience that negated both principles of gender equality and the equal dignity of human beings. Moreover, by setting up a significant barrier to contact with others, this practice was a denial of fraternity and a flagrant infringement of the French principle of living together (*le vivre ensemble*).^[9] An explanatory memorandum accompanying the burqa ban bill states that the "voluntary and systematic concealment of the face is problematic because it is quite simply incompatible with the fundamental requirements of 'living together' in French society" and that the "systematic concealment of the face in public places, contrary to the ideal of fraternity ... falls short of the minimum requirement of civility that is necessary for social interaction."^[10] Hiding one's face in general—not just by means of a burqa—therefore, is at odds with the "respect for the minimum requirements of life in society," and banning the full veil can be linked to the legitimate aim of the "protection of the rights and freedoms of others."^[11] Individuals in France thus have the human right to live in a society where one is not confronted with face covering veils in public spaces.

The bill was supported by the National Assembly's Delegation on the Rights of Women and Equal Opportunities and was formulated in general terms—as the Gérin committee had advised—thereby deflecting a legal debate on religious freedom. What became law no. 2010-1192 was passed by the National Assembly on July 13, 2010, with 335 votes in favor, one against, and three abstentions, and shortly



thereafter, by the Senate on September 14 with 246 votes for and one abstention. On October 7, France's Constitutional Council ruled that the ban was compliant with the constitution, and thus the law was enacted on October 11, 2010. The plaintiff then took her case to the ECHR in the hope of having the bill overturned. On July 1, 2014, the Grand Chamber, the ultimate court within the ECHR released its verdict, supporting the French prohibition.

The court extensively cited past jurisprudence on religious freedom and acknowledged that the ban had indeed a significant negative impact on the lives of those women who had chosen to wear the veil for religious reasons.^[12] But it concluded that the ban did not violate the right to respect for private life (Article 8 ECHR), freedom of religion (Article 9 ECHR), or freedom of expression (Article 10 ECHR). The decision hinged on the notion of *vivre ensemble* as being a sufficient and compelling enough factor to enable the French to ban the burqa without violating the convention.^[13] It agreed with the French rationale that the social bond that citizens form with one another is an essential foundation of democracy. To establish that social bond, it is imperative that every person be able to see everyone else's face. This argument is detached from the religious aspect of face veiling and encompasses every form of face concealment in a public setting.

Accusations of "Islamophobia"

Although the final rationale for the burqa ban centered around the secular values that had been an integral part of the French Republic since its inception, both critics and supporters



of the ban raised additional arguments to buttress their case, and it is instructive to look at them since they may play a role in future decisions or challenges to the current one. Many critics claimed that the push for a ban was actually a manifestation of "Islamophobia."

Coined in the late 1980s, the term gained greater currency after the 1997 publication of a British report, "Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All,"^[14] and was widely adopted by Muslim advocacy groups after the 9/11 terror attacks in reaction to the worldwide critical focus on Islam and Islamism.

There were several submissions by outside parties in the *S.A.S. v. France* case that stated that the French ban was an "Islamophobic" and populist reaction to a minority already facing tough times in an increasingly intolerant Europe. For instance, Thomas Hammarberg, commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, was cited as arguing that the prohibition would lead to further exclusion of the Muslim community and that it had not been proven that burqa-wearers "are victims of more gender repression than others."^[15] Likewise, Amnesty International asked the ECHR to examine the case, contending that the debate surrounding the ban and the ban itself reinforced "negative stereotypes and Islamophobia."^[16]

Although the court upheld the ban, it did not ignore this argument altogether. In its own words, "the Court is very concerned by the indications of some of the third-party interveners to the effect that certain Islamophobic remarks marked the debate." Additionally, it claimed that "the debates surrounding the drafting of the bill may have upset part of the Muslim community, including some members who are not in favour of the full-face veil being worn."^[17]

While some proponents of the "Islamophobia" charge may be motivated by true concern for anti-Muslim discrimination, there is another, pernicious side to the ledger that the court seemed to ignore, namely, the common use of "Islamophobia" to silence and defame legitimate criticism of Islam and Muslims. There is absolutely no reason why Muslim beliefs should be spared the free and vigorous debate, including abrasive lampooning and ridicule, to which Christians, Jews, atheists, or any other group have long been subjected. In a free society, Muslims and Islam should not be exempted on the grounds of some sense of fear or hostility unless that critique takes the form of incitement to hate and/or violence. Nor does favoring a burqa ban mean ipso facto hostility to Islam. The



overwhelming majority of Muslim women do not wear burqas while many abhor it because it gives Islam a bad name. Numerous Muslim intellectuals, men and women, have spoken up in favor of a ban and have done so in Muslim-majority countries as well.^[18] One can only wonder whether the court is aware of the implicit message it is sending: first, that "Islamophobia" is a phenomenon deserving recognition by Europe's highest court, and second, that fierce (and at times uncivil) debate can be so upsetting to one bloc of people—which the court has lumped together based on their cultural heritage regardless of individual differences—that the rights of free expression of individuals, who are the actual carriers of the liberties that the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights bestowed upon them, may be trampled upon.

A Threat to Civil Society?

There are two other arguments, cited in the Gérin report and the French bill's accompanying explanatory memorandum, that

Islamism ... the cloth hides not only a face but secret intentions as well: to attack secularism and impose Islamic rule."^[21] Seen from this perspective, banning the burqa—as well as outlawing Nazi uniforms—is a justified act of "militant democracy," that is, the use of legal restrictions on political expression and participation in order to stop anti-democratic political groups and movements from gaining currency.^[22]

The other anti-veiling argument, articulated most prominently by American political commentator and historian Daniel Pipes, maintains that such garb is a threat to public safety. Both in his personal writings and in the archives of Islamist Watch, a project of the Middle East Forum, which he heads, Pipes has documented cases worldwide involving crimes committed by burqa-clad perpetrators. There are more than one hundred cases listed, including incidents of child abduction, robbery, bombings, murder, theft, acid attacks, and suspects evading justice under the cover of this garment (most notably the 1937 flight from Palestine of the notorious Jerusalem mufti, Hajj Amin Husseini).^[23]

There is a well-documented concern that the burqa is a threat to public safety. Worldwide, there have been more than one hundred cases of criminals hiding under the burqa to perpetrate murders, child abductions, acid attacks, bombings, and robberies like the one attempted on this British shopkeeper in 2013.

In the explanatory memorandum accompanying the burqa ban bill, the French government made the case that in certain situations the practice of concealing one's face in a public setting could represent a danger to communal safety.^[24] Concealing one's identity would certainly hamper any criminal investigation. The public safety argument is not then tied to any religious aspect of full face-veiling, nor is it relevant whether or not the burqa is worn voluntarily. Everyone needs to show their face, and this would include covering them by means of helmets, masks, theatrical make-up, and so forth. The European Court agreed that freedom of religion would not be

the ECHR chose to dismiss. **The first contention is that Islamist women wear burqas (or Islamist men put women under pressure to wear burqas) as a way of expressing solidarity with and identifying themselves as adherents of a specific, political belief system.** This makes the outfit not just an expression of religion but a political statement informed by a totalitarian ideology. French philosopher Élisabeth Badinter, for example, has called the burqa "the Salafists' banner"^[19] and does not consider it to be "clothing."^[20] Others have derided full-face veiled women as "the Trojan horse of extremist



unjustly compromised if individuals had to show their faces "in the context of security checks" and on identity photos for official documents. A blanket ban for this reason, however, was deemed overkill and "proportionate only in a context where there is a general threat to public safety."^[25]

Yet, as Pipes' database makes eminently clear, security considerations are far from hypothetical, for the simple reason that "one cannot allow faceless and bodyless persons walking the streets, driving cars, and otherwise making use of public places; the dangers are too great."^[26] Indeed, the Belgian government seems to fully subscribe to this view. Rather than wait for burqa-donning criminals to strike, it chose public safety as one of the main reasons for its 2012 ban of the burqa, and the Belgian Constitutional Court concurred.^[27]

Conclusion

The drafters of the Gérin report, and subsequently French legislators, and ultimately, the ECHR had a difficult task in deciding on the best arguments for banning the burqa. Despite the generalized formulation concerning the covering of one's face used in the laws eventually adopted, it would be disingenuous to ignore the fact that the ban is at least occasioned by the appearance of burqa-draped Muslims on the streets of Europe.^[28]

But despite an acceptance of cultural and religious differences on the part of Europe's elites—an acceptance that may not necessarily be shared by the European "man on the street" who views the burqa as yet one of the foremost manifestations of the continent's growing Islamization—tolerance toward the full-face covering has reached its limit at least in France and Belgium. *Vivre ensemble*—the principle of "living together"—was the one ground the European Court of Human Rights latched on to as a means of upholding the French burqa ban despite other equally significant arguments. By setting aside other similarly important, yet perhaps more politically sensitive arguments, such as gender equality, human dignity, or the outlawing of Islamist symbols, the court followed the carefully constructed French reasoning, which sought to disentangle the issue from the claims of religious discrimination.

This ruling paves the way for more European countries to ban full-face veiling, as demonstrated by the 2015 banning of face-covering Islamic veils in schools, hospitals, and public transportation in Netherlands.^[29] As Western European societies are overwhelmed by a tidal wave of Muslim immigration, it remains to be seen how widespread this ban will become.

► References are available in source's URL.

Paul Cliteur is professor of jurisprudence at the University of Leiden and visiting professor of philosophical anthropology at the University of Ghent. His book The Secular Outlook (Wiley-Blackwell, 2010) is in translation as La visione laica del mondo (Nessun Dogma, 2014).

Machteld Zee is a political scientist and legal scholar. She holds a Ph.D. in jurisprudence from the University of Leiden. Her most recent book is Choosing Sharia? Multiculturalism, Islamic Fundamentalism and Sharia Councils (Eleven International Publishing, 2016).

War on ISIS

ISIS Expands in Southeast Asia



By [South Front](#), March 29 2016

ISIS is struggling to expand its influence in Southeast Asia amid the dramatic series of losses started with the Russian military operation in Syria.

"Encouraging Libya to Turn Into Another Iraq".



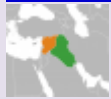
By [Graham Vanbergen](#), March 28 2016

The prime minister promised, in September 2011, that he would "not allow Libya to turn into another Iraq" so he decided to lead international efforts, with



France, to rescue Libya, by backing rebels fighting to overthrow Gaddafi and impose a...

[The Syria Campaign Against Daesh Terrorists: After Palmyra, The Next Step is to Secure the Palmyra-Sukhanah-Deir Ezzor Road](#)



By [South Front](#), March 29 2016

The prime minister promised, in September 2011, that he would “not allow Libya to turn into another Iraq” so he decided to lead international efforts, with France, to rescue Libya, by backing rebels fighting to overthrow Gaddafi and impose a no-fly zone over the country, supposedly overcoming initial reservations from the EU and even the USA.

[Message from Palmyra. Syria's Strategic Victory. Towards the Defeat of Daesh-ISIS](#)



By [Stephen Lendman](#), March 28 2016

Routing ISIS from Palmyra decisively is the most important strategic victory in the struggle to liberate Syria from foreign terrorist invaders since Obama launched naked aggression in March 2011.

[ISIS Serves US Foreign Policy: “Islamophobia” Industry Feeds War Abroad, Grows Police State at Home](#)



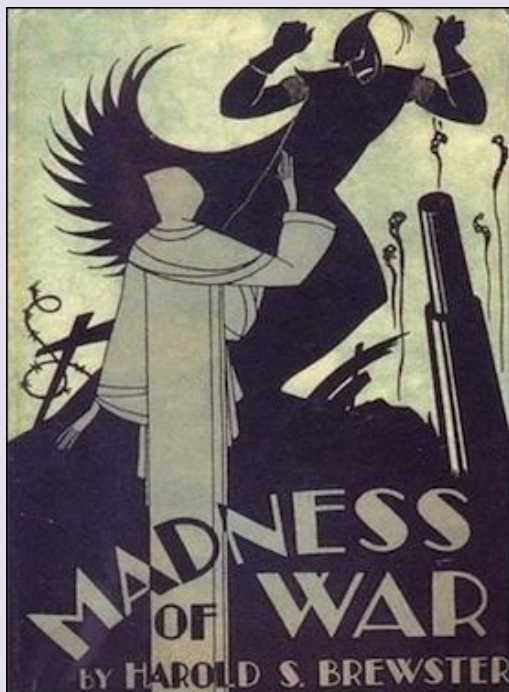
By [Tony Cartalucci](#), March 27 2016

It's real simple. Create a threat, predicate expanding autocracy at home and endless wars of hegemony abroad upon confronting that threat, and all the while intentionally perpetuate fear, hysteria, hatred, and division to keep that threat relevant in the hearts and minds of as many people as possible.

War and Madness

By **Jonathan Spyer**

Source: <http://www.meforum.org/5929/war-madness>



All photos by author.

Mar 28 – The cold numbers are the first thing that hit you. Figures telling of a human catastrophe on a scale hard to compute. Suffering on a level to which any rational

response seems inadequate – 470,000 people killed, according to the latest estimates; 11.5 percent of the population injured; 45 percent of a country of 22 million made homeless; 4 million refugees and 6.36 million internally displaced persons. Life expectancy is down from 70.5 years in 2010 to an estimated 55.4 years in 2015. Welcome to the Syrian civil war. For those of us who have covered the war closely, these are not just numbers in black and white. They have behind them searing images and memories impossible to erase.

I remember the throngs of refugees in the olive groves close to the border fence north of Aleppo in the summer of 2012. The battle for the city was raging at its full murderous strength a few kilometers to the south. The refugees, mostly Sunni Arabs, were trying to find a place safe from the destructive intentions of Bashar Assad's air force. They had no way to get into Turkey. Their forlorn hope was to take their families as close as possible to the border fence. They believed that the Syrian Air Force would not dare to bomb so close to the powerful northern neighbor.



Whole families with small children – some people terribly wounded by the bombings – living in the olive groves with neither shelter nor provisions. But I had been in Aleppo city, too, and I knew that their calculation made sense. Inside the city, the barrel bombs were falling without discrimination. Houses, buildings, lives turned into nothing.

This is what the figures are made of. For five years, this is what the lives of Syrians have looked like. It is the greatest catastrophe to have hit the Levant since World War II.

Few people saw the war coming. For a moment, it looked as though the wave of regional change would pass Syria by. The prison-house state constructed by the Ba'ath Party had strong walls, after all. Its residents seemed too cowed, too intimidated to challenge their dictator.



Lieutenant Bilal Khabir of the Free Syrian Army, with comrades, Sarmin, Idlib Province, Syria, February 2012.

Assad himself, in a strange interview given to the *Wall Street Journal*, published January 31, 2011, explained why, in his view, Syria had not and would not experience instability. "We have more difficult circumstances than most of the Arab countries but in spite of that Syria is stable," the dictator said. "Why? Because you have to be very closely linked to the beliefs of the people. This is the core issue. When there is divergence between your policy and the people's beliefs and interests, you will have this vacuum that creates disturbance."

Here was the language of the Arab nationalist police state in all its self-assurance and blindness. The prisons full of political prisoners. The citizenry cowed by an all-embracing structure of surveillance and repression. And on top of it all, the "president" blithely insisting to his compliant Western interviewer that the stability was the result of a kind of tacit contract of consent between the regime and the people.

It couldn't hold. And, of course, it didn't. As nemesis follows hubris, so in March 2011, demonstrations by schoolchildren in Dera'a province were brutally repressed by the local security forces. A boy called Hamza al-Khatib who was murdered in custody became the symbol for the protests. The unrest spread to other Sunni Arab parts of the country – Homs, Hama, Baniyas. Assad, whose rule, he had claimed, rested on the unspoken consent of his people, rapidly and predictably abandoned any such nonsense and sought simply to drown the spreading protests in the blood of the protesters.

By summer, the stage was set for the civil war to come. The death toll was rapidly mounting. Western leaders called for Assad's resignation in August. But Assad was going nowhere. These were the days of the Arab Spring. People power and demonstrations were supposed to be enough to bring down the dictators. This happy narrative neglected to note a fact of salient importance. Deposed dictators – Zine El Abidine Bin-Ali in Tunisia, Hosni Mubarak in Egypt, Ali Abdullah Salah in Yemen – had fallen not only or mainly because of popular unrest against them. They were deposed because their patron, the United States of America, chose to abandon them in their hour of need. Assad had chosen different friends. He wasn't aligned with the West, but with Russia and the Islamic Republic of Iran. And the response of these two powers, from the very outset, was to provide the dictator with whatever level of support he required to stay in his seat.

The form this took varied. Russia used its Security Council veto at the UN to prevent any concerted action against the regime. Moscow also kept the weapons coming. The Iranians used their expertise in crowd control to help Assad control the demonstrations. By the end of 2011, it was clear that the bright lie of the "Arab Spring," according to which beautiful young people marching in the streets was all it took to topple dictators, wasn't going to work in Syria.

At this point, the opposition made the fateful decision to try a different way. Already, groups of recently deserted soldiers were arming themselves to defend the demonstrations against the attentions of Assad's soldiers. In early 2012, these began to



crystallize into the first rebel battalions, organizing not only to defend protests, but also to attack the army and make areas in revolt impassable for the government's forces. The stage was set for war.

I visited rebel-controlled Syria for the first time during that period. Idlib Province – one of the heartlands of the emergent insurgency. I remember the fevered atmosphere of the time and the hopes of swift victory. I interviewed a recent defector from Assad's airborne troops in a village called Sarmin close to Idlib City. Lieutenant Bilal Khabir was typical of the type of fighters who were capturing the world's attention at that time. Young, idealistic and brave, Khabir had deserted his unit after a brother officer was executed for refusing to fire on civilian demonstrators in Dera'a.

"I am with the law, not against the law," Khabir had told me, as we sat in a half-built structure that formed the rebels' headquarters in Sarmin. "The regime is fascist and criminal. We expect what happened in Homs to happen here. But even with our simple weapons, we are ready to fight. Either Bashar stays, or we stay. And freedom is the promise of God on earth."



YPG fighters at a front line position in Ras al Ain (Sere Kaniyeh), Hasakeh Province, Syria, March 2013.

They fought. Khabir himself rose to senior command in the rebellion in Idlib, before being terribly wounded in action in 2013. The rebels of Idlib and Aleppo and Dera'a, Quneitra and Raqqqa, Homs and Hama and Deir al-Zor and Damascus made much of those areas no-go zones for Assad's army in the year that followed.

But even then, in those first days, it was possible to discern the sectarian hand inside the velvet glove of the rebellion's fine words. In Sarmin and Binnish, in February of 2012, Salafi fighting groups separate from the ragtag recent army deserters were already operating openly,

apart from the enthusiastic, often younger rebels of the non-Islamist units. As the bloodletting continued in 2012 and 2013, it was these organizations that began to make headway. The secular rebels had no real vision or idea to put in their place. They just wanted to destroy Assad. The ideas came from the Islamists. The money, meanwhile, was coming mainly from Qatar and Turkey. Both these countries favored the emergent Islamist groups, whose inclinations mirrored their own. And, of course, there was a discernible sectarian logic to the rebellion from the start. The Assad family hailed from the country's 12 percent Alawi minority. By no means were all those who had benefited from Assad's rule Alawis. There were Sunni Arabs and others in senior positions. Similarly, it was possible to find non-Sunnis and non-Arabs among the rebels. But the core dynamic was one in which the dictator relied, ultimately, on the support of his sect. The Shabiha, Alawi thugs and criminals, who would later be organized by the Iranians into a well-drilled militia, were crucial to the regime's survival from the start. Alawi-dominated military units – the special forces, the Republican Guard, the 4th Armored Division – were also relied upon from the outset when the large formations of Sunni conscripts were of doubtful loyalty.

The rebellion, similarly, emerged from the 60 percent Sunni-Arab majority of the country. In the course of 2012 and 2013, the sectarian logic of the war became increasingly inescapable. It was marked by the emergence of new and powerful formations that would play a crucial role. In the summer of 2012, Assad carried out a strategic withdrawal from a large swathe of Syria's northern border with Turkey. The withdrawal was itself dictated by sectarian logic. Assad was short of manpower. Because of his regime's narrow base, it had become clear that he did not have sufficient men to hold the entirety of a country largely in revolt against him. This fateful decision, made out of urgent necessity, began the process of fragmentation that is now very advanced in Syria. In the course of 2012 and 2013, the country effectively separated into a number of enclaves that survive to this day.

The regime held on to Damascus and the western coastal areas, and the road links between them. The Sunni rebels and Islamists



had the east and south. The local franchise of the Kurdish PKK (Kurdish Workers Party), known as the PYD (Democratic Union Party), established itself as the de facto ruler of three non-contiguous Kurdish enclaves stretching along the Syrian-Turkish border. Their formidable Kurdish YPG militia emerged as one of the most powerful of the military organizations, which now divided control of the territory of Syria between them. The emergence of the Kurdish enclaves was further testimony to the sectarian dynamic now underlying the war.



The author and a YPG fighter, at a position west of Kobani, March, 2014.

The rise of extreme Salafi Islamist groups from the womb of the rebellion confirmed the trend. On January 23, 2012, the foundation of the Jabhat an-Nusra li-Ahl ash-Shām (Support Front for the People of the Levant) was announced. Usually shortened to Jabhat al-Nusra, this was the official franchise of the al-Qaida network in Syria. Led by Sheikh Muhammad al-Julani it quickly gained a reputation for military effectiveness and particular ruthlessness. Then, in May 2013, in the course of a dispute between the Nusra leadership and the leadership of the Iraqi franchise of al-Qaida, a faction began operating in Syria under the name of the Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS, or ISIL). Little noticed at the time, this jihadi group was set to transform the Syrian conflict, and then the region.

I entered Syria for reporting purposes on numerous occasions during that period. Amid the chaos and suffering, it was possible to discern that something extraordinary was taking place. The state structures that had existed since the early 20th century in this area – "Syria" and later "Iraq" were effectively ceasing to exist.

The old borders did not deter the military groups. Journalists crossed "illegally" with rebel assistance. Sometimes the crossings were lengthy and perilous affairs. But, more often, the border was hardly noticed, fictionalized. What had appeared at the beginning to be a war of a populace against a brutal dictatorship turned out to be something else entirely. The walls of the prison-house states of Syria and Iraq had been breached. New and unfamiliar entities were making war among the ruins.

In the Turkish border town of Kielis, in the early summer of 2014, I interviewed two ISIS members. I had just crossed back from Syria, after visiting the besieged Kurdish Kobani enclave.

At a place called Haj Ismail, a few days previously, comrades of the two men I met in Kielis had been shooting at me while I was interviewing a YPG commander at a forward position. The ISIS positions were about 200 meters away, across a flat, blank landscape. The firing began and I ran after the fighters as they raced for a machine-gun position behind some sandbags to return fire. It was a routine incident along a tense section of frontline. But it was passingly strange to be sitting in a room chatting and drinking tea with the men on the other side of the lines, just two days later.

The two men called themselves Abu Muhammad and Abu Nur. They were both Syrians. "If ISIS falls, you can forget about Sunni people in Syria," Abu Muhammad told me, after relating the story of his own long journey to the jihadi organization. The men were animated by a strange combination of local sectarianism and vast, millennial hostility to the West. The two fitted seamlessly together and the power of their combination was evident in the rapid growth of ISIS and the bloodthirsty fanaticism of its fighters.

As for the movement's goal, Abu Nur spoke about it with reverence. "We want the caliphate, something old and new, from the time of Muhammad. The Europeans came here and created false borders. We want to break these borders." ISIS, in other words, was emerging directly from the reality of the Levant in 2014.

The situation, indeed, was becoming increasingly clear. As my friend Mahmoud, a onetime teacher turned political analyst and a supporter of the rebels bluntly expressed it, "In Syria, today,



there are three groups worth mentioning. ISIS, the regime and the Kurds. Nothing else."

The reality of fragmentation and sectarian war burst across the borders a few months after that interview with the astonishing advance of ISIS into Iraq. By August, the jihadis had reached the gates of Baghdad and Erbil. They were stopped only after the entry of US air power into the fray.

The advance of ISIS into Iraq brought the logic of the Syrian war into the larger neighboring country. In the dramatic and terrifying events around Sinjar Mountain that summer – the harrowing attempt at the genocide of the Yazidi people – the sheer savagery of the Sunni jihadis was laid bare. Here was a horror that defied description. But, while the singling out of the Yazidis carried with it a special evil, the Assad regime remained responsible for, by far, the largest number of the deaths in Syria.



A Yazidi refugee girl rescued from Sinjar Mountain, Newroz refugee camp, northern Syria, August 2014.

The situation today retains the essential contours that emerged in mid-2014. The Syrian war has metastasized across borders. As a result, neither Syria, nor Iraq, nor indeed Lebanon any longer constitute states in the usually understood sense of that word. Rather, the entire vast landscape between the Iraq-Iran border and the Mediterranean Sea is, today, divided up between various political-military organizations and arrangements, almost exclusively organized along religious sectarian or ethnic lines.

They vary in orientation from the radical secularism and socialist outlook of the Syrian Kurds in autonomous "Rojava" to the murderous and apocalyptic Sunni jihadism of the Islamic State.

Along the way, one may find the Iran-oriented Shi'ite Islamism of Hezbollah and the Shi'ite militias of Iraq, the pro-Western, tribal conservatism of the Kurdish Regional Government in Iraq, and various types of Sunni Islamism in the poorly governed wastelands of the Syrian-Sunni rebels.

The war has, of course, also impacted far beyond the Middle East itself. The US and the West have staunchly sought to keep their involvement to a minimum. But, today, Western air power and special forces are playing a key role in the effort to reduce and destroy the Islamic State.

Further west, the Russian intervention after September 2015 almost certainly saved the Assad regime from destruction and reversed the course of the war. Currently, there are peace negotiations in Geneva and a fitfully observed cease-fire.

But the cease-fire relates only to the original war in Syria (regime vs. rebels). It doesn't impact on the other conflicts that emerged from its womb (YPG/SDF against ISIS, rebels against Kurds, KRG and Iraq against ISIS, Turks against PKK, regime against ISIS).

The bombings in Brussels on March 22 are the latest demonstration of the far reach of the war. What began with demonstrations by schoolchildren in Dera'a has now turned into a process of flux and convulsion of historic proportion.

I think of the Syrian war, and my mind is filled once more with memories of astonishing vividness: The deep blue of the sky during a barrel bombing of the Sha'ar neighborhood in Aleppo, in the scorching summer of 2012. YPG fighters crossing the Tigris River in dinghies by night, in dead silence. The swishing of the water, the stars reflected in it and the blank expanse ahead. A hospital for Kurdish fighters in Derik, in summer 2014, filled with men wounded in the fight to open the corridor to Sinjar Mountain and the trapped Yazidis. Very dark-skinned Ktaeb Hezbollah militiamen at a frontline position just east of Ramadi city in Iraq in July 2015. The ghost-like figures of ISIS men, in black, running quickly past a gap in their defensive position. The first rebels, in Idlib Province, with hope, long since lost. The Yazidi refugees, just down from Sinjar, at the Newroz refugee camp in summer 2014, their exhausted, haunted eyes



and the black horror of the things they described.

We are left with the bare facts behind all this – facts with which the policymaking echelon in the West has only just begun to grapple. The prison-house states are broken to pieces. The forces released from their ruins are swirling

and clashing across the region and heading beyond it. Syria has become one of the hinges upon which regional and global events turn. The reputations of great powers, global and regional, are being made and broken among its ruins. It is war, and madness. And it is far from over.

Jonathan Spyer is director of the Rubin Center for Research in International Affairs and a fellow at the Middle East Forum.

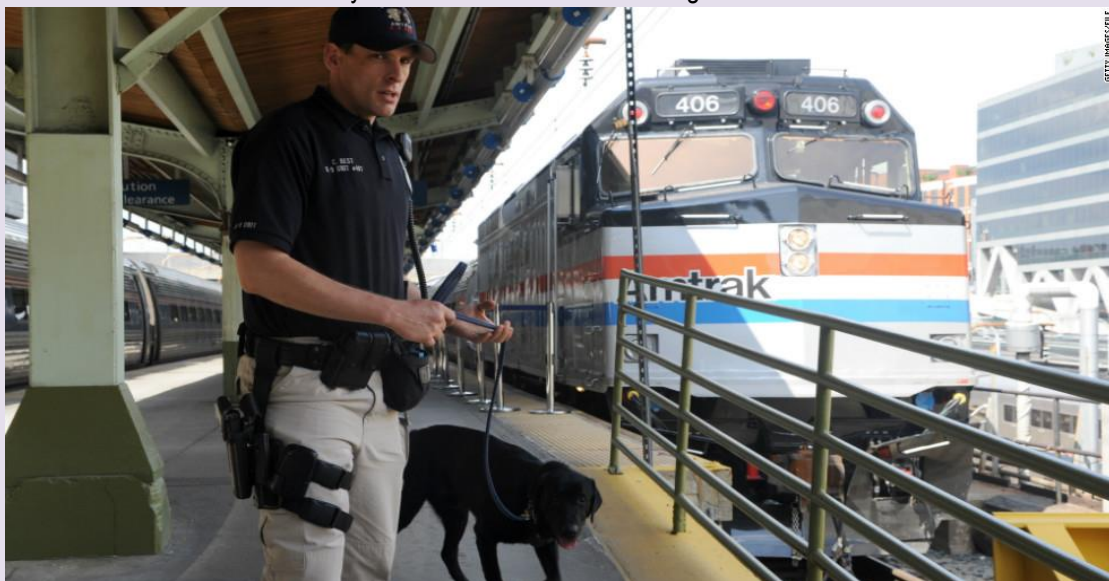
Brussels Subway Attack Prompts Worry in U.S. About Bus, Rail Safety

Source: <http://www.emergencymgmt.com/safety/Brussels-Subway-Attack-Prompts-Worry-Bus-Rail-Safety.html>

Mar 25 – In the wake of the terrorist attacks on the airport and subway system in Brussels, a group of lawmakers in Congress is pushing to increase funding to provide better security on the United States' mass transit systems.

Another 11 people were killed in twin blasts at the city's Zaventem International Airport, which remains closed through Sunday.

Members of Congress from California and Washington state to North Carolina to Florida



On Wednesday, 66 House Democrats urged the Homeland Security appropriations subcommittee to set aside \$105 million to help local transit systems improve security. That's \$20 million more than President Barack Obama requested in his 2017 budget proposal and a drop in the bucket compared to the billions the country spends annually on aviation security.

An explosion in the Maelbeek Station on the Brussels Metro killed 20 people Tuesday. One of the suspected bombers, Khalid El Bakraoui, was killed in the suicide attack, which happened near the headquarters of the European Commission.

are expressing worry that U.S. transit systems, including the busy subways in New York City and Washington, D.C., are vulnerable to a similar attack.

"This week's horrific terrorist attacks in Brussels — one of which targeted a busy subway station — underscore the pressing need to keep America's bus, rail and ferry systems safe," said Rep. Eric Swalwell, a Democrat from California's East Bay area who was the lead author of the letter and is a member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.



Swalwell and the other lawmakers also requested that the Transit Security Grant Program, administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, be kept separate from other security preparedness grants.

The funding for transit security is paltry compared to the \$7.6 billion requested in next year's budget for the Transportation Security Administration, the agency that focuses primarily on aviation security.

Unlike air passengers, rail transit, ferry and bus passengers are generally not screened before they board.

According to the American Public Transportation Association, Americans took 10.8 billion transit trips in 2014, the highest level of ridership in 58 years.

The nation's transit systems were supposed to get more security funding from FEMA under the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007. But since 2011, the Transit Security Grant Program has provided less than \$100 million a year.

"An attack on any of these systems could kill thousands, flood rail tunnels and stations, and cripple major metropolitan areas," the lawmakers wrote.

They said the deadly attacks on rail and bus systems in Madrid in 2004 and London in 2005 highlighted the "open and porous nature" of mass transit.

"Terrorists are well aware of these facts and have targeted such entities many times," they wrote.

Amtrak and many transit systems have their own police departments. Those forces are occasionally augmented with teams of TSA agents under a program known as VIPR (pronounced "vipr").

VIPR, or Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response, teams are not used exclusively to bolster transit security, however. They're also deployed at special events such as sports tournaments and presidential inaugurations. In a statement Tuesday, Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson said that TSA was deploying additional security to airports, rail and transit stations.

Of the more than 3,700 terrorist attacks worldwide on surface transportation between 1970 and 2014, 71 percent struck mass transit, according to an analysis by the Mineta Transportation Institute at San Jose State University.

In testimony to the House Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee last April, Michael Melaniphy, the president and CEO of the American Public Transportation Association, noted that nearly \$389 million was made available for transit security in 2008, the first year after Congress approved the 9/11 Act.

By 2015, the funding had dropped to \$87 million — a decline of 78 percent. Melaniphy told lawmakers that the funding levels are "woefully inadequate." "With transit ridership and security risks growing," he testified, "we remain concerned with this underinvestment in the security of our nation's transit systems."

Belgium has divided and decentralized itself almost out of existence

By Georges Van Den Abbeele

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160329-belgium-has-divided-and-decentralized-itself-almost-out-of-existence>

Mar 29 – Only days after the arrest of Salah Abdeslam, one of the Belgian-based organizers of the Paris attacks in November 2015, Brussels was rocked by two suicide attacks that killed more than thirty people and injured more than 200 (300). The bombings have called attention to the crisis of security

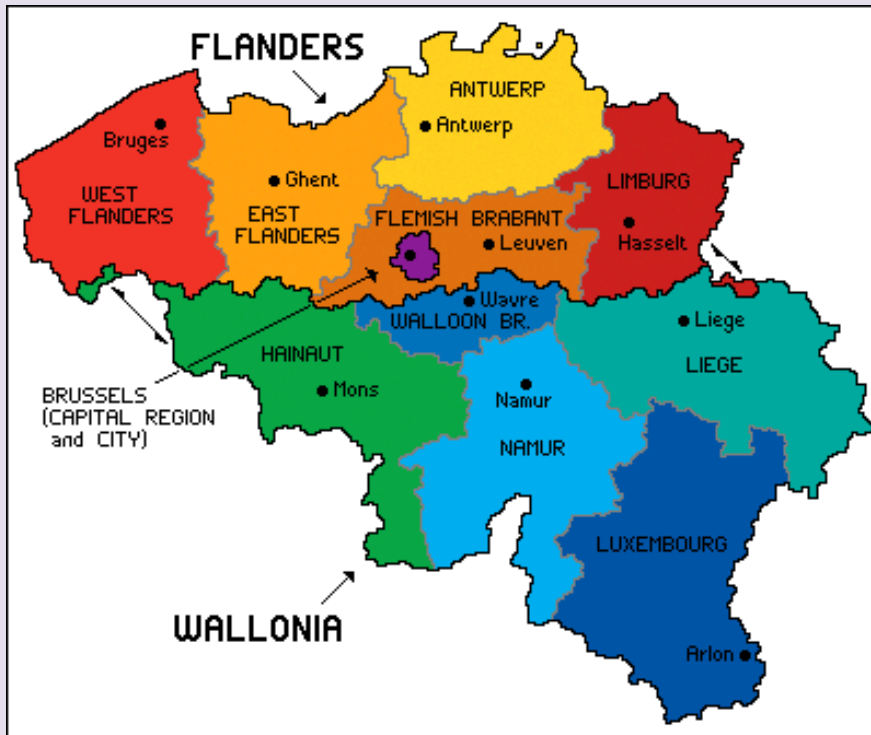
across Europe in the face of terrorism and radicalization.

But the incidents also add color to the image of Belgium — my native country — as a failed nation-state, one that seems egregiously incapable of protecting its own people.



As it is, Belgium is no longer a nation-state in any functional sense, but rather a

French and Dutch, but also English, German and other languages besides.



Historically a border region situated between France and the Netherlands and ruled by the royal Habsburg family, modern Belgium first emerged as an independent entity in 1789. But it was quickly absorbed into the Napoleonic French empire, and after Napoleon's defeat in 1815, merged into the kingdom of the Netherlands.

Anti-Dutch sentiment, fuelled by both religious and linguistic differences, led to the revolt of 1830, which created the current nation-state of Belgium.

In the nineteenth century, French reigned; it was spoken in the wealthy coal-rich south, and was the preferred idiom of the Francophilic bourgeois elite. But in the 20th century the situation was reversed. Mines in the French speaking Wallonian south became depleted and left endemic unemployment and poverty, while a commercial boom in the Dutch-

speaking north empowered Flemish pride and linguistic assertiveness.

The German occupations during the two World Wars encouraged and exacerbated these rifts through calculated strategies of divide-and-rule, encouraging linguistic nationalist movements.

In the post-war era, the language issue was in principle "settled" by dividing the country along provincial/linguistic lines. Only the nine central communes of Brussels are officially bilingual, and one small eastern part of the country is officially German-speaking.

Today, demographic data about who actually speaks which language are almost impossible to come by, since the Belgian constitution effectively stipulates that language follows region.

But "Flemings" and "Walloons" are not ethnic groups in any meaningful sense, and these labels don't necessarily tally with the language people speak at home. Rather, they simply indicate in which region one resides, since Belgians are simply presumed to speak their region's designated language. As an example of the confusion this creates, Brussels is officially bilingual even though most of its

"federation" of three different regions (Flanders, Wallonia and Greater Brussels) and of three different "linguistic communities" (Dutch, French and German). As a result, it is host to an array of police and juridical districts that don't map onto each other geographically, demographically, or politically.

"Belgium" is now, arguably, just an intermediate stage on the way to a regularly predicted and yet never fully realized political separation.

So how, exactly, has it come so close to the point of simply ceasing to exist?

Language as wedge

Belgium's "failure" has been a long time in the making. It stems from a century or more of determined and well-organized efforts to weaken the national state in favor of local control over almost all decision-making. This insidious politics of division has been advanced largely via language, the ultimate phony "wedge" issue in Belgium.

Though we share a country geographically smaller than the greater New York metropolitan area, we are a nation of polyglots, and most of us speak not only



residents speak French – and yet it's also the capital of Flanders.

In reality, we have families that readily straddle the supposed linguistic border between the regions. We go to soccer matches and sports events where players and spectators yell in unpredictable mixtures of both languages. We freely switch languages as the need arises. And yet, opportunistic wedge-issue campaigning by local politicians foments resentment that our “native” language (whatever that is) is not sufficiently respected or appreciated within our own confines (whatever those might be).

Neither here nor there

Precious little has been done to clean up this mess.

There's little recognition that *le français standard* and *algemeen Nederlands* are in fact two imported foreign languages, rather than the old border dialects we traditionally spoke. Those dialects, which began to diminish as industrialization swept the country, epitomized our uniquely opportune yet hopelessly marginalized status among the dominant European tongues and their cultural ambitions. But even the two principal “foreign” languages of French and Flemish have yet to be properly embraced.

When Belgians travel abroad, we speak to each other in English to avoid offending the assumed linguistic sensitivities of other Belgians we don't know – and at home, Belgian media and advertising are saturated with English. Indeed, we may be headed for an Anglophone future and the end of French and Dutch (to say nothing of classic Wallonian and Flemish).

But instead of the obvious solution of teaching everyone both languages in school and thereby eliminating much of the gap between them, Belgium has allowed endless arguments over local language differences to be used as pretexts for dragging state functions down to the local or municipal level.

This is made all the more acute by the EU's explicitly stated aim of devolving power and decision-making downwards to “regions” and localities, bypassing the nation-state altogether – except in countries institutionally strong enough (the U.K., say) or even just homogeneous enough (such as Denmark) to resist.

The Belgian embrace of the EU is also a way to avoid addressing the needs of a nation-state in increasing distress.

The consequences of this elite-driven downward spiral of decentralization were becoming increasingly and frighteningly apparent long before the March 22 attacks.

Ineptitude breeds disaster

Belgian national uproars used to be innocuous; the *bourgmestre* or mayor of a Flemish town would be revealed to be communicating with other members of the city council in French, or vice versa. But in the 1990s, these were superseded by examples of the Belgian police's scandalous ineptitude in tracking criminal activity across the country's linguistic, regional and municipal borders.

None was more infamous than the saga of serial child rapist and murderer Marc Dutroux, who was twice arrested but then freed before his final arrest.

While the EU's program of lowering external borders and trade barriers have helped Belgium become a strongly competitive economy, the very same policies have weakened the national state to the advantage of both local governments and the broader EU.

That made Belgium itself an increasingly dangerous center of criminal activity, from drug-dealing and car theft and housebreaking (for which it has been ranked in the global top 20) to horrendous instances of human trafficking and violence against immigrants.

Immigration to Belgium increased under the all-but-insatiable labor needs of western Europe's postwar economic miracle, and the country is now more than 10 percent foreign-born. Just over half of Belgium's foreign citizens are from the EU's member states; among the others, Moroccans and Turks are particularly visible.

Those who come to Belgium unaware of its invented linguistic divide often reject its self-divided culture. Many have retreated into sectarian communities – such as the sprawling Arab and Maghreban ghetto in Molenbeek – that view themselves as embattled and without a place in society at large.

If Belgians don't imagine a way to reinvent themselves as a



functioning nation-state, despite their linguistic and other differences, the consequences could be dire indeed.

Without a state strong enough to keep all its people safe, and cohesive enough to include

all its divergent populations as citizens of a common polity, the forces behind what happened in Brussels on 22 March will only fester and grow.

Georges Van Den Abbeele is Dean, School of Humanities, University of California, Irvine.



Views of millions of Muslims “fundamentally incompatible with the modern world”: Tony Blair

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160329-views-of-millions-of-muslims-fundamentally-incompatible-with-the-modern-world-tony-blair>

Mar 29 – **Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair has said that “many millions” of Muslims hold a viewpoint which is “fundamentally incompatible with the modern world.”**

In his comments, made in a [Sunday Times](#) interview and in an [article](#) in the same newspaper, Blair rejected arguments that ISIS is merely “tens of thousands of brainwashed crazies,” saying: “[ISIS] does



not seek dialogue but dominance. It cannot therefore be contained. It has to be defeated.” To prevent such attacks, Blair recommended “active on-the-ground military support” for Arab armies, stating that ISIS “have to be crushed.”

He called for the creation of a pan-national anti-terror force, saying: “We must build military capability able to confront and defeat the terrorists wherever they try to hold territory. This is a challenge for the West.”

Last fall, Blair said that the emergence of ISIS

could be blamed, at least in part, on Western intervention in the Arab world during the second Iraq war.

In a CNN interview in October 2015, when asked whether he thought the invasion of Iraq was a “principle cause” of the rise of ISIS, he said:

“I think there are elements of truth in that... Of course you can’t say that those of us who removed Saddam in 2003 bear no responsibility for the situation in 2015.

“But... it’s not clear to me that even if our policy did not work, subsequent policies have worked better.”

Still, in his more recent comments, Blair has expressed views which are similar to his earlier, more hawkish approach to the Middle East and its problems. He criticized those who believe that “we have caused all of this through Western policy.”

He warned that “increasingly frequent acts of terrorism” could culminate in an attack “of such size and horror” that it would result in “many more victims” than the recent attack on Brussels or 2015 attacks in Paris.



EDITOR’S COMMENT: One could easily comment: “Look who is talking!”



Europe should remove its velvet gloves of liberalism

Source: <http://www.arabtimesonline.com/news/europe-remove-velvet-gloves-liberalism/>

Mar 30 – According to the British newspaper the Telegraph “Freelance journalist, Fayçal Cheffou, was arrested on Thursday and according to Belgian reports is the third airport bombing suspect. His charge comes as it emerged as security guard at a Belgian nuclear facility was killed”(March 26, 2016).

The terrorist attacks on Brussels airport and on the train leaving from Maalbeek station reveal how brutal the terrorists can become in killing innocent people. ISIS and its criminal sympathizers will continue to target European countries unless a stronger European security integration is put in place. In fact, ISIS and its affiliated terrorists would stop at nothing to harm Western countries and they might be currently planning to build and use radioactive dirty bombs against civilian population.

It would be difficult however to prevent any future terrorist attacks unless European governments start to remove their velvet gloves of liberalism and indulgent democracy and initiate an effective policy of prevention. Muslim extremists are already present in many European countries and it does not require sophisticated thinking to link some of them to any future threat to the security of Europe.

In fact, I wonder sometimes why many European governments continue to apply the standard of human rights principles on suspected terrorists. For example, if an individual refuses to abide by the unwritten rules of civil behavior in Western societies and insist on separating themselves from the main Western culture while continuing to grow very long beards, and insist on preaching hatred against European culture and democracy in the middle of European cities and towns, why not then gag, arrest and prosecute these harbingers of Evil! One can understand that European and Western governments continue to abide by international laws of human rights.

However, it is anachronistic to continue using twenty-first Western and democratic mentality in trying to understand medieval terrorist thinking.

Moreover, how can a government not prosecute an individual who continue to preach hate speech against Christianity and Western culture in fundamentally Christian societies and Western countries?! In other words, it is illogical to continue to allow few Muslim extremists to preach hatred against non-Muslims in the heart of non-Muslim Europe.

Furthermore, it is difficult not to expect such anti-Christian, anti-Semitic and anti-Western bigots to follow their hate speech with evil actions. Western liberal attitudes, civil behaviors and the maintaining of civil conduct are only appropriate for liberal individuals, civilized citizens and those who adhere heart and soul to Western civic ethics.

However, allowing some extremists too much freedom to preach hatred against the very country that allowed such freedoms to exist remains unfathomable, at least to me!

As a Muslim individual, I condemn every violent act committed in the name of my faith.

However, I continue to recognize the fact that few of my “fellow Muslims” do actually harbor so much hatred against anything non-Muslim. It is impossible to inject tolerance into historically intolerant minds and it is impossible to talk democracy and human rights with apocalyptic minds already programmed to destroy the West.

I stand by my European and Western brothers and sisters in their darkest hour and sympathize wholeheartedly with the victims of terror.



China's First Anti-Terrorism Law: An Analysis

By Abhishek Pratap Singh

Source: http://www.idsa.in/idsacomments/china-first-anti-terrorism-law_apsingh_290316

Mar 29 – China's recent promulgation of a series of laws, especially the new National Security Law (July 2015) and the country's first Anti-Terrorism Law (December 2015), marks a shift towards the increased role of law in politics and governance. These laws



came shortly after the Fourth Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), held in October 2014, had emphasised the role of the constitution in “comprehensively advancing the rule of law” in the country. The plenary session had also brought out the strong desire of the leadership to advance the “socialist rule of law with Chinese characteristics” in which “the constitution is taken as the core.”¹ The drafting of the anti-terrorism law, and several such laws in 2015, was also very much in line with President Xi Jinping’s concept of an “overall national security outlook”, which he put forth in his address at the inaugural meeting of the National Security Commission in April 2014.²

Mixed Reactions

China’s first anti-terrorism law has drawn mixed reactions, mostly scepticism and criticism, from rights activists to media networks and from telecommunication firms to Western governments. In fact, the draft anti-terrorism law underwent two rounds of deliberations before being finally adopted in December 2015.

The two earlier drafts (released in November 2014 and February 2015) had come in for strong international criticism.

Reacting to certain technical provisions of the draft law, US President Barack Obama had observed in a March 2015 interview to *Reuters* that it “would essentially force all foreign companies, including U.S. companies, to turn over to the Chinese government mechanisms where they could snoop and keep track of all the users of those services.” He added, “we’ve made very clear to them (Chinese Government) that this is something they’re going to have to change if they expect to do business with the United States.”³ The German Government and the European Parliament too had expressed concerns on the draft law and its potential impact in terms of restricting the freedom of expression.⁴ On the other hand, the law was domestically seen as a brave and practical step in view of the growing threat of terrorism to China.⁵

The draft anti-terrorism law had also drawn strong criticism from global technology companies over the provision of providing ‘encryption keys’ to public security authorities for any data stored on their servers. Despite the fact that the draft law was twice revised before it was finally adopted in December 2015, serious concerns over the right to

‘proprietary data’ remain among business and telecommunication enterprises.

Making of the Law

The promulgation of the first anti-terrorism law can be traced back to October 2011 when China’s supreme legislative body, the National People’s Congress (NPC), passed the “Decision on Issues Related to Strengthening Anti-Terrorism Work”, which for the first time specifically defined the terms “terrorist organisation”, “terrorist” and “terrorism”.⁶ However, it was never made into a law. Prior to it, considering the gravity of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, modifications were made subject to Amendment III in China’s Criminal Law on December 29, 2001.⁷

It is noteworthy that the Chinese Constitution does not directly address the issue of extremism and terrorism. Until the passage of the anti-terrorism law, it was under the Criminal Law and other national laws like the State Security Law that anti-terrorism related provisions were mentioned. For instance, Article 120 of the Criminal Law stipulated imprisonment for “whoever forms, leads, and actively participates in a terrorist organisation.”⁸ Similarly, Articles 1, 4 and 36 of the constitution basically dealt with disruption of the social system and public order within the state at large.⁹ None of these laws offered any clear definition of ‘terrorism’ as such.

In the absence of a universally agreed upon definition of terrorism, China’s first anti-terrorism law too has defined it in broad terms:

The term “terrorism” is defined as any proposition or activity—that, by means of violence, sabotage or threat, generates social panic, undermines public security, infringes on personal and property rights, and menaces government organs and international organizations—with the aim to realise certain political and ideological purposes.”¹⁰



The new anti-terrorism law reflects China's growing security concerns over the rise in militancy among the Muslim Uyghur community in Xinjiang Province. In recent years, there have been reports of Uyghur militants carrying out attacks outside Xinjiang as well. The official Chinese media cited a knife attack that left 29 people dead at a train station in March 2014 as giving greater urgency to the anti-terrorism legislation. The attack by four assailants was widely attributed to a Uyghur group.¹¹

A similar attack had occurred in September 2014 in a coal mine in Xinjiang. Again, in May 2014, 31 people died when a busy market in Xinjiang's capital Urumqi was bombed.¹² According to a government report, Uyghur separatists were responsible for 200 attacks between 1990 and 2001, causing 162 deaths and injuring more than 440 people.¹³ China maintains that these militants are linked to the 'Eastern Turkestan' separatists who are part of the 'global Islamic terror network'. However, some experts attribute these attacks to 'community clashes' between the ethnic Han majority and the Turkic Muslim Uyghur minority.

The approved draft of the anti-terrorism law, which came into effect from January 2016, consists of 97 articles detailed in 10 chapters, broadly dealing with issues like the designation of terrorist organisations and personnel (chapter 2), security and prevention (chapter 3), intelligence gathering and investigation (chapters 4 and 5), emergency response and international cooperation (chapters 6 and 7), and safeguards and legal liabilities (chapters 8 and 9).

According to *Xinhua*, China's new anti-terrorism law also seeks to establish "a national leading organ for counter-terrorism work" and a national intelligence centre "to coordinate inter-departmental and trans-regional efforts on counter-terrorism intelligence and information." It also allows the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to take part in counter-terrorism operations abroad.¹⁴

Addressing Concerns

Compared to the previous draft that was introduced in February 2015, the final draft law appeared much more forceful and broader in scope. For instance, while the previous draft required telecom companies to provide data encryption keys to the security authorities,

Article 18 of the final draft stated that the companies instead need to "provide technical support and assistance, including decryption, to police and national security authorities in prevention and investigation of terrorist activities."¹⁵

In view of continuing concerns among telecommunication companies, particularly US companies, over the provisions of network security and content monitoring in the draft law, the Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson, in his regular briefing on December 23, 2015, clarified that the new draft law "will not restrict companies' lawful business, nor will it leave a backdoor open or infringe companies' intellectual property right and citizens' freedom of expression on line."¹⁶

Arguing that "the clause (Article 18 of the new draft law) reflects lessons China has learnt from other countries and is a result of wide solicitation of public opinion," senior legislator Li Shouwei of the Legislative Affairs Commission under the NPC's Standing Committee stated that the clause "will not affect companies' normal business nor install backdoors to infringe intellectual property rights, or....citizens freedom of speech on the internet and their religious freedom." He asserted that the US and EU counter-terrorism legislations were studied while drafting China's anti-terrorism law.¹⁷ In fact, according to a statement by the NPC Standing Committee, the new definition of terrorism is inspired by a Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) counter-terrorism convention as well as by the UN's Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism.¹⁸

However, there are still concerns that the new law seeks to extract critical information in the name of promoting security. It is also not specified in the law as to what constitutes lawful measures of 'prevention'. The new law stipulates strict censorship pertaining to dissemination of any terrorism-related sensitive information. It calls for restrictions on reporting of terrorist activities in China that may lead to repeatability of acts and has stipulated a blanket cover on reporting of anti-terrorism responses.

Censoring Media

According to *Xinhua*, the new draft law stipulates that "no institutions or individuals shall



fabricate and disseminate information on forged terrorist incidents, report on or disseminate details of terrorist activities that might lead to imitation, nor publish scenes of cruelty and inhumanity in terrorist activities.” It further states that, “None, except news media with approval from counterterrorism authorities in charge of information distribution, shall report on or disseminate the personal details of on-scene workers, hostages or authorities’ response activities.”¹⁹

The nature of censorship which the new law formulates on terrorism-related information appears more severe than the common practice of media censorship in China. Interestingly, a commentary published in *Xinhua* defended it arguing that “The various restrictions on media imposed by the new law only intends to prevent copy-cat crimes, protect frontline anti-terror workers and keep society from the harm of hearsay.”²⁰

People’s War Strategy

In the name of formulating “people’s war” strategy, the final draft law entails ‘civilian participation’ (Article 5) as a key component of the counter-terror framework. The two-fold purpose of civil participation are intelligence gathering and formation of volunteer groups in the event of any anti-terrorist action. In fact, in August, 2014, China had mobilised local residents in Hotan Prefecture of Xinjiang in search of suspected terrorists. The draft law stipulates the setting up of formal forces or volunteer groups in the communities (Article 74). It also seeks to establish joint coordination mechanisms to mobilise grassroots organisations (Article 8) and also encourage civilians to work as informants to promote intelligence gathering (Article 44).

At the same time, the new anti-terrorism law reiterates the duty of all organisations and individuals to cooperate with the authorities (Article 9). It also seeks the introduction of the knowledge of prevention and response to terrorist activities (Article 17) among departments of education and human resource in China. There are doubts that the intended provisions may require mandatory military service or training in future particularly in times

of emergency. The given provision is more ‘conformist’ and intends to seek compliance with the state’s objectives subject to ideological training.

The new law also provides for honours and awards for those who support the prevention of terrorist activities (Article 10) and those who suffer injuries or are killed while discharging their duties against terrorist activities (Article 75). It is crucial to note that the framework of monitoring and action that the new anti-terrorism law in China seeks to take revolves around the strategy of “people’s war” based on infusing a sense of duty among civilians in order to draw their active support against terrorism.

Need for Right Balance

It has been observed that the anti-terrorism law has less to do with physical threats to China and is more directed towards the expansion of restrictions. From the Chinese point of view, the law is necessary for the security of citizens as it attempts to create a statutory basis for future anti-terrorism activities. At the same time, it also raises the larger question of the possible misuse of the rhetoric on terrorism to grant undue discretionary powers to the government, thus severely infringing upon the individual liberty of citizens in the process.

Though the new anti-terrorism law in China strives for stricter preventive measures and offers the necessary legal framework against any kind of terrorist activities, but, contrary to the Chinese claim of the law being in accordance with international practices, there is enough scope for creating ‘emergency situations’ in order to restrict the rights of the people or heavily suppress any local dissent.²¹ The problem lies not just with its tough provisions but the manner of its operation and its implications in terms of tightening political control. As China’s new anti-terrorism law falls short of striking a ‘fair deal’ between liberty and security, it is important that the nature of its operation reflects upon countering ‘legitimate’ terrorist threats without compromising on ‘citizens’ and organisations’ lawful rights and interests in the process’, which the law itself provides for.

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How ISIS Built the Machinery of Terror Under Europe's Gaze

By Rukmini Callimachi

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/29/world/europe/isis-attacks-paris-brussels.html>

Mar 29 – **The day he left Syria with instructions to carry out a terrorist attack in France, Reda Hame, a 29-year-old computer technician from Paris, had been a member of the Islamic State for just over a week.**

His French passport and his background in information technology made him an ideal recruit for a rapidly expanding group within ISIS that was dedicated to terrorizing Europe. Over just a few days, he was rushed to a park, shown how to fire an assault rifle, handed a grenade and told to hurl it at a human silhouette. His accelerated course included how to use an encryption program called TrueCrypt, the first step in a process intended to mask communications with his ISIS handler back in Syria.

The handler, code-named Dad, drove Mr. Hame to the Turkish border and sent him off with advice to pick an easy target, shoot as many civilians as possible and hold hostages until the security forces made a martyr of him.

"Be brave," Dad said, embracing him.

Mr. Hame was sent out by a body inside the Islamic State that was obsessed with striking Europe for at least two years before the deadly assaults in Paris last November and in Brussels this month. In that time, the group dispatched a string of operatives trained in Syria, aiming to carry out small attacks meant to test and stretch Europe's security apparatus even as the most deadly assaults were in the works, according to court proceedings, interrogation transcripts and records of European wiretaps obtained by The New York Times.

Officials now say the signs of this focused terrorist machine were readable in Europe as far back as early 2014. Yet local authorities repeatedly discounted each successive plot, describing them as isolated or random acts, the connection to the Islamic State either overlooked or played down.

"This didn't all of a sudden pop up in the last six months," said Michael T. Flynn, a retired Army lieutenant general who ran the Defense Intelligence Agency from 2012 to 2014. "They have been contemplating external attacks ever since the group moved into Syria in 2012."

Mr. Hame was arrested in Paris last August, before he could strike, one of at least 21 trained operatives who succeeded in slipping back into Europe. Their interrogation records offer a window into the origins and evolution of an Islamic State branch responsible for killing hundreds of people in Paris, Brussels and beyond.

European officials now know that Dad, Mr. Hame's handler, was none other than Abdelhamid Abaaoud, the Belgian operative who selected and trained fighters for plots in Europe and who returned himself to oversee the Paris attack, the deadliest terrorist strike on European soil in over a decade.

The people in Mr. Abaaoud's external operations branch were also behind the Brussels attacks, as well as a foiled attack in a suburb of Paris last week, and others are urgently being sought, Belgian and French officials say.

"It's a factory over there," Mr. Hame warned his interlocutors from France's intelligence service after his arrest. "They are doing everything possible to strike France, or else Europe."

Missing the Connections

For much of 2012 and 2013, the jihadist group that eventually became the Islamic State, also known as ISIS or ISIL, was putting down roots in Syria. Even as the group began aggressively recruiting foreigners, especially Europeans, policy makers in the United States and Europe continued to see it as a lower-profile branch of Al Qaeda that was mostly interested in gaining and governing territory.

One of the first clues that the Islamic State was getting into the business of international terrorism came at 12:10 p.m. on Jan. 3, 2014, when the **Greek police** pulled over a taxi in the town of Orestiada, less than four miles from the Turkish border. Inside was a 23-year-old French citizen named Ibrahim Boudina, who was returning from Syria. In his luggage, the officers found 1,500 euros, or almost \$1,700, **and a French document titled "How to Make Artisanal Bombs in the Name of Allah."**



But there was no warrant for his arrest in Europe, so the Greeks let him go, according to court records detailing the French investigation.

Mr. Boudina was already on France's watch list, part of a cell of 22 men radicalized at a mosque in the resort city of Cannes. When French officials were notified about the Greek traffic stop, they were already wiretapping his friends and relatives. Several weeks later, Mr. Boudina's mother received a call from a number in Syria. Before hanging up, the unknown caller informed her that her son had been "sent on a mission," according to a partial transcript of the call.

The police set up a perimeter around the family's apartment near Cannes, arresting Mr. Boudina on Feb. 11, 2014.

In a utility closet in the same building, they found three Red Bull soda cans filled with 600 grams of TATP, the temperamental peroxide-based explosive that would later be used to deadly effect in Paris and Brussels.

A Signature ISIS Explosive in Europe

Triacetone triperoxide, which was used in the Paris attacks in November, has become the Islamic State's explosive of choice in Europe. Specialists in bomb detection explain why.

It was not until nearly two years later, on Page 278 of a 359-page sealed court filing, that investigators revealed an important detail: Mr. Boudina's Facebook chats placed him in Syria in late 2013, at the scene of a major battle fought by a group calling itself the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

According to a brief by France's domestic intelligence agency, he was the first European citizen known to have traveled to Syria, joined the Islamic State and returned with the aim of committing terrorism. Yet his ties to the group were buried in French paperwork and went unconnected to later cases.

Like the killers in Paris and Brussels, all of these earlier operatives were French speakers — mostly French and Belgian citizens, alongside a handful of immigrants from former French colonies, including Morocco.

They were arrested in Italy, Spain, Belgium, France, Greece, Turkey and Lebanon with plans to attack Jewish businesses, police stations and a carnival parade. They tried to open fire on packed train cars and on church congregations. In their possession were box cutters and automatic weapons, walkie-talkies and disposable cellphones, as well as the chemicals to make TATP.

Most of them failed. And in each instance, officials failed to catch — or at least to flag to colleagues — the men's ties to the nascent Islamic State.

In one of the highest-profile instances, Mehdi Nemmouche returned from Syria via Frankfurt and made his way by car to Brussels, where on May 24, 2014, he opened fire inside the Jewish Museum of Belgium, killing four people. Even when the police found a video in his possession, in which he claimed responsibility for the attack next to a flag bearing the words "Islamic State of Iraq and Syria," Belgium's deputy prosecutor, Ine Van Wymersch, dismissed any connection.

"He probably acted alone," she told reporters at the time.

Though the degree to which the operatives were being directed by the Islamic State might have been unclear at first, a name began to appear in each successive investigation: Abdelhamid Abaaoud, a Belgian citizen who counterterrorism officials say rose through the ranks to become a lieutenant of the Islamic State's external operations efforts.

In the months before the Jewish museum attack, Mr. Nemmouche's phone records reveal that he made a 24-minute call to Mr. Abaaoud, according to a 55-page report by the French National Police's antiterror unit in the aftermath of the Paris attacks.

"All of the signals were there," said Michael S. Smith II, a counterterrorism analyst whose firm, Kronos Advisory, began briefing the United States government in 2013 on ISIS' aspirations to strike Europe. **"For anyone paying attention, these signals became deafening by mid-2014."**

It was in the summer of 2014 that the link to the terrorist organization's hierarchy became explicit.

On June 22 of that year, a 24-year-old French citizen named Faiz Bouchrane, who had trained in Syria, was smuggled into neighboring Lebanon. He was planning to blow himself up at a Shiite target, and during interrogation, he let slip the name of the man who had ordered him to carry out the operation: Abu Muhammad al-Adnani.

Mr. Adnani is the spokesman for ISIS and is considered one of its most senior members. Just a few days after Mr. Bouchrane checked into a budget hotel in Beirut, Mr. Adnani



released an audio recording announcing the establishment of the caliphate. “Adnani reportedly leads the external operations planning of the Islamic State,” said Matthew G. Olsen, the former director of the National Counterterrorism Center.

State of Terror

Articles in this series examine the rise of the Islamic State and life inside the territory it has conquered. Intelligence officials in the United States and Europe have confirmed the broad outlines of the external operations unit: It is a distinct body inside ISIS, with its command-and-control structure answering to Mr. Adnani, who reports to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the self-proclaimed caliph of the Islamic State.

The unit identifies recruits, provides training, hands out cash and arranges for the delivery of weapons once fighters are in position. Although the unit’s main focus has been Europe, external attacks directed by ISIS or those acting in its name have been even more deadly beyond Europe’s shores. At least 650 people have been killed in the group’s attacks on sites popular with Westerners, including in Turkey, Egypt and Tunisia, according to a Times analysis.

Within the hierarchy, Mr. Abaaoud was specifically tasked with mounting attacks in Europe, according to the French police report and intelligence brief.

“Abaaoud, known as Abou Omar, was the principal commander of future attacks in Europe,” Nicolas Moreau, a French jihadist who was arrested last year, told his French interrogators, according to the report by France’s antiterror police. “He was in charge of vetting the applications of future candidates.”

Pacing Attacks

In an audio recording released on Sept. 22, 2014, Mr. Adnani, the ISIS spokesman and chief of the external operations wing, addressed the West.

“We will strike you in your homeland,” he promised, calling on Muslims everywhere to kill Europeans, “especially the spiteful and filthy French.” And he urged them to do it in any manner they could: “Smash his head with a rock, or slaughter him with a knife, or run him over with your car,” he said, according to a translation provided by the SITE Intelligence Group, which monitors extremist propaganda.

In the months that followed, a man decapitated his employer near the French city of Lyon, sending a snapshot of the severed head to the Islamic State. Another man stormed a police station in Paris, carrying a butcher’s knife and a photocopy of the Islamic State’s flag.

These are among around two dozen plots linked to the Islamic State that were documented in the year after Mr. Adnani’s speech. In most, there were no direct operational ties back to Syria, but there were clear signs that the attacker had consumed the terrorist group’s propaganda online.

The low potency of these attacks, with single-digit death tolls, combined with the fact that many of the perpetrators had a history of mental illness, prompted analysts and officials to conclude that the Islamic State remained a distant second to Al Qaeda in its ability to carry out attacks on Western soil.

Experts now believe that the Islamic State was actually adopting a strategy first put forward by an earlier operations leader for Al Qaeda, who argued that the group would become obsolete if it worked only on 9/11-size plots that took months or years to mount. He instead called for Al Qaeda to also carry out a pattern of small- and medium-size plots, and to use propaganda to inspire self-directed attacks by supporters overseas.

In a recent issue of its online magazine in French, [Dar al-Islam](#), the Islamic State explained the approach. **“The Islamic State has deployed its resources to generate three types of terrorist attacks,” the article states, specifying that they include large-scale plots coordinated by the group’s leaders, down to “isolated actions of self-radicalized people, who have absolutely no direct contact with ISIS, and yet who will consciously act in its name.”**

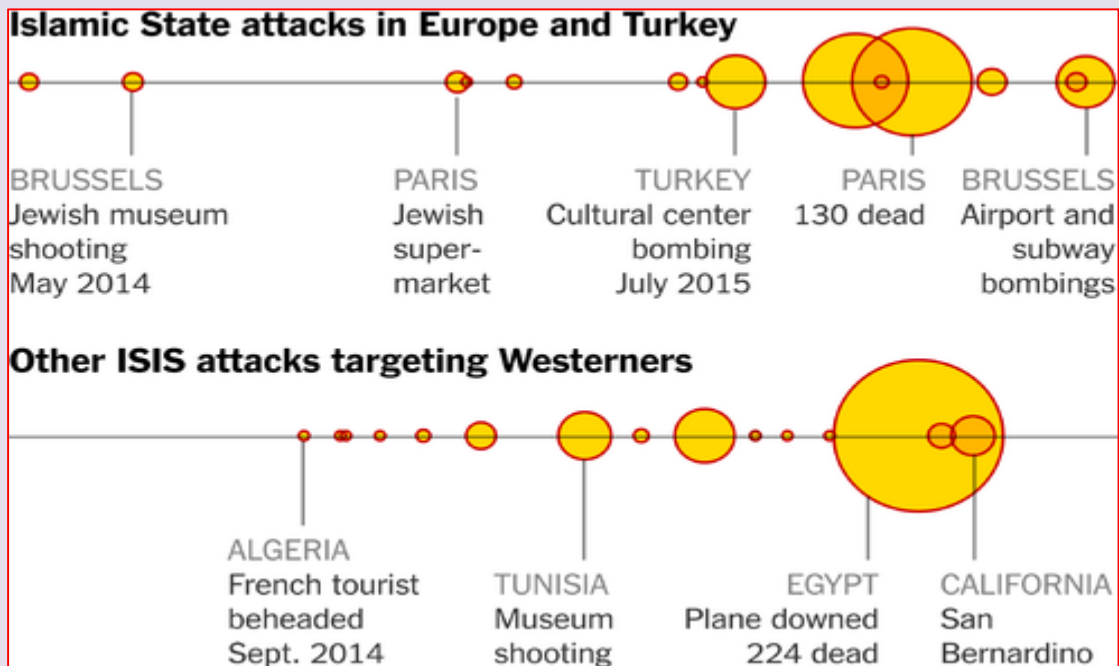
The same article says the group’s method for carrying out jihad in Europe involves an adaptation of [Auftragstaktik](#), a combat doctrine within the German Army in the 19th century. Those tactical guidelines call for commanders to give subordinates a goal and a time frame in which to accomplish it, but otherwise to give them the freedom to execute it.



The Islamic State explains in the article that it adopted the system to give recruits “complete tactical autonomy,” with few fingerprints that could be tracked back to the group, and “no micromanaging.”

The Recruit Pipeline

By early 2015, the Islamic State’s external operations branch had personnel dedicated to spending their days in Internet cafes in Syria pumping out propaganda, aimed both at inciting lone-wolf attacks and at luring new recruits.



Among the people who took the bait was **Reda Hame**, the young technology professional from Paris, who later told investigators that he had joined in hope of fighting to bring down President Bashar al-Assad of Syria. Instead, upon arriving in Syria in June 2015, he walked directly into the Islamic State’s pipeline for foreign attacks.

During his intake interview in Raqqa, Syria, in June 2015, the Islamic State administrator taking notes on a computer across from him expressed satisfaction when he learned that Mr. Hame was from Paris and had a background in technology, according to his lengthy account to France’s domestic intelligence agency, the Direction Générale de la Sécurité Intérieure, or D.G.S.I. The details were recorded in more than 16 hours of questioning, according to a transcript obtained by The Times and first reported on by the French newspaper Le Monde.

Days later, a man wearing a mask called Mr. Hame outside, told him to lie down in the bed of a pickup truck and covered him with a tarp. He was warned to keep his eyes lowered and not to look out.

They drove at high speed, and when the truck stopped, a fighter speaking Arabic directed him to a sport utility vehicle idling nearby, its tinted windows obscuring its occupants. When Mr. Hame opened the door to the back seat, the driver said, “Monte devant,” French for “Get in the front.”

The driver, Mr. Hame said, was Mr. Abaaoud, by then considered the most wanted terrorist in Europe. As they drove through the Syrian countryside, the future architect of the Paris attacks explained to Mr. Hame that if he faced the enemies of Islam alone, he would receive double the reward in heaven.

“He asked me if I was interested in going abroad,” Mr. Hame told investigators. “He said to imagine a rock concert in a European country — if you were given a weapon, would you be ready to open fire on the crowd?”

When Mr. Hame reiterated that he wanted to fight the Assad government instead, Mr. Abaaoud became terse. “He said he would show me those wounded in the war and buildings that had been destroyed, so that I would realize how lucky I was to be sent back to France rather than stay to fight here,” Mr. Hame recounted.



Videos released by the Islamic State after the Paris attacks in November included footage of eight of the 10 attackers while they were still in territory the terrorist group controlled in Iraq and Syria. They announced that they were acting on the orders of Mr. Baghdadi, the caliph of the Islamic State, and then proceeded to shoot or behead a captive, most of them in grotesquely choreographed scenes shot against a desert backdrop, according to the footage archived by the SITE Intelligence Group.

Officials have deduced that the footage was filmed between February and September 2015, suggesting the Paris attacks were being planned months before they took place. It is now known that at the same time Mr. Abaaoud was laying the groundwork for the devastating plot, he was recruiting, cajoling and training Mr. Hame and others for smaller, quick-hit attacks.

The night they met, Mr. Abaaoud dropped off Mr. Hame at a house in Raqqa with a white gate, according to the transcript. He said he would come for Mr. Hame the next morning, and warned him that if he did not agree to the mission, his passport, which was about to expire, would be given to another recruit who would go to Europe in his place.

When Mr. Abaaoud returned the next day, his face was covered with a brown scarf with slits for his eyes. He wore a holstered handgun. "He told me that he was now going to explain the mission to me," Mr. Hame said after his arrest, describing how the discussion occurred in the senior operative's speeding vehicle. "He told me I didn't have a lot of time; he said he was just waiting for the confirmation of his emir. I told him that I would go."

Accelerated Training

Mr. Hame said his training began about a 30-minute drive from Raqqa, in a villa that acted as Mr. Abaaoud's classroom. There, the senior operative demonstrated how to load a Kalashnikov rifle. When Mr. Hame tried, he jammed his thumb in the metal, hurting himself. Mr. Abaaoud made him repeat the exercise again and again.

The next day, Mr. Abaaoud drove Mr. Hame to a park covered in dry grass for target practice. Throughout the lesson, Mr. Abaaoud repeatedly lost his temper, annoyed by his recruit's lack of skill.

"He yelled at me because when I was shooting in volleys, it went into the air," Mr. Hame recounted. "He made me practice a lot, to the point that the grass caught fire."

The instructor appeared even more on edge during the third and final day of Mr. Hame's military training, when he drew a silhouette on the wall of an abandoned building and demonstrated how to throw a grenade. Inexperienced and struggling in the suffocating heat, Mr. Hame did not throw it far enough and was cut by shrapnel. Only when Mr. Abaaoud saw him bleeding did he relent, driving his student to a nearby clinic to be bandaged.

At night, Mr. Hame was dropped off at an apartment in Raqqa that appeared to be a dormitory for members of the external operations branch. One room served as an arsenal, with stacks of suicide belts, jugs of explosives, body armor and combat boots. The other recruits were also French speakers, including a man who said he had been training for eight months. He and Mr. Hame were told to team up by Mr. Abaaoud, who decided to send them back to Europe the same day.

They were among the many pawns that Mr. Abaaoud was positioning across the Continent.

If Mr. Hame was not handy with weapons, he had other qualities that were attractive to the Islamic State: He had a French passport and had worked as a computer technician for Astrium, a subsidiary of the French aeronautics giant Airbus. It was at least the second time that Mr. Abaaoud had chosen a fighter with information technology credentials: Sid Ahmed Ghlam, who was dispatched last April to attack churches in France, was in the second year of a five-year computer science program, according to news reports.

The final phase of Mr. Hame's training took place at an Internet cafe in Raqqa, where an Islamic State computer specialist handed him a USB key. It contained CCleaner, a program used to erase a user's online history on a given computer, as well as TrueCrypt, an encryption program that was widely available at the time and that experts say has not yet been cracked.

The external operations unit was on a drive to improve its operational security after months of embarrassing failures.

Working on Security



TrueCrypt, a basic encryption program used by Mr. Hame and other jihadists, was the first layer in a security protocol he was instructed to follow.



More than a year and a half earlier, the would-be Cannes bomber, Ibrahim Boudina, had tried to erase the previous three days of his search history, according to details in his court record, but the police were still able to recover it. They found that Mr. Boudina had been researching how to connect to the Internet via a secure tunnel and how to change his I.P. address.

Though he may have been aware of the risk of discovery, perhaps he was not worried enough.

Mr. Boudina had been sloppy enough to keep using his Facebook account, and his voluminous chat history allowed French officials to determine his allegiance to the Islamic State. Wiretaps of his friends and relatives, later detailed in French court records obtained by The Times and confirmed by security officials, further outlined his plot, which officials believe was going to target the annual carnival on the French Riviera.

Mr. Hame, in contrast, was given strict instructions on how to communicate. After he used TrueCrypt, he was to upload the encrypted message folder onto a Turkish commercial data storage site, from where it would be downloaded by his handler in Syria. He was told not to send it by email, most likely to avoid generating the metadata that records details like the point of origin and destination, even if the content of the missive is illegible. Mr. Hame described the website as “basically a dead inbox.”

The ISIS technician told Mr. Hame one more thing: As soon as he made it back to Europe, he needed to buy a second USB key, and transfer the encryption program to it. USB keys are encoded with serial numbers, so the process was not unlike a robber switching getaway cars.

“He told me to copy what was on the key and then throw it away,” Mr. Hame explained. “That’s what I did when I reached Prague.”

Mr. Abaaoud was also fixated on cellphone security. He jotted down the number of a Turkish phone that he said would be left in a building in Syria, but close enough to the border to catch the Turkish cell network, according to Mr. Hame’s account. Mr. Abaaoud apparently figured investigators would be more likely to track calls from Europe to Syrian phone numbers, and might overlook calls to a Turkish one. Next to the number, Mr. Abaaoud scribbled “Dad.”

Mr. Hame was instructed to make his way back to Paris, employing an itinerary that mimicked the journey of a backpacker on a summer holiday: He was to travel to Istanbul and spend a few days wandering the streets of the tourist district around Taksim Square.

Then he was to fly to Prague and buy a Czech SIM card. He would again check into a hotel, pretend to be a tourist and leave quick missed calls on Mr. Abaaoud’s Turkish phone number. The record of the call would be Mr. Abaaoud’s notification of his trainee’s progress. Mr. Hame was expected to repeat the procedure for each leg of his journey, including in Amsterdam and then Brussels, before returning by train to Paris.



Once Islamic State leaders knew that Mr. Hame had made it home, they would use the encryption and the Turkish drop box to coordinate further instructions, he said.

The mission began on the morning of June 12, when Mr. Abaaoud drove Mr. Hame and a second recruit to the Turkish border. Both had USB keys with TrueCrypt, and each was handed €2,000, in €500 bills, Mr. Hame said. Both had the same general agenda — to hit a soft target in Europe — but they were instructed to take separate paths, with Mr. Hame returning to France while the second recruit was headed to Spain.

But Mr. Hame's comrade was picked up after he flew to Spain, and under interrogation, he divulged Mr. Hame's plan as well. After being notified, the French police tracked Mr. Hame to his mother's apartment in Paris. Behind a couch, they found his USB stick from the Islamic State, and in his bag a piece of paper showing his login credentials for TrueCrypt. They arrested and began interrogating him last August, almost three months to the day before the worst terrorist attack in French history.

In many ways, it was another clear failure for the Islamic State's operational security. Mr. Hame agreed to cooperate with investigators, and confirmed that the group was bent on attacking in Europe and was already interested in picking out a concert hall to strike.

Yet many aspects of the group's security protocol were working. In the end, Mr. Hame had few specifics he could share with the authorities. He did not know the names or even the nationalities of the other operatives he had met; they had been introduced to him only by their aliases.

Two of Mr. Abaaoud's other small plots around the same time did not go any better. Sid Ahmed Ghlam was ordered by Mr. Abaaoud to open fire on a church in Villejuif, south of Paris, according to the report by France's antiterrorism police. Instead, he shot himself in the leg. Ayoub El Khazzani, the other attacker sent by Mr. Abaaoud, was tackled by passengers after his weapon jammed while he tried to open fire inside a high-speed Thalys train last August, officials said.

Though they failed, the thwarted plots kept counterterrorism officials stretched thin in the months before the November attacks in Paris.

"It served to put all of our agencies on edge," said France's chief antiterrorism judge, Marc Trévidic, who debriefed Mr. Hame, Mr. Ghlam and Mr. Khazzani before retiring last summer. "Just like a smoke screen, it allowed them to calmly prepare."

A Signature Explosive

Among the clearest signs of the Islamic State's growing capacity for terrorist attacks is its progress in making and deploying bombs containing triacetone triperoxide, or TATP.

The white explosive powder was found in the suicide belts of the Paris attackers and in the suitcases of the Brussels bombers, as well as in two other ISIS-led plots in 2014 and 2015.

Before ISIS, Al Qaeda repeatedly tried, but mostly failed, to deploy TATP bombs, starting in 2001 when Richard Reid tried to destroy an American Airlines flight by sneaking TATP onboard in the sole of his shoe. He was thwarted when the fuse failed to ignite.

TATP has become terrorists' go-to explosive in Europe because the main ingredients, acetone and hydrogen peroxide, can be found in common household goods like nail polish remover and hair bleach, experts say.

But while the building blocks are easy to come by, TATP is difficult to make, because the ingredients are unstable once combined and can easily detonate if they are mishandled. Over at least two years, Islamic State operatives were working to get it right.

The three bombs found in Mr. Boudina's building near Cannes in 2014 were beverage cans filled with the explosive powder and wrapped in black tape, according to the French court filing in the case.

Though he had successfully cooked the explosive, Mr. Boudina was still struggling to set it off. **He had jammed a filament into a cavity in the body of each can, most likely to use as a crude fuse,** investigators concluded. However, the online searches he had conducted on his laptop just before his arrest indicated that he did not know how to make the final component. **He searched "how to make a remote detonator," "detonation by cellphone," and finally "where to buy firecrackers?"**

By comparison, the team sent from Syria to carry out the Paris assaults in November had ironed out the final details.



Two months before those attacks, the man suspected of handling logistics for the assailants, Salah Abdeslam, stopped by a fireworks shop northeast of Paris to buy a mechanism used to detonate fireworks from a distance, according to the French prosecutor. The Firework Magician shop's in-house lawyer, Frédéric Zajac, remembered little about the young man with a Belgian accent, except that "unlike other clients, he didn't ask questions about how it all worked."

Mr. Abdeslam is believed to be the only direct participant in the assaults to have survived, and he was arrested last week in Belgium after a continentwide manhunt.

The attackers he had been helping successfully detonated their suicide belts in seven locations in Paris, indicating that the group had mastered both how to mix the compound and how to set it off.

"To be able to assemble it safely, and to detonate it repeatedly, suggests a more organized effort," said Michael Marks, a retired Naval Criminal Investigative Service special agent who was the post-blast investigator on the Navy destroyer Cole. "It suggests a network."

That network stretched like a web across Europe to at least a dozen other accomplices, including a cell holed up in an apartment in the Brussels neighborhood of Schaerbeek, where two other teams of Islamic State fighters prepared the bombs detonated last week in Brussels Airport and a metro station.

The overpowering odor that comes with refining and storing TATP was noticed by the building's owner weeks before the bombings, Belgian officials said, but he did not report it until after the attacks.

While each of the explosive vests used in Paris in November had about a pound of finished TATP, **the bombs used at the departure terminal of the airport and inside a subway car in Brussels are estimated to have weighed 30 to 60 pounds each,** according to Claude Moniquet, a veteran of France's intelligence service who now heads the European Strategic Intelligence and Security Center.

That marked another level of achievement in making the explosive: The higher the volume of TATP, the more volatile it becomes.

The attacks last week could have been worse: Inside the attackers' apartment were more of the precursor ingredients used to make the explosive — nearly 40 gallons of acetone and eight gallons of hydrogen peroxide — as well as a suitcase containing over 30 pounds of ready-to-go TATP, according to the Belgian police.

The one thing the attackers had not thought of was that the taxi they called to take them to the airport had room for only three suitcases, so they abandoned the fourth upstairs, Mr. Moniquet said. Their taxi driver told the Belgian newspaper DH that the customers had refused to let him help them load the heavy bags, and that during the drive to the airport, they sat in tense silence. The driver could not help but notice a strong odor wafting into the taxi from the sealed trunk.

Rukmini Callimachi is a foreign correspondent for The New York Times covering Islamic extremism, including Al Qaeda and the Islamic State. She is a two-time Pulitzer Prize finalist, the winner of the [Michael Kelly award](#), and the first journalist in the 75-year history of the [Overseas Press Club](#) to win both the Hal Boyle and the Bob Considine awards the same year. She joined The Times in 2014. Her series of articles, "[Underwriting Jihad](#)," showing how ransoms paid by European governments had become one of the main sources of financing for Al Qaeda, won the [George Polk Award in International Reporting](#). Before joining The Times, Ms. Callimachi spent 10 years at The Associated Press. From 2006 to 2014 she was based in Dakar, Senegal, covering 20 countries as the correspondent and the West Africa Bureau chief for The A.P.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: It is always a pleasure to read Rukmini's reports based on deep and thorough field research. **Only two short comments:** (1) Using "Mr." in front of terrorists names is kind of insulting for the people who earned this "title of respect"; and (2) the comment on the mentality of terrorists is not valid anymore. Terrorists are not poor psychopaths who were not loved by their mothers! They are just cool blood assassins that know exactly what they are doing and why.

Islamist terror growing in lethality and geography

By Steven Emerson and Pete Hoekstra | [Investigative Project on Terrorism](#)



Source: <http://www.rightsidenews.com/world/islamic-terrorism/islamist-terror-growing-in-lethality-and-geography-ipt-analysis-finds/>

Mar 29 – The massacres in Brussels and Paris are only the latest salvos in a heightening and devastating threat from radical Islamists globally.

They illustrate troubling and much larger trends that the Investigative Project on Terrorism (IPT) has identified in a new analysis based upon its extensive research, sources and multiple databases, including the University of Maryland Global Terrorism Database.

The IPT's analysis reached the following conclusions:

- Islamist attacks in Europe will increase over the next 18 to 24 months.
- Terrorism in Africa will expand numerically and geographically.
- Radical Islamists will further destabilize the Middle East, targeting specifically Jordan, Turkey and Saudi Arabia.
- Jihadists will expand their efforts and focus in South and Southeast Asia.

IPT research found that on average of 3,284 people died in Islamist terror attacks only five years ago. Today, that average is 28,708 per year.

For this report, the IPT separated four time periods between 2001 and 2015, basing them upon similarities in the number and lethality of attacks. From 2001-2006, there was an average of 2,508 fatalities annually, which rose to 3,284 per year from 2007-2011,

tripled to 9,537 per year in 2012-2013 and tripled again to 28,708 in the past two years.

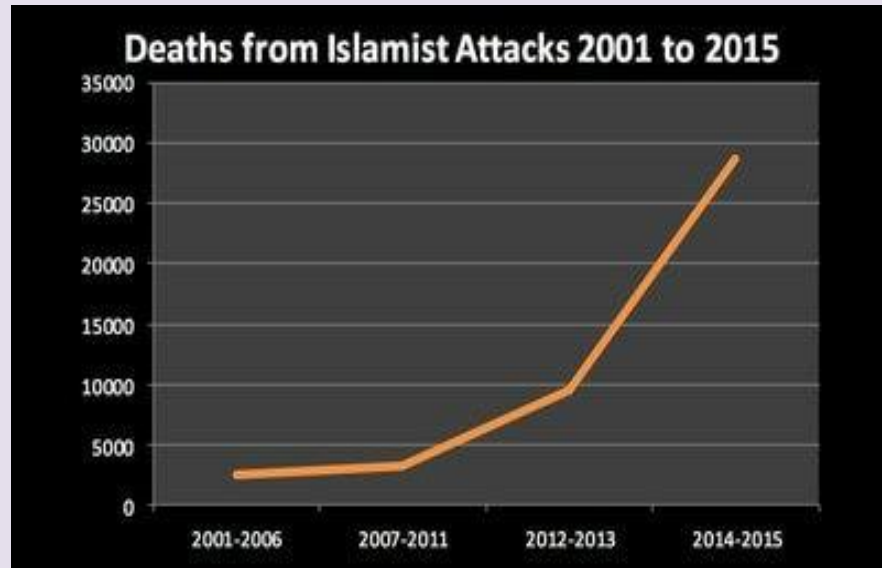
Terror deaths today have skyrocketed 774 percent since the 2007-11 average.

The emergence and rapid success enjoyed by ISIS is an obvious cause for the spike. It is

responsible for at least 10,780 deaths since 2013, the data show. However, the data highlights that the problem of Islamist terror is worsening beyond the reach of ISIS. The global statistics clarify that tactics employed by the United States and Western allies to counter the Islamist threat are failing and the threat may be much worse than what has been imagined previously.

The growth in terrorist victims corresponds to a wider theater of operations for terror groups. From 2001-2006, the threat was dispersed in area and occurring primarily in 10 countries, including the U.S. and Russia. By 2014-2015, significant Islamist terrorist activity could be found in 18 countries, with most concentrated in Africa and the Middle East.

The IPT analysis demonstrates that many of the new countries are those with which the U.S. has had significant engagement. More than half of all Islamist attacks since 2012 occurred in the failed states of Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Libya and Yemen.



Looking ahead, the IPT is pessimistic that the numbers will improve in the short and medium term. They are based on the following critical trends identified in the data.

Trend 1: Islamist Terror Engulfs More Lives

The chart below shows the stunning increase in deaths caused by radical Islamic terror since 2001.



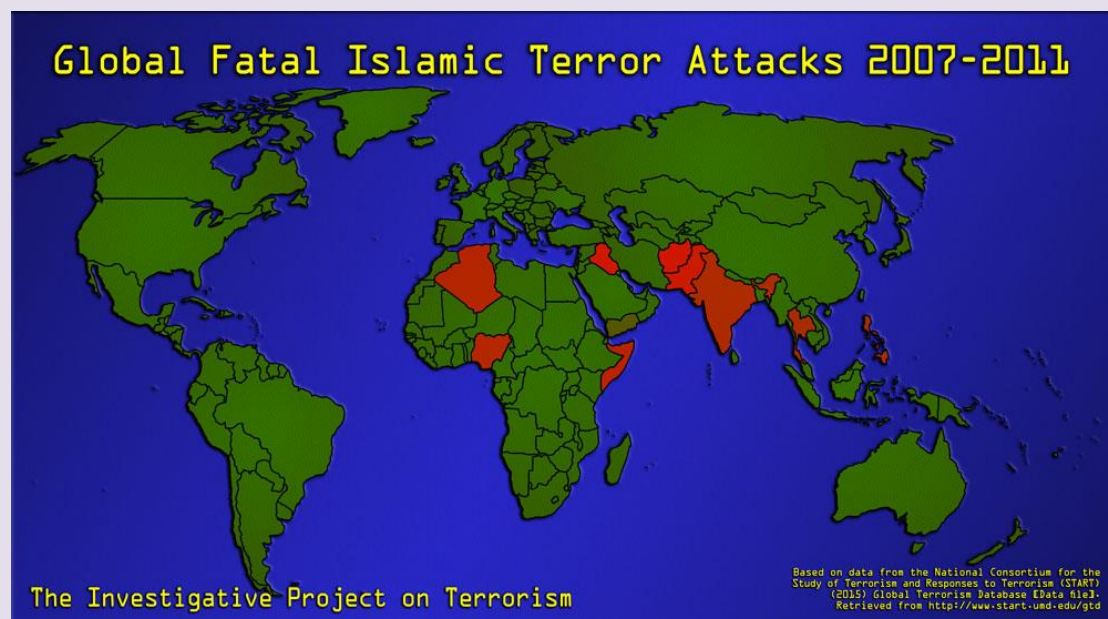
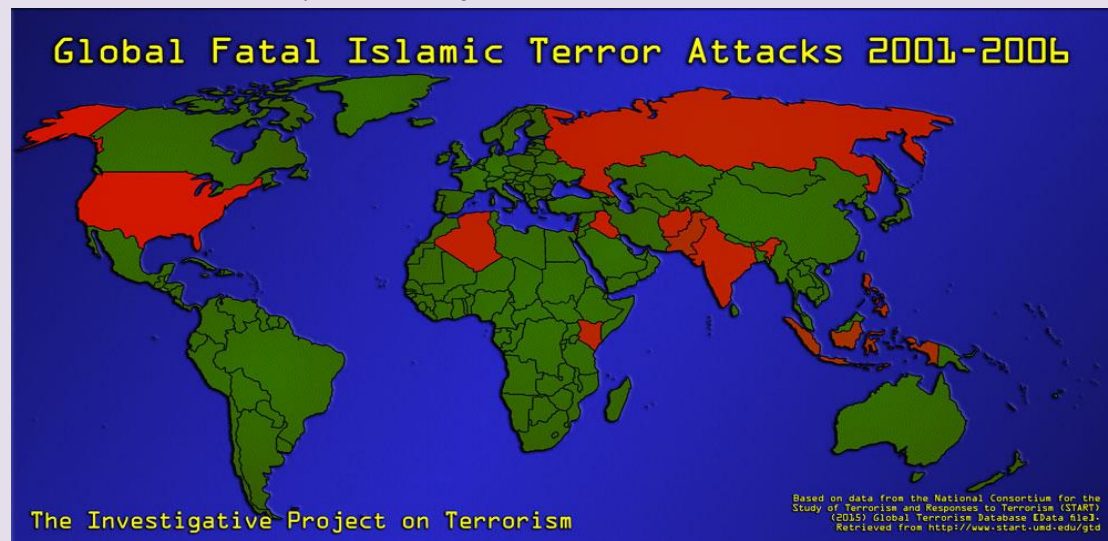
CBRNE-TERRORISM NEWSLETTER – April 2016

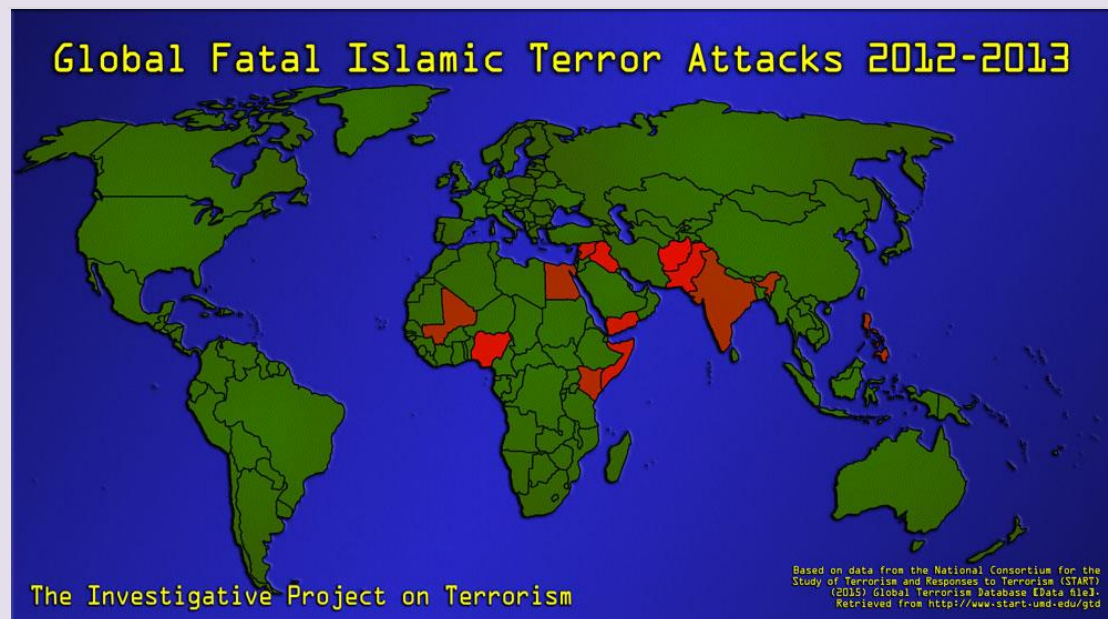
Time Period	2001-2006	2007-2011	2012-2013	2014-2015	Total
Annual Attacks	302	493	1,440	2,930	10,088
Annual Fatalities	2,508	3,284	9,537	28,708	79,244

**Final 2015 numbers are not yet available, but they are not expected to significantly alter the IPT's results.*

Trend 2: Islamist Terror Shifts Primarily to the Middle East and Africa

The following table identifies the countries where terrorism claimed an average of at least 50 lives per year in a given time frame. The impact of Iraq's slide into chaos since U.S. forces withdrew is clear. Afghanistan remains a troubled country. The growth of terror groups Boko Haram in Nigeria and al-Shabaab in Somalia is a key source driving the spike in terror deaths in Africa.





Time Period	2001-2006	2007-2011	2012-2013	2014-2015
North America	United States (500)			
East Europe	Russia (266)			
South Asia	Afghanistan (219)	Afghanistan (812)	Afghanistan (2,684)	Afghanistan (4,207)
	India (261)	India (90)	India (54)	India (60)
	Pakistan (69)	Pakistan (666)	Pakistan (1,349)	Pakistan (1,091)
SE Asia	Philippines (100)	Philippines (52)	Philippines (56)	Philippines (180)



	Indonesia (51)			
Middle East	Iraq (400)	Iraq (780)	Iraq (1,429)	Iraq (8,134)
	Israel (118)	Yemen (129)	Yemen (681)	Yemen (928)
			Lebanon (58)	Lebanon (75)
			Syria (634)	Syria (2,715)
Africa	Algeria (275)	Algeria (133)	Egypt (63)	Egypt (229)
		Nigeria (144)	Nigeria (1,542)	Nigeria (7,520)
		Somalia (197)	Somalia (608)	Somalia (1,522)
			Kenya (110)	Kenya (262)
			Mali (57)	Mali (56)
				Cameroon (778)
				Libya (193)
				Sudan (203)
				Central AR (62)
East Asia				China (260)

In Africa for example, Boko Haram, which translates to “Western education is forbidden,” waged the following attacks in February 2014.

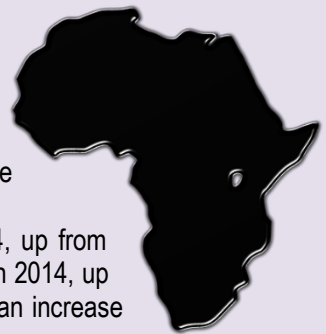
- Feb. 11 – 23 people die when Boko Haram torched a village called Konduga.
- Feb. 15 – More than 100 people are killed in attacks on the Christian village Izghe. Terrorists targeted the village’s men, going door to door to find them.
- Feb. 15 – Another 90 Christians died in a similar attack on the town Gwosa.
- Feb. 25 – As many as 50 gunmen storm a government boarding school in Buni Yadi, Yobe State, killing 59 students. Many died inside a locked dormitory that the terrorists set on fire. Others were killed trying to escape.

Trend 3: Africa Becomes a Primary Growth Target

Islamists are consolidating gains and rebuilding capabilities to resume growing again in 2016-2017, especially in Africa.

Terrorism in Africa was largely confined to Algeria in 2001-2006, but it increased to nine countries with significant fatalities in the time period of 2014-2015. The increase will be led primarily by three Islamist organizations.

Boko Haram, an ISIS affiliate based in Nigeria, murdered 7,112 innocents in 2014, up from 1,729 in 2013. Al-Shabaab, an al-Qaida affiliate based in Somalia, murdered 1,782 in 2014, up from 739 in 2013. Al-Qaida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb killed 873 in 2014, an increase from 370 in 2013.



Trend 4: Western Interventions Inflamm Instability

Interventions by the U.S. and/or NATO or other Western coalitions inflamed the threat from Islamists, the IPT analysis finds. The five countries in which the U.S. involved itself militarily – Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Libya and Yemen – represent an outsized share of attacks and fatalities.

In 2014-2015, they accounted for 55 percent of all fatalities caused by radical Islamist terror, a statistic that remains nearly unchanged since 2012-2013 due to the overall increase in Islamist terror activity worldwide.



	2012-2013 (Average Annual)		2014-2015 (Average Annual)	
Country	Attacks	Fatalities	Attacks	Fatalities
Iraq	98	1,429	565	8,134
Afghanistan	573	2,684	760	4,207
Syria	42	634	116	2,715
Yemen	111	681	180	928
Libya	7	19	50	193
Total	831	5,447	1,671	16,177

Trend 5: Failed States Breed Islamist Terror

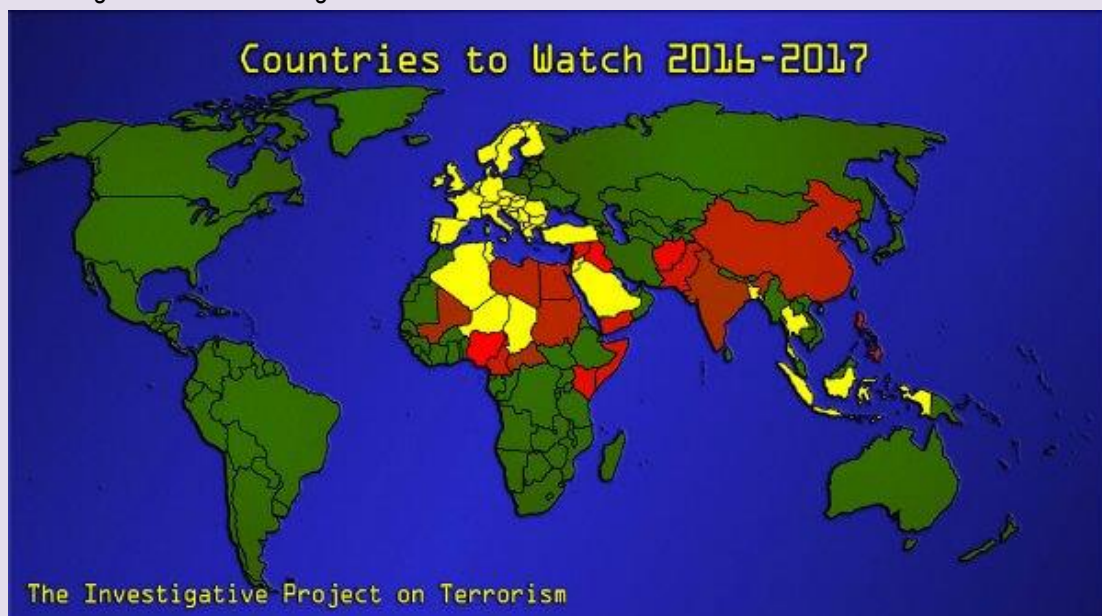
All five countries in the chart above can be considered failed states – those without functioning and effective central governments.

ISIS (responsible for 10,780 deaths since 2013) filled the vacuum in Iraq and Syria created by the lack of governance. Libya became a cesspool of extremism after NATO helped depose dictator Muammar Gaddafi. It was attractive enough that ISIS created a new caliphate along the Mediterranean with an estimated 6,500 fighters. From there, it exports weapons, jihadists and ideology to Europe, Africa and the Middle East. Saudi Arabia and Iran are currently fighting a deadly proxy war in Yemen.

Nigeria (9,207 killed since 2001) and Pakistan (3,175 killed since 2001) do not have failed central governments, but they are unable to extend stability or authority to significant areas within their boundaries.

IPT's Outlook for 2016-2017

Attacks will continue increasing in 2016-2017 in lethality and geography in the following countries in Africa, the Middle East and South and Southeast Asia, in addition to Europe. There may be isolated successes against jihadist groups, but there still is no effective, broad-based strategy for containing or defeating them. We are losing this war.



2016-2017 Countries to watch: Algeria, Bangladesh, Chad, Indonesia, Jordan, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey

The IPT predicts a dire 2016-2017 based upon its analysis. Until new and effective strategies develop, it offers the following insights into the near future.

The IPT predicts that the following trends will emerge or develop in 2016-2017 and beyond:



1. Europe's security systems will become more stressed and unable to respond to the rising challenges associated with the mass migration of refugees. Violence in Europe will increase in size and scope as Islamists exploit its nearly unregulated immigration system and Muslim enclaves such as Molenbeek in Brussels become more widespread.
2. The proliferation of terrorism in Africa will proceed unabated.
3. The Middle East will experience growing destabilization in Jordan, Turkey and Saudi Arabia as a result of regional conflicts spilling into their borders.
4. Thailand, the Philippines, India and Bangladesh will become more susceptible to an increase in attacks due to their perception as soft targets.

The data studied in this analysis was extrapolated in part from the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). (2015).

Islamic Extremism Is Not the Root Cause of Europe's Terror Problem

By Joshua Holland

Source: <http://www.thenation.com/article/islamic-extremism-is-not-the-cause-of-europes-terror-problem/>

Mar 30 – “If you tell a typical Frenchman that third-generation immigrants in the *banlieues* don't have running water—if you tell him that many are illiterate and have no hope of finding a job or being a productive member of French society—he simply won't believe you,” says Akbar Ahmed, a former Pakistani ambassador to the UK and now a professor of Islamic studies at American University in Washington, DC. “He'll insist that they're French citizens with the same opportunities as everyone else.”

Ahmed and his team are working on the first comprehensive, continent-wide study of Muslim communities in Europe. “Thirty percent of the population of Marseilles are immigrants,” he says. “They have no central mosque, they live in ghettos and most are unemployed. They don't have decent schools. And exactly the same conditions exist in Belgium. They have very poor education, very poor lifetime prospects. Social rejection is the norm—they are not considered part of the fabric of their society—and this is enough to drive any community up a wall.”

Up a wall, and for some, into the hands of radical Islamism.

The contrast between Muslim communities in Europe and the United States is stark and telling. American Muslims tend to be prosperous, well-educated and deeply invested in their country. As a group, they're politically active and comfortable living in a pluralistic society, and there's no evidence that they embrace extreme religious views or commit acts of violence at a higher rate than Christians or Jews.

But in Europe, life on the economic and social margins creates fertile ground for radicalization. None of this is news to sociologists, or unknown to counter-terrorism experts on either side of the Atlantic. But European politics constrain the conversation. Ultra-nationalist parties are on the rise across the continent, and political leaders who call for addressing the profound social problems that are fueling Europe's home-grown extremism are accused of being “soft on terrorism,” or “coddling extremists.”

The problem is “not the radicalization of Islam, but the Islamization of radicalism.” — Olivier Roy

As a result, there's a lot of focus on radical theology, and not enough on the conditions that allow it to take hold. European law enforcement, says Ahmed, “are analyzing this through the prism of theology. They're studying

the Koran for explanations, but what we're seeing is nothing more than disaffected, disenchanted, illiterate young people who are not adjusting to society. Look at these



young idiots who are blowing things up—they're looking at ISIS videos with a beer in one hand and a joint in the other.”

In a telling incident in 2014, two Britons who pleaded guilty to terror charges purchased a copy of *Islam for Dummies* before traveling to Syria to fight with ISIS. Olivier Roy, a professor at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy, and the author of *Globalized Islam*, writes that **what Europe faces today “isn't about religion or politics,” it's a “youth revolt.”** The problem, Roy argues, is “not the radicalization of Islam, but the Islamization of radicalism.”

The unemployment rate among Muslim immigrants in Europe is estimated to be as high as 40 percent, depending on the country. A report last year by the British think tank Demos found that Muslims in the UK “are disproportionately likely to experience poverty,” “lack the networks, social capital and soft skills that can facilitate access” to the middle class and face “discrimination in recruitment processes.”

In a 2010 study led by David Laitin, a Stanford University political scientist, fake résumés were submitted to French businesses with names that suggested the applicants were either Christian or Muslim immigrants from Senegal. Their qualifications were equal, but the resumes with a typically Christian name listed past work with a Catholic relief organization and the ones with the Muslim name cited similar experience with an Islamic charity. Even though both hypothetical applicants were immigrants from the same country, the ostensible Christian was two and a half times more likely to be called in for an interview. Laitin's team also **“found that second-generation Muslim households made about 400 euros less a month than ethnically and socioeconomically similar Christian families,”** according to a press release.

Even a tiny fraction of people within these marginalized communities can wreak havoc. Jean-Charles Brisard, a French terrorism expert and author of *The New Face of Al-Qaeda*, tells *The Nation* that Western Europe faces as many as 6,500 home-grown extremists out of a population that the [Pew Research Center estimates at 19 million](#). **In many European countries, prisons have basically become factories that**

manufacture extremists. There's a pipeline that begins with petty crimes in immigrant slums, runs through the judicial system, and leads to Islamist terror groups. This has been a serious problem for a long time. But Michael Birnbaum reported last year for *The Washington Post* that in France, despite the fact that there are “Osama bin Laden posters hanging on inmates' walls,” authorities are just beginning to tackle the issue, and their “efforts [remain] minuscule compared with the scope of the problem.”

And identifying individuals within these communities who may be at risk of radicalization isn't easy. Matt Apuzzo recently reported for [The New York Times](#) that, **“despite millions of dollars of government-sponsored research...there is still nothing close to a consensus on why someone becomes a terrorist.”**

Security failures have been a real problem—police and intelligence agencies have repeatedly failed to interrupt plots by individuals who were on law-enforcement's radars. “The security services are overwhelmed,” says Brisard. “All of the countries don't feel the same level of threat, and the European Union has been unable to provide the EU members with the tools they've been asking for for years.” Information sharing between national police forces continues to be a problem for the EU, and some member states are opposed to the idea of tighter border controls between European countries. Efforts to create a uniform database of air travelers' information and to track potential terrorists' electronic communications have been stymied for years because of concerns about civil liberties.

But for all of the focus on security, it's important to understand that improvements in this area alone won't solve the problem. There will never be enough personnel to surveil every disaffected young person who might pose a threat, and short of turning Europe into a massive police state, it's impossible to harden every soft target—today, troops surround the Louvre, but there aren't enough soldiers to guard every restaurant and disco in the EU. Brussels was under the highest state of alert when four individuals successfully attacked an airport, which are among the most secure targets in any country.



In an open society, this isn't a problem that can be solved with a European Patriot Act—a proposal that has little political support—which is all the more reason to address the problems by preventing radicalization before it starts. "The most fundamental question is, How do we create conditions for individuals not to be radicalized?" says Brisard. "How do we identify people at risk? The UK has been trying to implement some pilot programs locally, but unfortunately, on this key issue, these small local programs have not been reproduced at the national level." Most of those programs are symbolic. Interfaith leaders visit community centers in marginalized communities and organize sporting events for young people. They promise greater cooperation between

officials and local community leaders, take some pictures, and then go home.

For Akbar Ahmed and others, broken communities are the source of the problem, and only by healing them can the problem be solved. ISIS is [hemorrhaging territory](#) in Iraq and Syria, and is likely to be defeated in the coming years, but Europe will continue to suffer serious terror attacks until its elites face up to what's causing a small but deadly fraction of its citizens to lash out with violence. "When we talk of long-term solutions, that means education, jobs and investing in the communities," he says. "And without those long-term solutions, I fear the situation is only going to get worse."

Joshua Holland is a contributor to The Nation and a fellow with [The Nation Institute](#). He's also the host of [Politics and Reality Radio](#).

Lithuania's intelligence agency is concerned that migration and terrorism are distracting Western countries from Russia's "aggressive policies" toward its neighbors.

Source: <http://www.therepublic.com/view/story/418bf00c1fcb4a5e80b2c7378a40a56d/EU--Lithuania-Security-Report>



Mar 30 – **Lithuania's intelligence agency is concerned that migration and terrorism are distracting Western countries from Russia's "aggressive policies" toward its neighbors.**

In its annual report Wednesday, the State Security Department said Russia continues to pose a political and military threat to Lithuania, which broke away from the Soviet Union in 1991.

The report said Russia's military would need 24-48 hours to amass enough forces "to start military actions against Baltic states."

The agency said the migration crisis is dangerous because it's hurting the unity of the European Union and **"will distract attention of Western countries and organizations from the security situation in Eastern Europe."**

In order to understand the above point of view:

1944-1991

After the retreat of the German armed forces, the Soviets re-established the annexation of Lithuania in 1944. Under border changes promulgated at the Potsdam Conference in 1945, the former German Memelland, with its Baltic port Memel (Lithuanian: Klaipėda), was again transferred to Lithuania, or as it was after 1945 the Lithuanian SSR. Most German residents of the area had fled in the final months of World War II.



The Soviets engaged in massive deportations of Lithuanians to Siberia, complete nationalisation and collectivisation and general sovietization of everyday life. From 1944 to 1952 approximately 100,000 Lithuanian partisans fought a guerrilla war against the Soviet system. An estimated 30,000 partisans and their supporters were killed, and many more were arrested and deported to Siberian gulags. It is estimated that Lithuania lost 780,000 people during World War II.

The advent of *perestroika* and *glasnost* in the late 1980s allowed the establishment of Sąjūdis, an anti-Communist independence movement. After a landslide victory in elections to the Supreme Soviet, members of Sąjūdis proclaimed Lithuania's independence on 11 March 1990, becoming the first Soviet republic to do so. The Soviet Union attempted to suppress the secession by imposing an economic blockade. Soviet troops attacked the Vilnius TV Tower, killing 14 Lithuanian civilians and wounding 600 others on the night of 13 January 1991 (January Events). On 31 July 1991 Soviet paramilitaries killed seven Lithuanian border guards on the Belarusian border in what became known as the Medininkai Massacre.

On 4 February 1991, Iceland became the first country to recognise Lithuania's independence. After the Soviet August Coup, independent Lithuania received wide official recognition and joined the United Nations on 17 September 1991.

1991–present

The last Soviet troops left Lithuania on 31 August 1993 – even earlier than they departed from East Germany. Lithuania, seeking closer ties with the West, applied for NATO membership in 1994. After a transition from a planned economy to a free market one, Lithuania became a full member of NATO and the European Union in the spring of 2004 and a member of the Schengen Agreement on 21 December 2007.

The Islamic State in Europe: Terrorists Without Borders, Counterterrorists With All Borders

By Clint Watts

Source: <http://warontherocks.com/2016/03/the-islamic-state-in-europe-terrorists-without-borders-counterterrorists-with-all-borders/>

Mar 29 – Belgian investigators have taken a beating since failing to disrupt the Brussels bombings last week. They took more than four months to locate Salah Abdeslam in the very neighborhood he grew up in. Belgian investigators also missed the network's talented bomb maker, Najim Laachraoui, who escaped arrest on Friday only to resurface the following Tuesday at the Brussels airport where he and one other terrorist detonated suicide belts. Three others executed suicide bombings in the Maelbeek subway station almost simultaneously. The attacks, initiated so quickly after the arrest of Abdeslam, have revealed Belgium has the inability to handle an expansive terrorism menace in its borders. Across Europe, they are not alone in this deficiency.

Belgium, like most other European countries, suffers from a counterterrorism capacity problem. Far too many European passport holders trotted off to the Islamic

State's ranks in Syria and Iraq in recent years. They now return emboldened by the Islamic State's well-rooted facilitation network and empowered by years of combat experience. This deadly combination has and most assuredly will continue to generate terrorist attacks directed and inspired by the Islamic State.

This should not come as a surprise to anyone. European security services have long been concerned (although perhaps not concerned enough) about foreign jihadist fighters returning home to disenfranchised diaspora communities that turn a blind eye to their nefarious activities. While Europe's counterterrorism capacity has been stretched, failing to anticipate the growth of the Islamic State in Europe ultimately speaks to incompetence. Syria's foreign fighter inflows and the resulting creation of sophisticated and capable terrorist networks was not probable, it was inevitable. Failing



to anticipate and prepare for this eventuality has left Europe vulnerable to a trend that could have been avoided had intelligence been shared and a united front created across the Union.

Individually, certain European countries like the United Kingdom, France, and Germany have vast counterterrorism experience and effective integration of intelligence and law enforcement. As a whole, however, the European Union's counterterrorism efforts are a patchwork of bureaucracies, capabilities, and regulations. Smaller countries have free ridden for years on the enforcement efforts of larger states. The Islamic State's returning foreign fighter networks exploited the seams of the European Union, striking the continent where it is weakest. Belgium, like other smaller countries

already known: European countries don't share intelligence nor do they communicate insights as quickly as their terrorist adversaries. Europol and Interpol do this to an extent, but neither of them has the authority or the resulting investigative teeth to traverse Europe's complex web of borders and regulations and impede terrorists operating without impediment.

The Islamic State claims to have mobilized as many as 400 operatives on the European continent. The pace of attacks suggests future operations will be both likely and soon. Instead of slowly redesigning a counterterrorism bureaucracy, the European Union should immediately start a task force that narrowly focuses on the threat of the Islamic State to Europe. In situations like today's European



in Europe such as Denmark and the Netherlands, has witnessed large migrations of fighters to Syria and Iraq. These countries don't have sizeable intelligence organizations or sufficient investigative capacity to pursue experienced Islamic State networks slipping across borders and communicating surreptitiously.

What should Europe do to erase the gap between counterterrorists and terrorists?

The natural government response to tragedies like Brussels is to call for commissions to investigate intelligence failures and subsequently redesign large bureaucracies. Reshaping ineffective bureaucracies will take years. Success in this area might only come once the Islamic State phenomenon is already fading. Commissions take years to formulate results and their findings will reveal what is

Union, task forces prove more effective than bureaucracies. If authorized, they can organize resources quickly around prescient issues, assign a mission and responsibility to a single entity, provide top cover to investigators hopping jurisdictions, facilitate sharing of critical intelligence and top capabilities in areas that were previously lacking, overcome linguistic challenges and articulate a clear chain-of-command for decision-making. A European task force, in many ways, will mirror the structure of the Islamic State's network seeking to match their strengths and shore up the many weaknesses of counterterrorists. The U.S. military's Joint Special Operations Command and the FBI's steadily improving Joint Terrorism Task Forces provide two recent examples of their benefits during times of crisis, compared to



lumbering interagency or interstate bureaucracies.

Properly shaping a European counterterrorism task force against the Islamic State will be key in avoiding cultural resistance, both bureaucratic and country specific, to such an immediate change. Objectives should be clearly stated in the task force's mandate: stop any immediate Islamic State attacks, destroy Islamic State facilitation, and support networks and disrupt recruitment of homegrown extremists into the Islamic State's ranks. The task force should have a limited duration, with the option to extend it as needed should the threat of the Islamic State persist. Properly staffing the task force will be essential and should seek to integrate Europe's top counterterrorism investigative capacity with local capabilities best suited for interdicting terrorists in vulnerable communities. For example, the task force might be led by a United Kingdom veteran law enforcement official whose deputy comes a capable intelligence service in a smaller country, possibly the Netherlands for example. The task force would then integrate aggressive investigative teams, pairing those with robust access to intelligence, from say France, Germany, or hotspot Turkey, with those currently overcapacity at the local level, namely Belgium. The European Union should finance the task force collectively, reminding all European countries, especially those not yet affected by Islamic State violence, that collective work will prevent them from being the next target. Countries with aggressive counterterrorism postures might pitch in more resources, as the task force would incentivize their efforts to get needed intelligence in previously denied European neighborhoods.

A successfully executed European task force against the Islamic State will ultimately provide the foundation for the enduring counterterrorism bureaucracy Europe needs to disrupt the Islamic State and any terrorist networks in the future. The task force, working together aggressively in pursuing Islamic State foreign fighters returning home, will identify and close current gaps in intelligence sharing and pinpoint where much needed human intelligence needs to be generated. For

example, some European countries know of diaspora safe havens residing in neighboring countries, such as France in the case of Molenbeek, but lack the authority and access to appropriately generate human intelligence amongst an ally's populace. A task force can help eliminate this deficiency.

Identifying these intelligence gaps will also determine where tagging and tracking technologies should be implemented to maintain less intrusive surveillance along terrorists' preferred avenues of approach into and throughout Europe. Currently, European countries host a technical surveillance of a variety of types and sophistication. Integration of these systems through a task force would greatly increase information sharing, interdiction and response. A task force will provide the opportunity for experimentation in tactics and techniques and lay the grounds for appropriate legislation and regulation regarding investigative techniques, intelligence sharing, and the balance between security and privacy. Policy born of experience rather than theory almost always bears the best results for its constituents and the right capabilities for its practitioners.

Essential in application of a European task force against the Islamic State is speed.

Europe seems slow to respond and unlikely to mobilize quickly despite watching the Charlie Hebdo and Kosher Market attacks in Paris more than a year ago, the Paris attacks this past November and now the Brussels attacks, which reporting suggests has connections to five countries.

The attitude of European countries appears to be, "terrorism is not my problem until it is my problem." Sadly, the Islamic State in Europe is a problem more than four years in the making. The terror group threatens the continent collectively and for any European nation home to foreign fighters lucky enough to be spared violence thus far, it's a matter of when, not if, the terrorists in their midst will affect them.

Lacking immediate counterterrorism action on a wide scale, Paris and Brussels will ultimately be the start rather than the end of the Islamic State's campaign of European terror.

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at The George Washington University. Prior to his current work as a security consultant, Clint served as a U.S. Army infantry officer, a FBI Special Agent on a Joint Terrorism Task Force and as the Executive Officer of the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point.

Is the International Community Out of Ideas to Combat Terrorism?

By Colum Lynch and John Hudson

Source: <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/03/30/is-the-international-community-out-of-ideas-to-combat-terrorism/>



Mar 30 – A slew of Islamic State attacks, from Paris to Turkey to Brussels, is shaking confidence in the international community's approach to combating terrorism and has prompted a new look at what critics call a failing strategy that relies too heavily on law enforcement, intelligence gathering, and military operations — and not enough on winning hearts and minds.

It has been nearly 18 years since the United Nations was first asked to support the budding U.S. war on terror with a Security Council resolution calling on states to cooperate in pursuing those behind the Aug. 7, 1998, attacks on two U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.

Following the 9/11 attacks, the U.N. built an industry of counterterrorism panels and committees that has documented the spread of militant organizations across Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. The world body has pressed countries to rewrite laws, share intelligence, and criminalize terrorism.

But extremist violence continues to bedevil the big powers, prompting a major rethink of counterterrorism priorities.

"Here we are, 18 years later, with pretty much the same problem and no really strong

strategic approach for dealing with it," Richard Barrett, a former director of global counterterrorism for the British Secret Intelligence Service, or MI6, who headed U.N. investigations into al Qaeda, told Foreign Policy. "It's very much about bombing and arresting rather than understanding why this is happening and what can be done to try to address that."

The problem has become so pronounced that even the U.N.'s most senior leaders are sounding the alarm.

"Over the past two decades, the international community has sought to address violent extremism primarily within the context of security-based counter-terrorism measures adopted in response to the threat posed by Al-Qaida and its affiliated groups," U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon wrote in a Dec. 24 report titled "Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism."

"However, with the emergence of a new generation of groups, there is a growing international consensus that such counter-terrorism measures have not been sufficient to prevent the spread of violent extremism," Ban wrote.



Ryan Greer, a former advisor at the U.S. State Department's Counterterrorism Bureau, agreed that a militarized response to terrorism has limits.

"There are too many returning foreign fighters and ISIL supporters to arrest and kill our way out of this, particularly as new recruits join each day," Greer told Foreign Policy. "We need to better understand the root causes of support to ISIL and prevent people from radicalizing and reintegrate returning fighters who are not dangerous."

One challenge is settling on exactly what the United States and its allies should be fighting. In February 2015, the Obama administration hosted a summit on countering violent extremism. But the phrase remains an "elusive concept," even within the borders of Europe, where the United Kingdom, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark have different definitions of what constitutes violent extremism, according to Ben Emmerson, the U.N. special rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism.

In a Feb. 22 report, Emmerson said the lack of an internationally recognized definition for violent extremism or terrorism has created what he called a "well-founded concern" that authoritarian states could use the terms to justify targeting "members of religious minorities, civil society, human rights defenders, peaceful separatist and indigenous groups and members of political opposition parties."

"You don't want to make life easier for dictators," said François Heisbourg, a former French diplomat who serves as a special advisor at the Foundation for Strategic Research in Paris. The lack of a definition, he added, "does make life easier for dictators. It enables them to define those terms."

There is also disagreement over what social, economic, or psychological forces drive individuals into a life of terrorism.

Shortly after 9/11, then-President George W. Bush and other world leaders proclaimed at a summit on poverty in Monterrey, Mexico, that it is essential to eradicate poverty to defeat terrorism. Heisbourg, by contrast, cast doubt on that conclusion: "Were the 9/11 terrorists primarily defined by the fact that they were poor?" he said. "Most of them were not."

Regardless of the cause of violent extremism, the national reflex for most governments struck by terrorists is to hit back.

Over the last year, and since attacks in Paris and Brussels, French and Belgian authorities have stepped up their bombing campaigns against the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq while pressing for tighter European border controls, more intelligence sharing, and arrests of suspected accomplices. Following the March 22 bombings in Brussels, Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel confirmed plans to resume F-16 airstrikes on Islamic State targets as a part of the U.S.-led coalition against the extremist group.

While counterterrorism experts have suggested ways Europe can more effectively share critical information, there's a growing realization in New York that the U.N. can only do so much. European powers say the U.N. Security Council has already given member states sweeping powers to crack down on terrorism. What is missing is the resolve to exercise those powers.

"It's hard to imagine what more can be done in terms of a resolution," Barrett said. "I think all the tools have been unpacked, laid out, ready to use. It's about getting on with it."

That's not to say there aren't important improvements to be made in Europe, where the lack of political will to share intelligence on the movement of suspected Islamic State militants has been glaring.

In 2004, following the Madrid train bombings that killed 192 people, the EU created a counterterrorism coordinator position to foster cohesion among member states. But the coordinator's office "doesn't have any authority," Eric Rosand, a former State Department official who specialized in counterterrorism, told FP last week. "He has a grand title, and he produces wonderful reports. But he has a limited mandate and no resources."

The current coordinator, Belgian diplomat Gilles de Kerchove, issued a [March 1 report](#) warning that "further urgent improvements to information sharing and border security are necessary" — especially related to the use of a common database for DNA, fingerprints, and car license plates for suspected terrorists. The report also noted governments aren't even using a separate



database to help with ongoing prosecutions and convictions of suspected extremists. But those are fixes that don't involve U.N. action.

In theory, the U.N. has the power to sanction countries that fail to take steps to cooperate on intelligence sharing. But the world body virtually never does. The language of U.N. resolutions calling for such action is more "aspirational than real world," Heisbourg said.

And in practice, states jealously guard the secrets their security agencies dig up; Heisbourg cited the prominent failures by the CIA and FBI to routinely share intelligence before 9/11. "I don't think the U.S. intelligence community would be delighted to have to share on a systematic basis all its product" with other countries, he said. "Intelligence is not shared; it is traded."

Recent revelations that the Islamic State showed signs of planning attacks on Europe as far back as 2014, as first reported by the New

York Times, have heightened criticisms of Western intelligence agencies. The newspaper's report, based on court proceedings, wiretaps, and interrogation transcripts, found that local authorities in Europe repeatedly shrugged off a series of uncovered plots by Islamic extremists as "isolated or random acts" and downplayed the connections to the Islamic State.

Yet the ability of intelligence services — no matter how competent they are — to never miss a threat is often overestimated, some experts said.

"The 'this was an intelligence failure' line is almost always a bit of a red herring," said Greer, who is currently CEO of Vasa Strategies, which consults on countering violent extremism. "Would we like to know everything all the time? Sure. But we won't."

"It's really hard to collect intelligence in a war zone where your military is not on the ground," he added.

Colum Lynch is Foreign Policy's award-winning U.N.-based senior diplomatic reporter. Lynch previously wrote Foreign Policy's Turtle Bay blog, for which he was awarded the 2011 National Magazine Award for best reporting in digital media. He is also a recipient of the 2013 Elizabeth Neuffer Memorial Silver Prize for his coverage of the United Nations.

John Hudson is a senior reporter at Foreign Policy and co-author of the magazine's "The Cable" blog where he reports on diplomacy and U.S. national security issues. Prior to joining FP, John covered politics and global affairs for The Atlantic magazine's news blog, The Atlantic Wire. In 2008, he covered the August War between Russia and Georgia from Tbilisi and the breakaway region of Abkhazia. Over the years, he's dug up resignation-causing FEC documents; unmasked infamous Internet trolls; exposed bizarre Photoshopping by government media; and revealed the ins and outs of Washington's foreign policy machine. He's appeared on CNN, MSNBC, BBC, C-SPAN, Fox News radio and other broadcast outlets.

Why terrorists do what extremists think

By Abdulrahman al-Rashed

Source: <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/views/news/middle-east/2016/03/29/Why-terrorists-do-what-extremists-think.html>

Mar 30 – It is naïve to accuse writers and commentators of spreading local narratives about Islamist extremism beyond borders and of inciting people against their own religion.

What's being written and spoken about can be interpreted very easily. The world does not need local translators or writers or inciters to understand what is going on as the tools available for gathering and monitoring information and analyzing them are beyond

imagination. More importantly, the truth is clear to everyone: terrorists do what extremists think. During its period of influence, al-Qaeda released publications urging violence and detailed a manifesto of governance. Its theorists rooted for violence based on their vision. Academic and security apparatuses no longer need to read between the lines or analyze phone calls to decode how extremists think. They need to



know what the next target is as the ideology is the same no matter how different these organizations and their names are.

When al-Qaeda emerged, there was controversy over the real motives behind terrorism and questions were asked as to what extremist ideology is behind terrorism. Terrorists are now getting more and more violent. It is now evident that extremism leads to violence and this is no longer a mere theory or conclusion by a researcher who is ignorant of the language and religion.

Are there parties spreading extremist ideology to serve their political aims? Of course, and they are mainly political groups who use extremists to target their local or foreign rivals. This is what is happening in Egypt's Sinai and in Syria.

Are there parties exploiting extremist organizations to serve their own objectives? Of course, there are. Iran is the best example; its regime has managed to use extremist organizations for 30 years in Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine, and most recently, in Yemen.

Those adopting an extremist ideology, or defending it, do not understand that they are partners of politically violent groups like the ISIS and al-Qaeda. They agree with them on several principles even though they don't support their political plans. Those propagating extremism in this politically tense atmosphere are tools for the Tehran regime. Extremists serve Iran's interests because they are putting their countries within the range of the world's cannons.

For example, rivals accuse each other of being the source of extremist ideology and justify such statements by referring to extremist practices. Let's not forget that Iran was the party that formulated the political rhetoric that's currently spread among Islamists and which is about global arrogance and religiously and politically fighting it.

Cascading effect

Regardless of political exploitations which are usually common in wars, the new threat comes from the complications caused by the spread of extremism, which now threatens us and threatens Muslim communities in the West. Extremist ideology that the terrorists are acting upon is proving to be a major threat to Muslim

governments and communities and their relations.

Unless we admit the presence and spread of extremism the situation will continue to worsen and we will find ourselves clashing with other victims. Some theorists try to justify terrorism by putting religion and governments at the forefront. They do this either to protect themselves or to involve them in disputes raised by them. This nothing to do with Muslims in general who end up paying the price of violence taking place in Lahore, ar-Raqqah or Brussels.

Extremists have exhausted the justifications they have used over the years to support terrorists. In the beginning, violence was justified because of the American bases in Saudi Arabia. Then they used Afghanistan to defend al-Qaeda and Taliban. Then they moved on to defending Saddam Hussein in Iraq despite his Baathist regime. After the Americans exited Iraq, those justifying terrorism started using the excuse that Muslims are being persecuted in the West. All that while they ignored acts of terrorism targeting Muslims in Syria, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Morocco.

The rise of religious extremism has nothing to do with social justice or political injustice. It represents an ideological project that aims to seize control and neutralize others. This is why when an organization commits a crime on the basis of an extremist ideology, the latter must also pay the price and the rest of the Muslims must not be expected to defend it or cover for it.

We must separate the extremists from among us, between extremists and the rest of Muslims and between extremists and Islam. We must reject their statements that the West opposes Islam or Sunnis or Saudis. Truth is that the West opposes them (extremists) and blames them for what is happening and warns against them.

Extremists have become more dangerous than terrorists even as terrorism has escalated across the world. ISIS defends itself and sacrifices its fighters while extremists want a suicide attack seeking to target everyone.



Abdulrahman al-Rashed is the former General Manager of Al Arabiya News Channel. A veteran and internationally acclaimed journalist, he is a former editor-in-chief of the London-based leading Arab daily Asharq al-Awsat, where he still regularly writes a political column. He has also served as the editor of Asharq al-Awsat's sister publication, al-Majalla. Throughout his career, Rashed has interviewed several world leaders, with his articles garnering worldwide recognition, and he has successfully led Al Arabiya to the highly regarded, thriving and influential position it is in today.

Pirates hijack ship in Philippines, take several hostages

Source <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/pirates-hijack-ship-in-philippines-take-several-hostages/>

Mar 30 – **Indonesia said Tuesday that 10 of its citizens are being held hostage in the Philippines after their ship was hijacked in the often-insecure border region between the two countries.**

The Foreign Ministry said in a statement that the owner of the hijacked tug boat and coal barge has received two telephone calls, purportedly from the militant group Abu Sayyaf, demanding a ransom.

It said it was unclear when the incident occurred but that the ship owner was first contacted on Saturday. The ministry referred to the hostage-takers as pirates.

Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi told a news conference that she is working with Indonesian and Philippine officials to coordinate a rescue.

"Our priority is the safety of 10 Indonesian nationals who are now still in the hands of the hostage-takers," she said.

Abu Sayyaf, which is on U.S. and Philippine lists of terrorist organizations, is notorious for bombings, extortions and kidnappings for ransom in the volatile south of the Philippines. It has been weakened by years of U.S.-backed Philippine offensives but remains a security threat.

If the Abu Sayyaf is confirmed responsible, the number of hostages would be among the largest it has seized since 2001.

In the Philippines, army Maj. Gen. Demy Tejares said troops were trying to verify reports that the Indonesians were taken to the southern province of Sulu and that an Abu Sayyaf commander notorious for ransom kidnappings, Alhabsi Misaya, was involved.

"There is information pointing to Sulu as the destination so we're monitoring it," Tejares said of the predominantly Muslim province 590 miles (950 kilometers) south of Manila, where several other kidnapping victims are believed to be held by Abu Sayyaf militants.

Philippine military chief Gen. Hernando Iriberry flew to Sulu on Monday to meet commanders and their troops involved in efforts to locate the Indonesians.



The tug, Brahma 12, and the Anand 12 barge were going from Sungai Putting in Kalimantan, which is the Indonesian part of Borneo island, to Batangas province, south of the Philippine capital.

The Facebook page of the Brahma 12's captain, Peter Tonsen Barahama, shows smiling photos of him and the crew on the vessel preparing for the voyage and good luck wishes from friends commenting on a port clearance document he posted. The document shows the vessel and its barge left a port in southern Kalimantan on March 15.

A Philippine police report said a villager sighted an unmanned boat marked "Brahma 12" on Saturday drifting in waters off Languyan town in the southernmost Philippine province of Tawi Tawi, near Sulu, and the vessel was taken by police to a Languyan wharf.

Indonesia's Foreign Ministry said it believes the barge, carrying about 7,000 tons of coal, is still under



the control of the hostage-takers.

Philippine security officials suspect the Abu Sayyaf was responsible for last year's abductions of two Canadians, a Norwegian and a Filipino woman from a marina on southern Samal Island. The victims are believed to be held in the jungles of southern Sulu province.

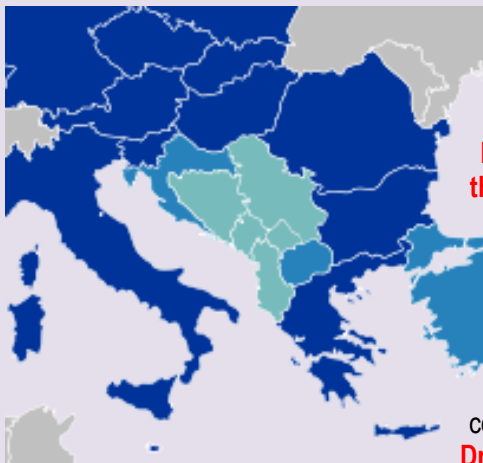
In a recent video posted on a Facebook account linked to the militants, they threatened to kill the hostages unless a large ransom is

paid by April 8. The Philippine military said the government continues to observe a no-ransom policy.

Indonesia has been helping the Philippines forge a peace agreement with Filipino Muslim rebels by sending soldiers to join an international group that helps monitor government and rebel adherence to a cease-fire.

Scale of Balkan Jihadist Extremism 'Underestimated'

Source: <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/scale-of-balkan-jihadist-extremism-underestimated--03-29-2016>



Mar 30 – Some have told the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network, BIRN, that this puts those states with significant numbers of jihadists at risk of possible attacks.

Dr Fabian Zhilla, a cybercrime expert and professor at the Canadian Institute of Technology in Tirana, says a significant number of young Albanians, mostly those with little religious knowledge, continue to access ISIS propaganda via popular social media networks such as Facebook.

"ISIS has made permanent efforts to spread a sort of propaganda online and their audience is mostly comprised of individuals supporting violent acts," he warns.

Dr Mimoza Xharo, a security expert and academic who has worked with the Albanian intelligence community for more than 20 years, also believes the scale of the problem is underestimated, noting there was an uptick in sharing violent extremist material via social networks immediately after the Paris attacks last November.

She describes young Albanians with little mainstream religious education who actively access and share violent propaganda as "potential fighters in the shadows".

"Albania is threatened by the boom in online supporters [of violent extremism] who tomorrow might act as lone wolves," she says.

In Bosnia, Uros Pena, deputy director of Bosnia's Directorate for the Coordination of Police Bodies, says: "We don't even know how big this problem of terrorism and radicalisation is."

Pena warns the problem cannot be tackled or monitored effectively until the scale is known. "And that means going back to basics, to community policing, being among the people, which we don't do anymore," he says.

Populist German party calling for banning construction, operation of mosques

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160330-populist-german-party-calling-for-banning-construction-operation-of-mosques>

Mar 30 – German media group RedaktionsNetzwerk Deutschland (RND) reported on Wednesday that a new 45-page draft policy proposal, to be debated at the end of April at the annual conference of the AfD (*Alternative für Deutschland*), a populist, anti-immigration party which has been gaining in the polls, would prohibit the "construction and operation of mosques."



Alternative für Deutschland

The *Local* reports that the policy draft, titled “Courage to take responsibility,” states that “Islam does not belong to Germany.” Mosques are conducive “not only to common prayer, but also to the spread of Islamic teachings directed towards the removal of our legal order,” the draft says.

The Koran also permits “lies and deception,” the proposal claims, adding that Islam “has already arrived at its declared path to world domination in 57 out 190 countries.”

According to the AfD proposal, when the authors of Germany’s Constitution outlined freedom of religion in Article 4, they would not have taken into consideration that a religion could incite crime and strive for “world domination.”

The RND notes that the proposal was drafted by right-wing elements within the AfD, which call themselves “The Wing” (*Der Flügel*). According to the group’s Web site derfluegel.de, members of The Wing include AfD leaders in several German states, among them Saxony-Anhalt, Thuringia, Brandenburg, and Saxony.

Bavarian AfD state leader Petr Bystron, said he rejected the proposed draft, saying the policy was proposed by party members who did not agree with the party’s leadership.



French government abandons plan to strip terrorists of French citizenship

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160330-french-government-abandons-plan-to-strip-terrorists-of-french-citizenship>



Mar 30 – **The French government has decided to abandon plans to strip convicted terrorists with dual nationality of their French citizenship and deport them.**

The controversial proposal, which was to be added to France’s constitution, had divided Francois Hollande’s governing Socialist Party and was opposed by the center-right opposition.

In December, justice minister Christiane Taubira resigned in opposition to the measure, tweeting afterward: “Sometimes to resist is to stay. Sometimes to resist is to leave.”

The *Local* reports that the constitutional change was proposed in the wake of the 13 November terrorist attacks in Paris which left 130 dead and hundreds injured.

The nationality clause was not the only proposed constitutional change which the government initially proposed and then was forced to abandon in the face of stiff opposition. Hollande also wanted to make the state of emergency, which gives the police



special powers and which was imposed for three months after the November attacks, a permanent feature of the constitution.

Hollande, after meeting last Thursday with the heads of both houses of the French parliament, announced that his government would not push for a vote on the proposal.

"A compromise appears out of reach," Hollande said. He sought to blame the main opposition party, Les Républicains, led by former president Nicolas Sarkozy.

"I also note that a section of the opposition is hostile to any review of the constitution. It's an attitude I deeply regret," Hollande added.

Hollande stressed that he would not deviate from commitments to "ensure the security of our country."

Changes to France's constitution must be approved by three-fifths of French MPs and senators. A special session of both houses were to convene in Versailles next month to vote on the issue, but the government announced that the special session has not been canceled.



French law forbids stripping French nationals of their citizenship if it would leave them stateless, but those who have acquired French citizenship and are convicted of treason or terrorism can lose it. **Since 1996, the measure has been applied only to thirteen naturalized people with terrorism convictions.** The government's proposal would have expanded the punitive measure to individuals with dual nationality who were born in France.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Big Nations; Small Leaders! C'est la vie!

ISIS Threatens Germany, Calls For Attack On International Airport

Source: <http://www.vocativ.com/news/303858/isis-threatens-germany-calls-for-attack-international-airport/>

Mar 31 – **The Islamic State threatened Germany and called for an attack on the international airport in Cologne just days after deadly attacks struck an airport and a subway station in Brussels.**

An official ISIS media wing, al-Furat, launched the campaign late on Wednesday, distributing photoshopped images showing the German chancellor's office engulfed in flames and an ISIS fighter standing in front of the Cologne Bonn Airport in western Germany, Vocativ's deep web analysts discovered.



The picture of the airport includes a call for violence: “Do what your brothers in Belgium did!” it says, in a message to ISIS loyalists. The image of the chancellor’s office shows a masked militant, a tank and an ISIS flag waving next to the building. “Germany is a battlefield,” it declares. Supporters of the terror group shared the images across Twitter and on the messaging app Telegram with the hashtag [#KhilafahDE](#), or “#CaliphateGermany.”



Translation: *Germany is a battlefield*



Translation: *Do what your brothers in Belgium did!*



Al-Furat, which was established last year, has published propaganda in Russian and German. Its call for attacks in Germany follow deadly violence in Belgium's capital last week for which the Islamic State claimed responsibility.

As part of the campaign, the media wing also published pictures showing a beheading, a German flag on fire and bloody faces of children, seemingly in an effort to show how children have been injured in U.S.-led coalition airstrikes.

Since the terror attacks in Brussels, ISIS has released at least four videos threatening the West with more attacks, declaring we're in an "an era of war" and announcing that the Brussels violence was an act of revenge for airstrikes against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

Do Radicalized Islamic Communities Exist in the U.S.?

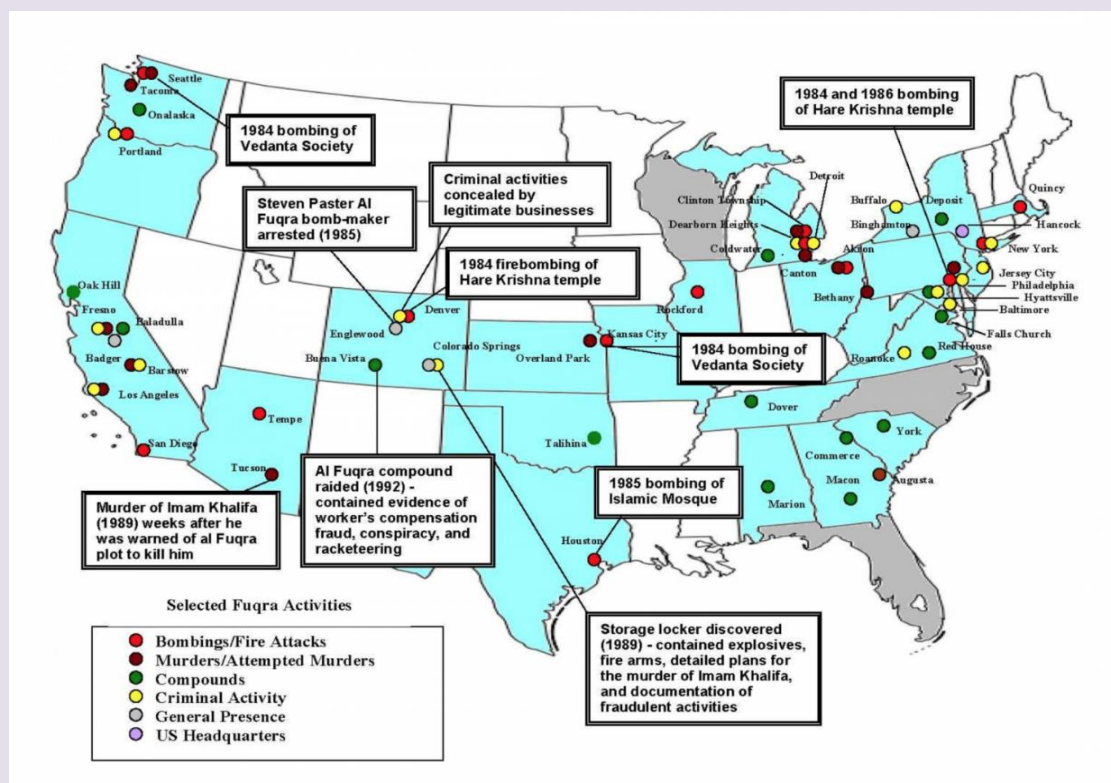
Source: <https://www.clarionproject.org/analysis/do-radicalized-islamic-communities-exit-us>



Mar 31 – **GOP presidential candidate Senator Ted Cruz's call for patrolling of Muslim communities with signs of extremism is being bashed as pandering to anti-Muslim voters, with critics saying there aren't even Islamist communities in the U.S. to begin with.**

They are wrong. They exist — and newly-published documents show that they've boasted of enforcing Islamic sharia law, even going so far as to whip children.

Jamaat ul-Fuqra, a Pakistani militant group that has rebranded itself as Muslims of the Americas, says it has 22 "Islamic villages" in the U.S. Its "Islamberg" headquarters in New York is the most well-known. The *Clarion Project* identified one village in Texas in 2014 and the group mentioned others, including one in Alaska during a frivolous lawsuit it filed against a prominent critic.

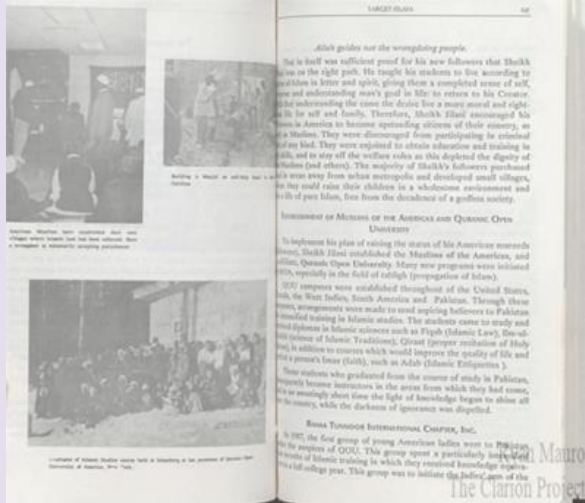


Fuqra's 1994 book, *Target Islam: Exposing the Malicious Conspiracy of the Zionists Against the World of Islam and Prominent Muslim Leaders*, explains that its establishment of "villages" in the U.S. since 1980 is part of a jihad against a Satanic-Jewish-Communist conspiracy that puppeteers the U.S. government.

They have a cultish devotion to their extremist leader in Pakistan, Sheikh Gilani, who they believe is in constant contact with Allah and the Prophet Mohammed and a miracle worker chosen by Allah to lead Islam to victory.

Of course, they state they are against criminality and terrorism (despite being extensively engaged in it) and tout a twisted version of patriotism. Part of the plan is ensuring the spiritual purity of the Fuqra/MOA members by enforcing *sharia* law in their villages.

"The majority of the Sheikh's [American] followers purchased land in areas away from urban metropolis and developed small villages, where they could raise their children in a wholesome environment and live a life of pure Islam, free from the decadence of a godless society," their book states.



Small picture to the left of the print shows a whipping being prepared.

That sounds innocent enough until you look at the picture above. The caption reads, "American Muslims have established their own villages where Islamic Law has been enforced. Here a wrongdoer is voluntarily accepting punishment." The unclear picture shows a man sitting on a chair, with his back facing a group of Muslims in prayer as a man stands over him. The image is identical to what a former Fuqra member described to the *Clarion Project* as the procedure for brutal whippings.

An issue of the group's newspaper, *the Islamic Chronicle*, from the 1980s has an article about

its purchases of land in America and explains: "Sheikh Jilani explained that this will be a territory to set-up a model for Jammah for the practice in its simple and austere manner under the Shariat (Law)..."

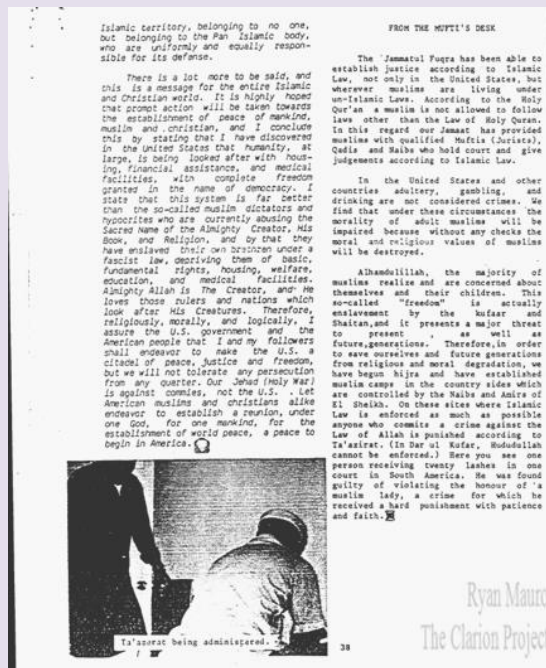
Taazarat being administered

Another issue, this one from 1983, (above) has a picture of a man bent over as a man stands over him apparently about to strike him. The caption reads, "Ta'azerat being administered." The article next to the picture explains that enforcement of *sharia* law in the villages in America is necessary to protect Muslims from falling into legal sins like gambling, adultery and alcohol consumption.

"The Jammatul Fuqra has been able to establish justice according to Islamic Law, not only in the United States, but wherever Muslims are living under un-Islamic laws. According to the Holy Q'uran, a Muslim is not allowed to follow laws other than the law of the Holy Qu'ran...This so-called 'freedom' is actually enslavement by the kufaar [non-Muslims] and Shaitan [Satan]..."

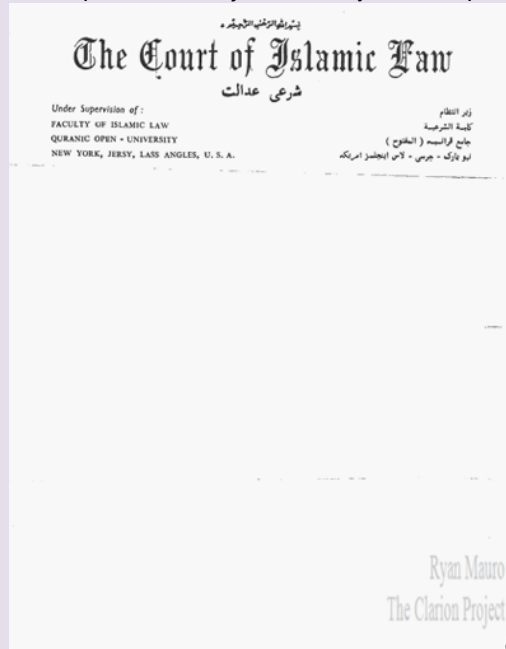
It continues:

"On these sites where Islamic Law is enforced as much as possible, anyone who commits a crime against the Law of Allah is punished according to Ta'azerat....Here you see one person receiving twenty lashes in one [Sharia] court in South America. He was found guilty



of violating the honor of a Muslim lady, a crime for which he received a hard punishment with patience and faith."

The article says that the *hudud* punishments, such as execution and severing of hands and feet, cannot be enforced in *kuffar* (infidel) lands like the U.S. Notice that this isn't a stand against *sharia's* brutal *hudud* punishments; just that they aren't implementable at this time.

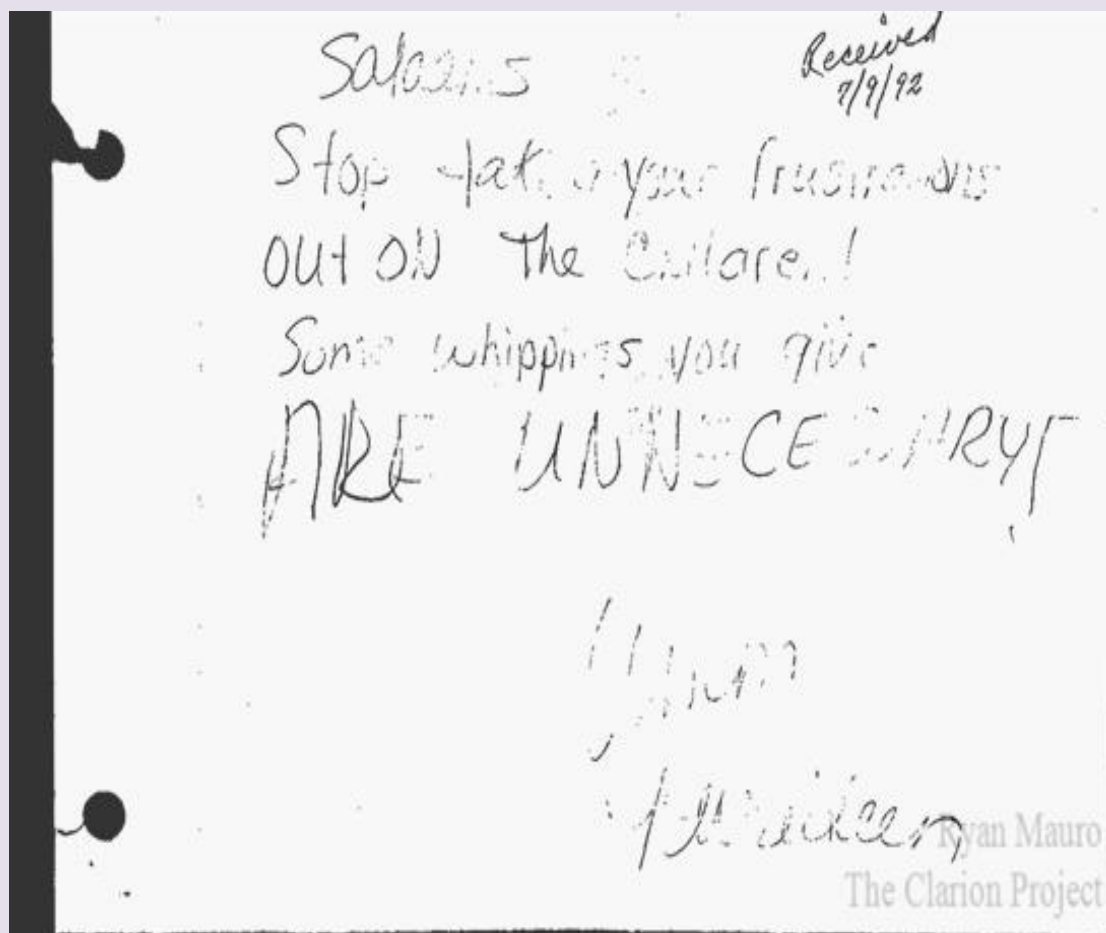


One of Fuqra's newspaper articles announces the formation of America's first Islamic court, arguing that it is in compliance with the country's religious freedom. Judges have been trained and appointed by Sheikh Gilani.

The *Clarion Project* has obtained a copy of the Islamic Court's letterhead (above), which was originally found by law enforcement personnel during a raid on a Colorado "village" in 1992 where tunnels filled with weapons were found, as well as proof of criminal fundraising and terror plots.

But one document (see below) found by law enforcement is harrowing in its disclosure about the enforcement of *sharia* in these villages.

It is difficult to read but its words can be mostly understood with a close look. It is a note written in July 1992 to a Fuqra member that reads, "Stop taking your frustrations out on the children! Some whippings you give ARE UNNECESSARY!" [emphasis original].



Complaint about unnecessary whipping of children

Heartbreaking stories from former Fuqra members told to the *Clarion Project* include child abuse, desperate poverty, domestic violence and severe beatings of young boys for minor infractions of *sharia* law, such as watching an American children's show without approval.

Polygamy is commonplace. One story is about a mother who ferociously protested the forced homeschooling of her child. She was punished so harshly that it can accurately be described as torture. Although these stories are from the early 1990s, but the organization and its villages are still around. The leadership is the same. The membership is mostly the same. The cultish, radical ideology is the same, albeit cleaned up a bit to cope with the negative attention. More recent testimony has come forth that shows that the abuses under *sharia* continue.

A former high-level member of Fuqra spied for the NYPD and came forward in a book titled *Twilight in America* by Martin Mawyer. His biggest concern was the treatment of the women and kids. He spoke of illiterate, unhealthy and indoctrinated children who he saw being beaten.

"If somebody breaks a command you could be tied to a tree and hit with sticks," he explained, including one case of a 50-year old woman which he witnessed. The punishments were for watching unapproved material, cursing, fornication, lying to the MOA officials and other perceived sins against Allah.

"You have to understand this—these kids, all they have been living for their whole lives is they want to fight a holy war. These are kids," he emphasized.

"You got all these young kids there, you walk up to them, ask them, 'what do you want to do?' 'I want to fight for Gilani.' That's what they want. It's not good."

to send them forth in several weeks. At this time also delegations were sent out to various embassies to establish points of entry (into Afghanistan like China, Iran and other surrounding countries).

We should also mention the conference of the Mujahideen held in New York City in which al Mustrah from all over the east coast gathered to declare their unqualified support of the mujahideen and the struggle of the muslim people in Afghanistan. Many who could not, because of distance be physically present, sent notes and letters of support. The majority of the mustrah were talibah of Shaikh Jilani, with the permission of their husbands, and besides being dedicated wives and devoted mothers, were also skilled in the use of weapons and field medicine, so their offering of their support was no small gesture or gimmick or token effort. They were, as their husbands were, fully prepared to offer their lives and seek the Pleasure and Face of Allah!

During this entire period there were many conferences as such in the U.S., West Indies and Canada, and the theme of support was just as enthusiastic. The ranks of mujahideen were starting to swell and momentum was starting to build. The entire jihad account is reported in a separate article in this issue, these resolutions were stated simply to complete the documentation of the entire campaign.



From Mufti's Desk

What is the responsibility of maintenance that a husband has for his wife and children before and after divorce? Reference: Suratul-Baqara — ayat 233

Nifka, in the language of the Law signifies all those things which are necessary to the support of life such as food, clothes and lodging. When a woman surrenders herself into the custody of her husband it is incumbent upon him henceforth to supply her with food, clothing and shelter. In adjusting the obligation of the nifka regard is to be had to the rank and condition of both her and her husband. Thus if the parties be both wealthy, he must support her in an opulent manner and if they be both poor, he is only required to support her accordingly. (Hedaya, Vol. 1 — Chap. XV, page 140). In the same manner children are provided for, according to the father's means.

If a separation takes place between a husband and a wife who are possessed of an infant child, the right of nursing and keeping, rests on the mother, because it is reported that a woman once applied to the Prophet (SAW) saying: "O Prophet of Allah, this is my son fruit of my womb, cherished in my bosom and suckled at by breast, and the father is desirous of taking him away from me into his own care." to which the Prophet (SAW) replied: "Thou has a right in the child prior to that of the husband so long as thou dost not marry a stranger." (Hedaya Vol. 1 Chap. XIV page 138) If she does so remarries she loses custody of the child but maintains visitation rights. When the child reaches an age where he can travel on his own rights are suspended. Maintenance

First America's Islamic Court

This Jamaat of Fuqra is the first America Muslim Jamaat to set up an Islamic Court in the United States. Thereby exercising their religious freedom which are guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States. All issues regarding problems, legal and otherwise brought to this forum will be considered and in Sha Allah, solved in this feature.

A number of Na'ibeen of Shaikh Sayid Mubarak Ali Jilani, after initial training, have been appointed to the position of Qadi. And through the use of manual of Ta'zeeriat Islamiyah, the Na'ibeen shall dispense justice, knowing very well that in particular circumstances faced by American Muslims no enforcement is possible of the Hoodoodul-Allah (capital punishment): for example cutting off the hand for theft.

But the Qadis, who will be in various parts of the United States, will exercise particular concern regarding moral laxities, pertaining to marriage, divorce, custody and maintenance of children.

The general body of Muslims can reach us through this column and find solutions according to Hanafiya Fiqh (system of law).

In this issue two such Na'ib, namely Mufti-Nur Muhammad Qadri and Ghazi Muhammad Hasib Qadri shall be dealing with the legal inquiries.

The spin from Fuqra now is that their version of *sharia* law is not to be feared, for it is not much different than the U.S. Constitution. Its current newspaper (above), the *Islamic Post*, tries to defend its interpretation of *sharia* law but, in so doing, delegitimizes the existence of the United States and states the group's desire to punish its opponents:

"Sharia governs Muslims in how they must deal with each other, as well as non-Muslims. So why are some Americans worried about Sharia? Perhaps the "anti-sharia" hate-mongers are afraid of the fact that it would give those cheated and abused in the past the right to prosecute those who had wronged them — whether by destruction of their properties, physical harm that was rendered, and/or wealth that was usurped. Under Sharia, a person's lands, if taken unjustly, would have to be given back to them. Following

Sharia, the U.S. would owe its very existence to Native American tribes.

"Americans have no reason to fear Sharia. Muslims are quite content with the current state of American Sharia Law. Establishing Sharia in America is not a concern for Muslims. Especially since it's already here."



Ryan Mauro is ClarionProject.org's national security analyst, a fellow with Clarion Project and an adjunct professor of homeland security. Mauro is frequently interviewed on top-tier television and radio.

Sweden – Bomb threat at Landvetter airport in Gothenburg

Source: <http://www.thelocal.se/20160331/bomb-threat-at-gothenburgs-landvetter-airport>

Mar 31 – **Part of Landvetter airport in western Sweden was evacuated on Thursday morning after a number of suspicious plastic bags were discovered in the domestic flights terminal.**



Police said that a threat had been made against the airport and that bags discovered in the domestic arrivals hall contained "unknown content" that needed to be checked out by bomb technicians.

"Since then staff have been on high alert and we have had extra police on the ground," Peter Adlersson, a spokesperson for the region's police force told the TT news agency.

"It's better to be safe than sorry," he added.

Regional newspaper Göteborgs-Posten (GP) reported that an

explosive substance called pentyl had been found in the arrivals zone, citing SOS Alarm, however The Local could not confirm this with the police or Swedavia, the company that runs the airport. Cars were immediately diverted away from the terminal, while flights from domestic gates were diverted to parts of the airport usually reserved for international arrivals and departures.

"Police decided to block the domestic terminal and the entrance to the airport building," Ulf Walling, head of Swedavia, told TT at around 2pm.

He gave few other details, stating that the incident was now "a police matter". However he apologised to customers who could face delays as a result of the evacuation.

"This means that it could get a bit messy regarding some departures. Most likely, air traffic will be affected by this."

However an hour later, Åsa Öhnan, a press officer for the company told The Local that Swedavia had managed to avoid any flight cancellations or significant delays.

"So far there are no delays because you can check in as normal from the departure hall," she said.



Belgian police chief sent home 'in disgrace' after being DRUNK at terror meeting on the day of the Brussels bombings

Source: <http://www.zimbabwenation.com/news/world/34371-exclusive-pictured,-the-belgian-police-chief-sent-home-in-disgrace-after-being-drunk-at-terror-meeting-on-the-day-of-the-brussels-bombings.html>

Apr 01 – Holding what appears to be a bottle of beer - the Belgian police chief sent home in disgrace after being drunk at an urgent terror meeting on the day of the Brussels terror attacks.



Robert Devillez arrived late to the emergency session and reportedly 'struggled to communicate' when grilled by his bosses in the hours after ISIS suicide bombers hit the city.

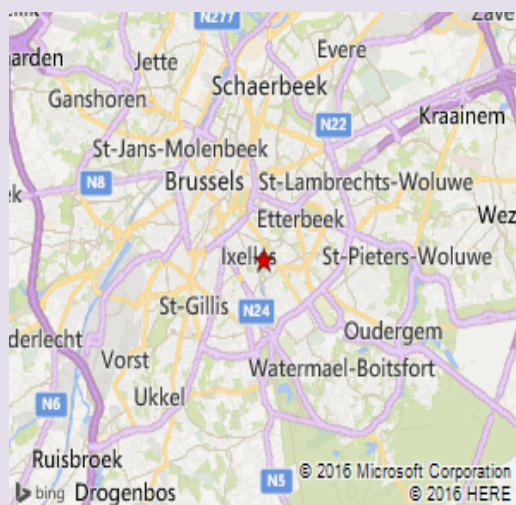
Colleagues suspected he was intoxicated and confiscated his gun as Devillez took a breathalyser test confirming he was over the limit.

The commissioner was set to review emergency security plans with the local mayor, hours after Brussels metro and airport were hit by suicide bombings that killed 31 people.



He was found to have 0.8g/l of alcohol in his blood, which is above the 0.5g/l legal driving limit in Belgium. The limit in the UK is 0.8g/l.

While he has only been identified by his



initials 'RD', by the Belgian media, he is the only police commissioner in the Ixelles district to share these initials.

When approached by MailOnline, police authorities in Brussels refused to comment on

whether the Commissioner being investigated is indeed **Robert Devillez, a police commissioner in the Ixelles district of the city.**

Spokesman for the district Christian De Coninck would also not confirm the confiscation of his service weapon, or that he was sent home although it was widely reported by Belgian media.

'As soon as his superiors found the problem, they did the necessary and set up a report. And the police chief took disciplinary measurements. But I cannot go any further on this otherwise there will be a procedure mistake and this can go all down the drain,' he said.

But authorities have previously been made aware of alcohol abuse within the district's police force when it was outlined in an explosive report published last year.

The 73-page ISPPW (internal service for prevention and protection at work) warned in September 2015 that there was an alcohol problem among police officers in the Ixelles district, which includes many of the city's popular eating and drinking spots as well as European Parliament offices.

'They would drink all day at the expense of work and colleagues who want to work. This deteriorates the image of the police,' the report said.

'The management is aware but obscures the problem so as not to make waves.'

When the reports findings were put to district Mayor Dominique Dufourny in the wake of the scandal, she said the issue of alcohol abuse had already been raised.

'I will check it. The alcohol issue has been raised and we will be very alert in the future', Mayor Dominique Dufourny told local journalists.

According to Belgian press, the penalty for drunk service, ranges from a warning to a reprimand to suspension or the sack.

Bulgaria, Croatia 'Used by Terrorists to Plan Attacks'

Source: <http://www.novinite.com/articles/173803/Bulgaria,+Croatia+'Used+by+Terrorists+to+Plan+Attacks'>

Mar 31 – **Balkan countries such as Bulgaria and Croatia are an "important link" in the activity of terrorists in Europe**, Newsweek Serbia says in a recent investigation, citing data from French police and intelligence sources.



"States like Croatia and Bulgaria are... not at the center of attention of those who deal with terrorism. At the same time, terror attacks are planned there, and participants go through these states unnoticed," the media outlet quotes information from "materials of French police and secret services".

Basing their information on the documents, they argue Salah Abdeslam, who was arrested in relation to the Paris attacks of November and whose cell appears to have been behind the Brussels attacks, frequently dialed Balkan numbers.

Abdeslam and his affiliates often made their calls using SIM cards from Morocco, Turkey and Belgium, but also Croatian, Albanian and Bulgarian ones. "Serbia[n numbers], at least officially, are not there, but experts advise it should not be considered that this world problem goes around us," Newsweek adds [SR].

According to the materials which it claims to have obtained, recruits of the so-called Islamic State (IS) group are using the Balkans for "training and to test their endurance and determination to join the terrorists".

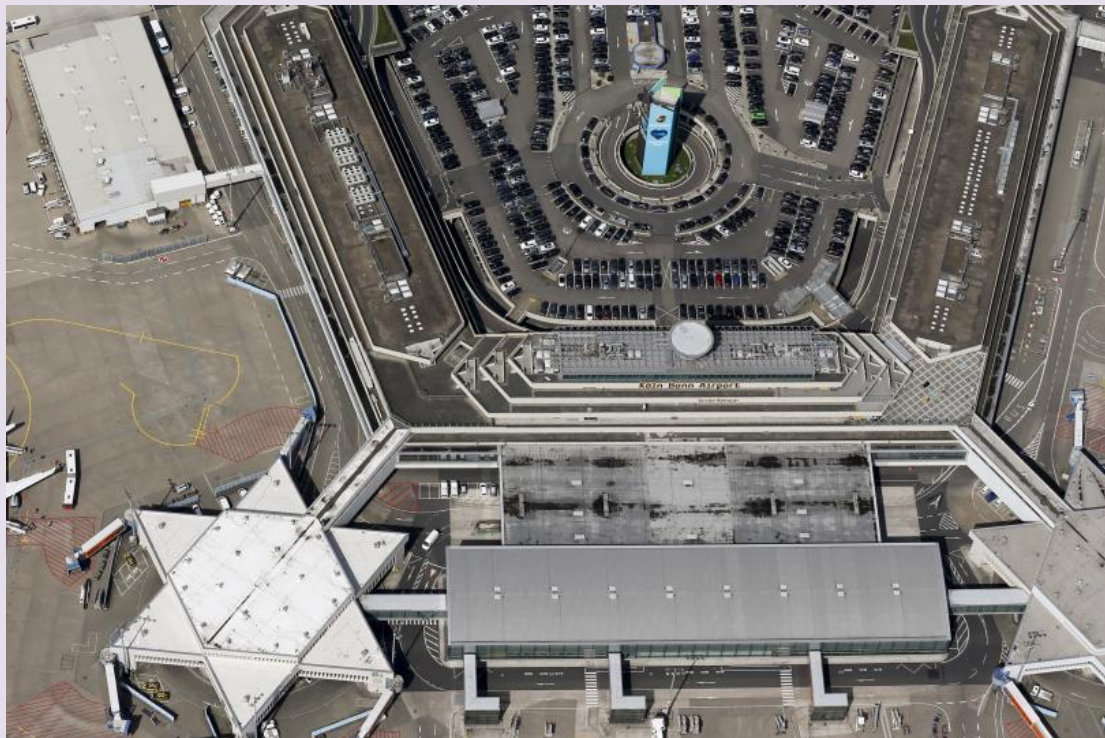
Serbian security agency officials are reported as telling Newsweek that the attacks in France and Belgium and calls made by the terrorists show "the Balkans [are] an important link" in terrorist activities.

The same sources, however, say it is "early to disclose operative data".

Dragan Simeonovic, a political science professor and anti-terrorism expert, is quoted as saying that "all important terrorist attacks had links to the Balkans".

ISIS To Attack Germany? Islamic State Lists German Targets For Brussels-Style Terrorism

Source: <http://www.ibtimes.com/isis-attack-germany-islamic-state-lists-german-targets-brussels-style-terrorism-2346404>



An aerial picture shows the Konrad Adenauer airport of Cologne-Bonn in western Germany, May 6, 2015.

Mar 31 – **The Islamic State group has named its next targets in Europe and called for Muslims in Germany to carry out attacks on Chancellor Angela Merkel's office in Berlin and the Cologne-Bonn airport,** it was reported Thursday. The group, also known as ISIS or ISIL, posted photos of the targets online and called for a Brussels-style attack, Reuters reported, citing information gathered by the SITE intelligence group.



ISIS claimed responsibility for the attacks at the airport in Brussels and the Maelbeek metro last week that killed at least 32 people and wounded at least 300. The terror group also took responsibility for the attacks in Paris in November that killed 130 people.

The images posted by ISIS were published in German media Thursday and included slogans that call for violence against the “enemy of Allah.” One image showed a militant in fatigues looking at the Cologne-Bonn airport with the caption, “What your brothers in Belgium were able to do, you can do too.” Another image showed the federal chancellery building in Berlin.

“We are aware of this material, and our experts are checking it,” a spokeswoman for Germany’s federal police told Reuters. “It is clear that Germany is the focus of international terrorism and that attacks could happen, but this material doesn’t change our security assessment.”

Experts have estimated that approximately 20,000 foreign fighters are currently in Syria and Iraq. About 4,000 of those fighters came from Western Europe, including 500 to 600 from Germany. Britain, France and

Belgium have also seen high recruitment numbers, said a report from the International Center for the Study of Radicalization and Politics at King’s College in London released at the end of January.

German prosecutors indicted an ISIS fighter who returned from Syria and was caught in Cologne earlier this month, Deutsche Welle reported. **But indicting people for crimes beyond joining ISIS has been difficult, German prosecutors noted.**

“We assume that some of these perpetrators have blood on their hands, but often we can’t prove it,” said Germany’s top federal prosecutor Peter Frank, speaking with the Süddeutsche Zeitung of Munich. “Our problem is: What proof can we get from a war zone where all state structures have collapsed? Cooperation in terms of legal help doesn’t work either in Syria or Iraq.”

Western Europe remains on high security alert after last week’s attacks in Brussels. Germany is part of the U.S.-led coalition striking ISIS in Syria, but Berlin has limited its role to reconnaissance and refueling missions, not direct airstrikes.

EDITOR’S COMMENT: It would be boring to write again that letting them return to homeland is the worst solution. If you know the numbers, you know the people. Let them be in the country of their choice! But do not let them come back home!

Ghosts of 9/11 Haunt Europe's Efforts to Stop Next Terror Attack

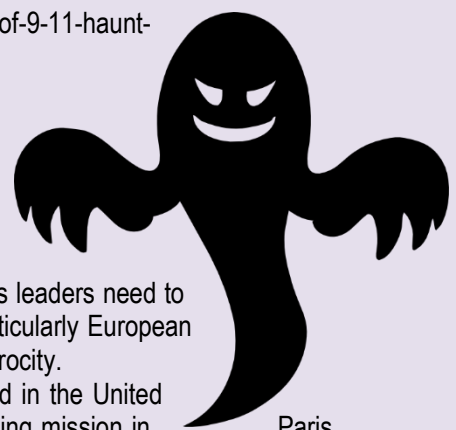
Source: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-03-31/ghosts-of-9-11-haunt-europe-s-efforts-to-stop-next-terror-attack>

Mar 31 – **From terror squads who slip past border controls to the valiant but all-too-improvised emergency response, the backstory of last week’s attacks in Brussels is eerily similar to what happened in the U.S. in the leadup to Sept. 11, 2001.**

Virtually every mistake made then by the U.S. national security machine found its analogue in Belgium on March 22. Now Europe’s leaders need to work out their own answers to those challenges while overcoming particularly European obstacles. Until they do, their citizens will remain exposed to the next atrocity.

“Intelligence sharing in Europe today is a lot like what we experienced in the United States before 9/11,” U.S. Senator Angus King, who was on a fact-finding mission in Paris when the bombers struck last week, said in an e-mailed response to questions. “Rivalries and complicated histories are acting as barriers that prevent intelligence agencies across Europe from working together.”

The 28-nation European Union makes peace, not war. It has done that job so well that it won the Nobel Prize in 2012. But the struggle to track the attackers who wreaked havoc in Brussels shows it also needs to beef up its defense apparatus, and that is alien to an EU culture predicated on tearing ramparts down, not putting them up.



Parallel Stories

When future historians come to render their judgment on the Brussels airport and subway bombings that killed 32, they could work from the independent U.S. report on the 9/11 attacks. In some cases, just the details have changed.

U.S. spy services chased, then lost sight of two al-Qaeda operatives in 2000; Belgium and the Netherlands were put on the trail of one of the Brussels suicide bombers in July and let the lead go cold. The U.S. arrested a trainee pilot, later reputed to be the 20th hijacker, in August 2001; Belgian police caught Salah Abdeslam, wanted for November's murders in Paris, four days before the Brussels bombings.

The U.S. chain of command broke when a belated order to shoot down hijacked airliners failed to reach air force pilots; the Belgian parallel was the 52-minute delay between the airport blasts and the first hesitant thoughts of evacuating the soon-to-be-targeted subway system. New York port authority radios stopped working as the World Trade Center towers crumbled, Belgium's emergency wireless network was quickly overloaded, forcing first responders onto messaging systems like WhatsApp.

The U.S. report's conclusion applies to Brussels as well as the two attacks in Paris last year: the assaults **"were a shock, but they should not have come as a surprise."**

European Problems

No one expects European governments to mobilize as rapidly as the U.S. after 9/11 with the bloc already in a defensive crouch. Signature achievements like the 26-nation passport-free travel zone are under threat, Britain is considering leaving the EU and the bloc's late 20th century faith in trade, travel, communication and finance as a benign force is being shaken to its core by the refugees flooding across its frontiers.

While much has been made of Belgium's failings -- the split between Dutch- and French-speaking subcultures, interlocking layers of government that obscure accountability, the neglect of aggrieved Muslim communities -- they are a microcosm of what Europe has to contend with. National security in the EU is just that: a national prerogative.

It comes down to "typical gumshoe detective-type work," said Colin Clarke, a terrorism

researcher at RAND Corp. in Pittsburgh. "European intel services definitively have more suspects that they need to track, monitor and surveil. The sharing within Europe sometimes seems to stop at the border, while terrorists don't."

Secretive Agencies

The EU appointed its first anti-terrorism coordinator in 2007, in a bid to step up intelligence efforts in response to the bombings in Madrid in 2004 and London in 2005.

Yet European agencies are still engaged in the turf battles that absorbed CIA and FBI attention in the runup to 9/11. In a March 1 report, the anti-terror coordinator, Belgium's Gilles de Kerchove, called for "further urgent improvements on information sharing and border security."

To take one data point: an estimated 5,000 European citizens went on jihadist junkets to join extremist groups like Islamic State in Syria and Iraq, but there are only 2,786 in one database, 1,473 in another, and 90 percent of the names added recently came from only five EU governments.

"Some continental intelligence agencies jealously guard their secrets," said Sajjan Gohel, international security director for the Asia-Pacific Foundation in London. "Often they have a piece of the puzzle that if they put it together, they form a wider picture of what the network actually looks like. But they need to put it together realtime, not post-incident."

Growing Recognition

The potpourri of European watchlists includes Focal Point Travelers and the European Information System, both managed by Europol, the EU's police-coordinating agency; the Schengen Information System and Visa Information System, used by national police and border patrols; Eurodac, a roster of applicants for political asylum; ECRIS, a repository of criminal records; and a nascent database of air passenger profiles, modeled on the U.S. tracking system.

The air-traveler monitoring system proposal has also been around since 2007, blocked by the European Parliament on personal-privacy grounds until the Paris killing spree in November forced it back onto the agenda. Even now, some EU lawmakers



are stalling the measure until more data-protection safeguards can be introduced, in another example of the peacetime priorities prevailing over security concerns.

"In my discussions with security officials in Europe last week, I sensed a growing

recognition that they must overcome these barriers" between agencies, said King, a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee .

"Hopefully it will not take another attack to begin seeing results."

EU cities have 900 "no-go zones": Hungary's government

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160401-eu-cities-have-900-nogo-zones-hungary-s-government>



Apr 01 – Hungary's right-wing government, ahead of a national referendum on the question of EU-mandated refugee quotas for EU member states, has claimed in a [Web site post](#) which supports the government's anti-migration stance, that there are 900 "no-go zones" in London, Paris, Stockholm, and Berlin.

The Hungarian prime minister, Viktor Orbán, has announced that his country will not take part in the EU's plan to relocate 160,000 migrants across the continent, calling it an abuse of power by the EU.



The *Daily Mail* reports that thereferendum, to be held in the autumn, will ask: "Do you want the EU to prescribe the mandatory relocation of non-Hungarian citizens to Hungary without the approval of the Hungarian parliament?"

The government Web page, entitled "We say no to mandatory migrant quotas," defines the 900 "no-go zones" as "neighborhoods not under control, or hardly kept under control," where "the norms of the host society ... barely prevail."

Zoltán Kovács, the government spokesman, when asked to name the areas of London

which are no-go zones, told the *Guardian*: "Everything is based on publicly available data and sources." The *Guardian* notes that the Hungarian state ministry's Web posting cited blogs and conspiracy Web sites as evidence.

The government posting, for example, claimed that 751 of the "no-go zones" are in France, relying on [a 2006 blog post](#) by Daniel Pipes about France's *zones urbaines*



sensibles (sensitive urban zones). Pipes, who is credited with coining the phrase “no-go zone” to describe neighborhoods with high immigrant populations, later retracted this statement after visiting France. “Having this first-hand experience, I regret having translated what the French government terms *zones urbaines sensibles* as no-go zones,” he wrote in 2013.

The Hungarian ministry also quotes conspiracy theorist Steve Emerson, who claimed last year that the city of Birmingham was “totally Muslim” (Prime Minister David Cameron reacted to the claims by Emerson, who describes himself as a “terrorism expert,” by saying: “When I heard this, frankly, I choked on my porridge and I thought it must be April Fool’s Day,” adding, “[T]his guy is clearly a complete idiot.”)

The Hungarian ministry offers other evidence to support its claims, citing [an American’s blog on Sweden](#) (with a dead link) to a map of fifty-five “hot zones” said to have been identified by the Swedish as “no-go zones,” although the Swedish police said it was not using the term and that, in any event, there are no neighborhoods in Sweden where the police does not go.

The ministry also cites as supporting [a Daily Telegraph article](#) about the Brussels district of Molenbeek. The Web page also shows a ticking clock to support the claim that a migrant is entering Europe every twelve seconds. Critics of the government point out, however, that according to [official Hungarian police statistics](#), that figure inflates the current reality on the Hungarian border by over 6,000 percent.

Police Claim 50 ISIS Sympathizers Worked at Brussels Airport

Source: <https://www.clarionproject.org/analysis/police-claim-50-isis-sympathizers-worked-brussels-airport>

Apr 03 – **Brussels airport is partially reopening today for the first time since it was hit by twin suicide bombs on March 22 in attacks that killed 35 people.**

The airport reopening was [delayed by a strike](#)



called by police officers who demanded extra security measures. Specifically they requested checks at the main entrance to the departure lounge. Authorities feared this could create bottlenecks going into the airport.

A group of police officers wrote an open letter to the press criticizing alleged security failings at Zaventem airport. **They alleged that 50 ISIS supporters are still working at the airport.**

Some people suspected of having fought in Syria came to the airport as “false tourists”. We

reported their presence but we do not know if anything was done with that information, the letter read according to the *Daily Mail*.

The officers complained about people who worked at the airport whom they allege celebrated the Paris attacks.

“When we checked these people, we were surprised more than once. It was men with a radical ideology and a long police history,” they said.

“Even today, there are at least 50 supporters of the Islamic state who work at the airport. They have a security badge and have access to the cockpit of a plane”

“In the past, a number of people had their badges revoked because they had IS sympathies. But clearly not everyone, especially in store personnel, cleaning services and baggage where we find the most suspicious people.”

The President of the largest police union in Belgium, Vincent Gilles, told the *BBC* that the letter represented the private feelings of a number of officers. He did not sign it and it was not endorsed by the Union because



the information in the letter was based on rumors and conversations and had not been verified.

Two of the Brussels bombers, Khalid and Ibrahim el-Bakraoui worked at the airport as cleaning staff, according to their uncle who spoke to the *Daily Mail*.

This is not the first time there have been concerns over possible terrorism links of airport staff. In November 2015 Clarion Project reported that a review of all staff at Charles de Gaulle airport, Paris, was ordered

after it emerged that 57 staff members had been allowed to continue working despite their being on a terrorism watch list.

It is not possible to prevent every single terror plot. However, **adequately screening people working at sensitive sites such as airports is an essential part of a robust counter-terror strategy.** With Brussels airport reopening it is hoped that staff at the airport will be properly vetted to minimize the risk of another attack.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: We have this sick attitude that "it will not happen to us!" that prevail us to make them lessons learned! It was not only Bussels' airport and nuclear plant and Charles de Gaulle airport; it happened also in the US and UK (Scotland Yard). What you should do when a gap occurs somewhere in the world? You immediately check you own system for the same problem. You run security screening and fill some gaps! Unless it will not happen to you! And then it happens! And you start recalling human rights, missing legislation, privacy issues and tons of related BS. Head people with fat salaries remember that "it was not raining when Noah made the Arc!"

45% of college-educated jihadis are engineers

Source: <http://m.timesofindia.com/home/sunday-times/all-that-matters/45-of-college-educated-jihadis-are-engineers-and-its-because-of-3-traits/articleshow/51665038.cms>

*Anecdotally, it is often said that engineers tend to lean rightwards in their politics. In their new book, *Engineers of Jihad*, sociologist **Diego Gambetta** and political scientist **Steffen Hertog** back up that gut sense with data. They find that Islamist radicalism and other far-right movements are dominated by engineers, doctors and those with tech backgrounds, while left-wing movements draw people from the humanities and social sciences. They tell **TOI** why this may be the case.*



In your study of political radicals in the Muslim world, you found that college-educated Islamist extremists are, overwhelmingly, engineers. How does this challenge the conventional wisdom about jihadis?

We found that about almost half of the Islamist extremists in our sample from many Muslim countries have either a degree or some university exposure, so this means that there is another half that has not gone above high school. It is among those who have a degree or university exposure that 45% are engineers. This means that, relative to other graduates, the odds are about 5-6 times higher that an Islamist extremist has an engineering

background. If the term of reference group is the adult male population, rather than graduates alone, then the chances of finding an engineer are 17 times greater. The conventional idea that poverty fuels Islamism is clearly not borne out by our data. Rather, militant Islamism got its original support from frustrated would-be elites, individuals who had invested greatly in their education, and hoped to play prominent roles in the modernisation of their countries, but who then crashed against the economic downturn that hit Muslim countries from the late 1970s onward. That is also the time when we first witness the emergence of the Islamist



movement, both violent and peaceful.

Why is this the case? What kinds of traits does a technical education foster?

Let us break it down into sequential questions: What kind of traits matter? Political psychologists have found that three traits are correlated with being right-wing and conservative: these traits are to be easily disgusted (say, by corruption of customs or by perceived social deviance such as homosexuality), to be strongly in favour of one's ethnic or religious in-group and against infidels and immigrants from other cultures, and to be intolerant of ambiguity and uncertainty - something that psychologists call "need for closure".

Why does this matter? We have found that the ideology of Islamists and that of far-right militants have very large areas of overlap, while neither has much overlap at all with far left-wing ideology.

What has all this got to do with engineers? We found that engineers are significantly present, not only among Islamists but also on the far right, but not on the far left, where humanities and social science graduates dominate. And at the same time, using the European Social Survey from many European countries, we found that engineers have those three traits to a higher intensity than people with other degrees, and this probably explains why they are attracted by right-wing and Islamist ideologies, which promise to clean up societies of corruption, to strengthen their cultural identity, and to offer an authoritarian order.

Conversely, among humanities and social science graduates the traits are less pronounced - which is the case among women, too, who also end up on the radical left much more frequently.

Lastly, what has a technical education got to do with this? We believe that the degree which one chooses to pursue is a crude window into personality traits, and that people's traits influence both their political behaviour and their educational choices, rather than the other way around. So a technical education (and the company of like-minded individuals) may reinforce those traits - for instance the idea that every problem has an optimal solution and, hence, the compromise typical of democracies

is to be abhorred - but it is unlikely that it creates them from scratch.

Would you suggest that this mindset is drawn mostly to religious movements?

Political psychologists find that different ideologies satisfy different cognitive and emotional needs. Insofar as a religious fundamentalist movement satisfies the three traits mentioned, then it should prove attractive. However, there are also secular groups and institutions that can do the same: while in the US and in the Islamic world, religion and extremist groups are mixed, in Europe extremist groups find their ideological match among nationalistic, populist parties and support strong authoritarian state institutions, rather than religion.

Your data shows that left-wing radicals tend to come from humanities and social science backgrounds. Why do their sympathies veer towards social justice movements rather than religious ones?

It is true that left wingers seem to respond more vigorously to social injustice, while right wingers and Islamists seem to respond more to corruption or breaches of tradition and cultural-ethnic integrity - the former look forward to a future of progress and want to upend existing hierarchies, while the latter look backward revelling in nostalgia for a mythical past orders.' Your question of whether these differences also predict whether left-wingers will not overall be attracted by religious ideologies is an interesting one; we do not deal with it in the book, but if we were to speculate, we could point out that by and large it seems true that left-wingers are more likely to entertain secular ideologies. Interestingly, however, a religion that left-wingers have been drawn to (and vice versa) - especially in Latin America from the 1970s onward - has been a brand of Catholicism. It is a religion in which social injustice can be invoked, thanks to certain readings of the Gospels, as a relatively more important value than in other religions which tend to more readily accept social and economic hierarchies. So it is not that left-wingers are necessarily averse to religion as that most religions seem to be distant from what matters to them.



BRIGHTON TERROR PLOT: Teen ISIS jihadis 'planned' gun and knife attack on seaside town

Source: <http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/657779/Group-of-teen-jihadis-were-planning-gun-and-knife-terror-attack-in-Brighton>

Apr 04 – Counter-terrorism officials identified the large group, of which roughly half are teenagers, as highly likely to flee to the Islamic State (ISIS) strongholds of Iraq and Syria.

The 28 strong gang, which includes five teenage girls who converted to Islam, were thought to be planning a terror attack in Brighton using knives or a pistol.

But it transpired five people, including three brothers, already slipped the clutches of UK security and managed to travel to war-torn Syria, joining up with Jabhat al-Nusra, an affiliate of al-Qaeda.

A further three, including one girl, have court orders preventing them from leaving for Syria.

The radicalised gang only emerged as part of a wider review for the council into three brothers who left their



family home to take up arms in the country ravaged by civil war.

Amer, 22, Abdullah, 18, and Jaffar Deghayes, 17, left for Syria in 2014, along with their childhood friend Ibrahim Kamara, 19.

All but Amer are thought to have been killed fighting, who is still believed to be in Syria.

A report by counterterrorism officials revealed they feared some of the radicalised group were planning a Lee

Rigby style attack on the streets of Brighton, home to 273,000 people.

Speaking to The Sunday Times, a source said: "The first threat level that they were concerned about is that some of them would take a knife and kill people, a bit like what happened in the Lee Rigby attack."

Despite identifying weapons such as knives and pistols as likely to be used by the clan, they ruled out explosives and considered it unlikely a group of teenagers would be able to get their hands on any bomb making material.

L-R Brothers Jaffar, 17, Amer, 22, and Abdullah, 18, Deghayes. All but Amer are thought dead



The source added: "It's obviously a serious concern that there are 28 young people brainwashed to the point that they want to join jihadist groups or consider plotting against innocent people here at home."

"The concern has not abated; there's a lot of extremism-related problems lurking that the police and social services are attempting to deal with."

Names of the 28 had appeared on lists of people deemed to be at risk of travelling to Syria, and were known to counter-terrorism police.



Roughly 60 per cent of the crew are Islamic converts, and at least one girl had previously been referred to the government's counter-radicalisation programme, Channel.

More than 800 British nationals, including 100 women, have traveled to either Syria or Iraq to engage in jihad. Roughly 100 are thought dead, and 450 are thought to have returned to the UK.



Hollande's 'Islamist terrorism' omitted from White House vid; 'technical issue' blamed

Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2016/04/02/hollandes-islamist-terrorism-omitted-from-white-house-vid-technical-error-blamed.html>

Apr 02 - **French President Francois Hollande's comments this week in Washington about Islamic terrorism -- a term President Obama won't use -- were omitted from an official White House video.**

Holland made the comments at an international summit in Washington on nuclear security that also focused largely on global terrorism.

"We are also making sure that between Europe and the United States there can be a very high level coordination. But we're also well aware that the roots of terrorism, Islamist terrorism, is in Syria and in Iraq. We therefore have to act both in Syria and in Iraq, and this is what we're doing within the framework of the coalition. ..." Hollande said following a meeting at the summit between his and Obama's top officials.

However, an audio gap occurs in the original White House video where the French-to-English translator would have said: **"Islamist terrorism, is in Syria and in Iraq. We therefore have to act both in Syria and in Iraq, and this is what we're doing within the framework of the coalition."**

The gap was reported first by the Media Research Center, a conservative-leaning government watchdog group. Republicans and others have been highly critical of Obama, and Democratic presidential front-runner Hillary Clinton, for not saying the

words "Islamic terrorism" when talking about the Islamic State terror group, which has claimed responsibility for the recent, deadly bombing attacks in Paris and Brussels.

"For seven years, President Obama, and Hillary Clinton and this administration have been sound bound up by political correctness that they have refused to acknowledge what is it is we are fighting, refused to even name it," GOP presidential candidate Texas Sen. Ted Cruz told FoxNew on Sunday.

"After every one of these attacks, the president does a national TV conference where he refuses to say the words 'radical Islamic terrorism.' Instead he lectures Americans on Islamophobia. Well, enough is enough."

The White House told several news outlets on Friday the audio gap was the result of a **"technical issue"** not an attempt to scrub or censor Hollande's comments and that an updated video with the complete audio was posted on WhiteHouse.gov soon after the problem was recognized.

Officials also said the official transcript posted on the website always included the dropped sentences.

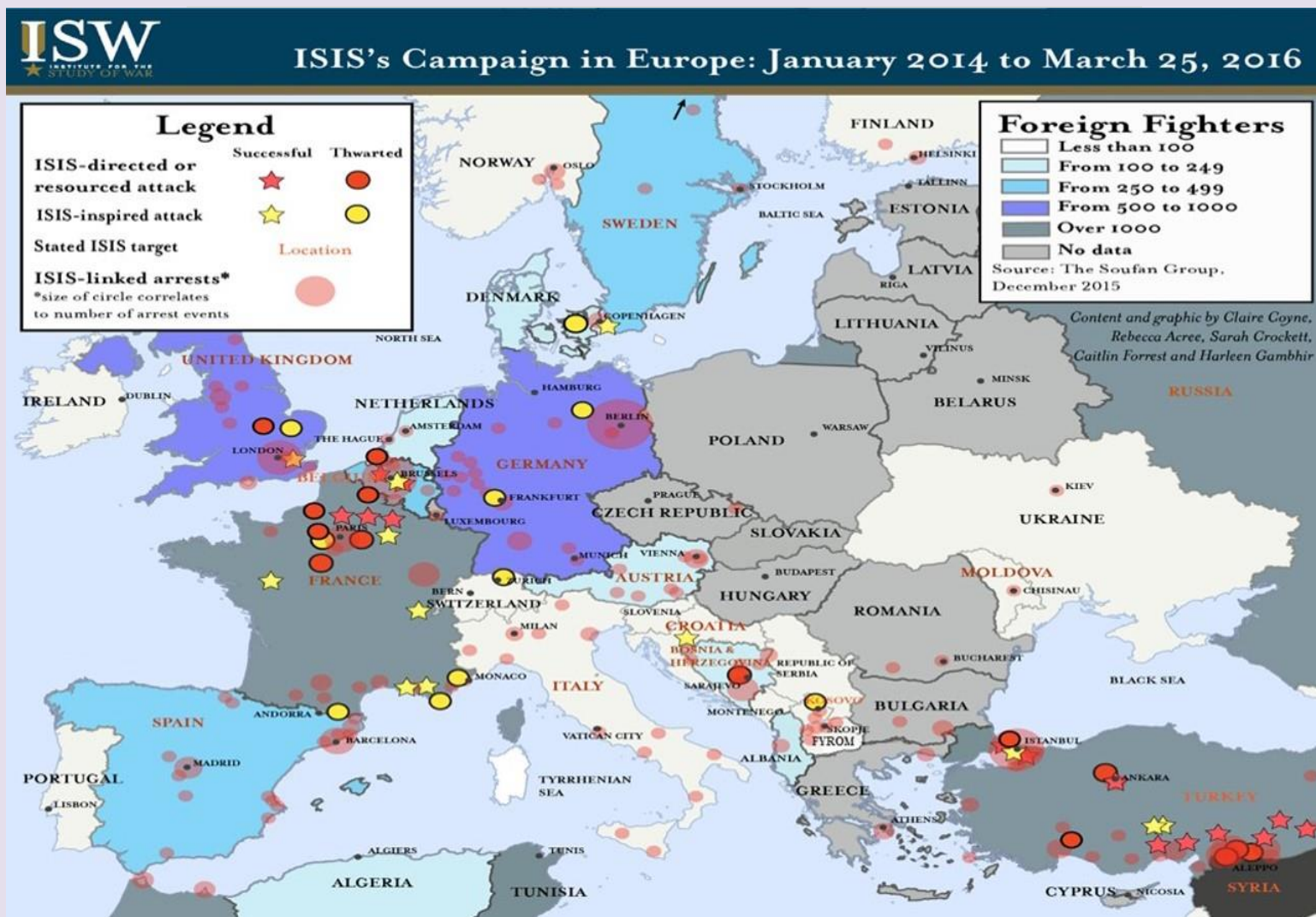
Obama has said that he will not use the words "radical Islamic terrorists" because they legitimize the efforts of the Islamic State, to which he refers to as ISIS.

Recent ISIS Attacks and ISIS-inspired Attacks in Europe

Source: <https://www.graphiq.com/wlp/9OwJhVqZApL>

Showing successful and thwarted attacks coordinated or inspired by ISIS in Europe between January 2014 and March 25, 2016. Markers were placed on the capital city of the country where an attack took place if exact location data was unavailable.





Source: [Institute for the Study of War](http://www.instituteforthe study of war.org) (as of March 26, 2016).

How getting women involved can combat extremism and save lives

Source: <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/how-getting-women-involved-can-combat-extremism-and-save-lives/>

As increasingly costly, disruptive and deadly conflicts unfold around the world, a House hearing last week highlighted that when women participate in negotiations, the resulting agreement is **35 percent more likely to last at least 15 years**.

"Think about the lives saved and economies maintained by a 35 percent decrease in repeated conflicts," said House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce, R-Calif. "Simply put, when women are at the negotiating table, success is more likely."

Smart investments in women's contributions to preventing conflict and building peace can foster durable peace in countries across the globe, reducing overall U.S. spending abroad and limiting foreign military intervention.

One example where women have an effect is in countering violent extremism (CVE). A sobering reminder of the urgency of addressing extremism underscored the hearing — earlier the same morning, three explosions shook Brussels in a series of terrorist

attacks orchestrated by the self-proclaimed Islamic State.

The dire need for new approaches to this evolving global threat demands that policymakers around the world involve women in CVE and de-radicalization efforts.

Research finds that women, frequently the first targets of fundamentalism, are often the first to stand up against it.

The ranking Democrat on the committee, Rep. Brad Sherman (D-CA), cited this evidence as an imperative for the broader inclusion of women in the formation of security policy.

Greater inclusion of women at the negotiating table and in post-conflict governance is a catalyst for peace, as well. When women are included in delegations, parties are more likely to sit down together, and when women participate in formal peace talks, success is more likely. A [new study](#) of 40 peace processes found a strong correlation between the involvement of women's groups in political negotiations and successful negotiation and implementation outcomes.

Monica McWilliams, a renowned negotiator and signatory to the Good Friday Agreement, offered testimony of how women in Northern Ireland's peace talks ensured that parties addressed issues like social services, schools, employment, and other factors that were critical to durable peace. Jacqueline O'Neill, director of The Institute for Inclusive Security, presented [research](#) on how women help ensure that peace agreements, once reached, are supported by the disaffected communities.

Given that one of the strongest predictive factors of conflict onset is previous conflict, the integration of women's perspectives and contributions in negotiating and implementing peace agreements is vital not only to the recovery from conflicts, but to the prevention of future cycles of violence.

Another area where targeted investments hold the potential to pay big dividends is in the recruitment and training of women in police, security, and peacekeeping forces. Hassan Abbas, security analyst and professor at the National Defense University, suggested that increasing the numbers of women in police forces "is directly linked to effective and good policing."

Research suggests that policewomen are more likely than their male counterparts to successfully de-escalate tensions; women

in policed communities are more likely to report gender-based violence to female officers; and female officers may have access to populations and spaces that are closed off to men in conservative cultures.

A growing body of evidence supports the notion that increasing the number of women in police forces could significantly reduce police violence and excessive use of force, as well as foster broader social and political stability.

So what should the United States do to ensure that women's participation in peace and security processes — including in CVE efforts, policing, and peace negotiations — remains squarely on the agenda of policymakers at home and abroad?

First, the U.S. must lead by example. While the United States advocates for greater participation by women in peace and security efforts abroad, congressional representatives and witnesses at last week's hearing suggested that the U.S. government could do better at setting the tone. They suggested that Congress could recruit more female experts to testify at their hearings and, while on official travel, meet with women in decision-making roles.

[Data collected](#) on recent House and Senate committee and subcommittee hearings on Iran, for example, found that at least 38 of 45 hearings had all-male panels, and, of the 140 named witnesses, a total of six were women. As the Brookings Institution's Suzanne Maloney observed, the proportion of women who testified on Iran policy in 2015 is comparable to the rate of women's participation in Iran's parliament, where 3 percent of MPs are women.

Second, the U.S. government must make targeted investments. "Provid[ing] needed financial support in places where women's inclusion is severely lacking ... is about smart spending and big dividends," O'Neill argued. State Department and USAID initiatives support the



contributions of women to peace and security from Afghanistan to Colombia to South Sudan. Given the evidence of the impact women can make if provided the opportunity, even more could be done within overall U.S. spending on security.

Third, accountability matters. “Too often, what gets agreed at the table is not delivered, which places the entire process in jeopardy,” McWilliams argued. She shared from her experience in Northern Ireland that “aspirational proposals in a peace agreement are not good enough ... they need to be accompanied by benchmarks and timetables, alongside champions tasked to ensure these are enforced.” A similar call has been made in

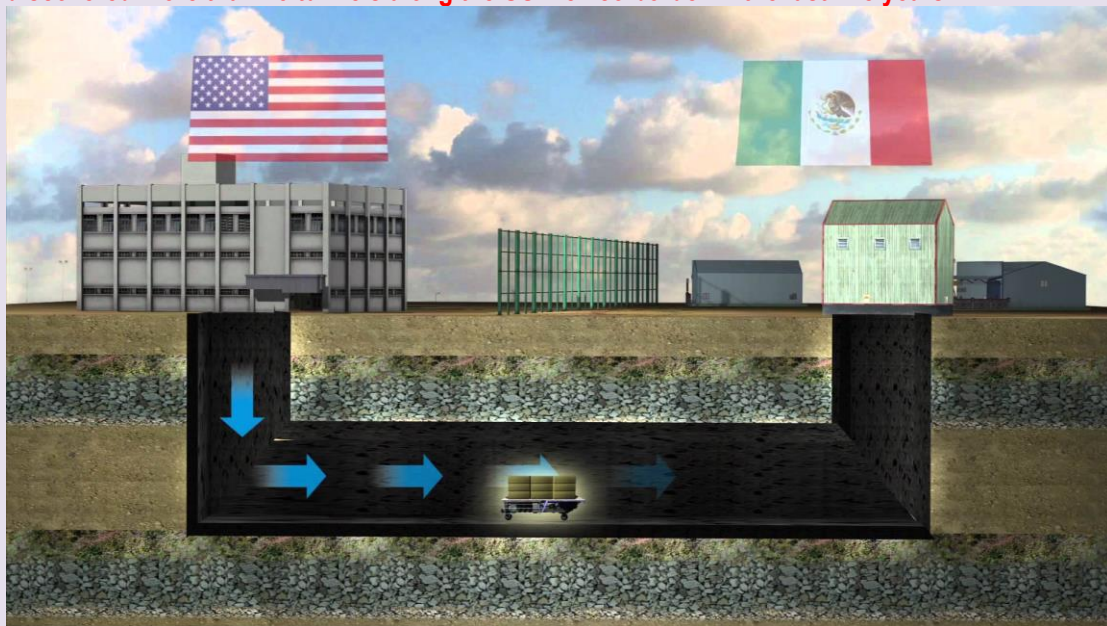
the United States, where there is an effort underway for Congress to pass the bipartisan “Women, Peace, and Security Act” (S. 224) in order to codify and provide oversight over the U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

“The benefits of women’s participation — and the risks of their exclusion — in all aspects of governance and peacemaking are too great to ignore,” Royce observed. Hearings like last week’s indicate that Congress knows it should care about whether women contribute to peace and security, and points to what they, along with others in the U.S. government and the international community, can do about it.

Cross-Border Tunnel Found In USA

Source: <http://i-hls.com/2016/04/cross-border-tunnel-found-in-usa/>

Apr 02 – Here in Israel, we know all too well the dangers cross-border tunnels pose. It seems we are not alone in realising this danger. **More than 600 kg of cannabis smuggled via tunnel from Mexico to California was seized in Los Angeles on 28 February this year. US authorities have discovered more than 75 tunnels along the US-Mexico border in the last five years.**



The tunnel in question extended about 275 m into Mexico and some 91 m into a lot on US soil that was purchased last April. A three-bedroom house was built on the property by December, and the smuggling operation commenced.

“This house and tunnel were constructed under the watchful eye of law enforcement,” said Laura Duffy, US attorney for the Southern District of California.

Investigators were apparently aware that Mexico’s Sinaloa cartel, led by the infamous Joaquin “El Chapo” Guzman, were looking to construct more smuggling routes in the area.

“For the builders, the financiers and the operators of these passageways, there is no light at the end of the tunnel. We will seize your drugs and your tunnel before you even have a chance to use it,” said Duffy.



The investigation into the operation is “still very much ongoing,” according to US Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s Homeland Security Investigations special agent Drew Shaw, but many other tunnels are being used undetected, and new ones are being dug all the time.

This time, law enforcement agencies prevented harm, but the construction of a tunnel in a residential area was bound to draw attention. The situation is far more risky when the tunnels are dug not for passage, but as combat tools lying in wait.



ISIS In Libya Poses The Real Danger To The West

Source: <http://i-hls.com/2016/04/isis-libya-poses-real-danger-west/>

Apr 01 – When rebels toppled Muammar Gadhafi in the fall of 2011 after 42 years as the country’s dictator, Libya held elections, passed an interim constitution and quickly ramped oil production back up to the levels from before the war. But peace didn’t last.

The elections in 2014 were declared invalid because Islamist parties received little support and newly elected members of parliament were forced to flee to the eastern part of the country where they established the internationally recognized parliament.



Since then, the country has had two governments and with them two militia coalitions that have several times engaged in combat against each other.

ISIS has been eyeing the torn Libya for a while now, as both governments, busy getting at each other’s necks, are unable to stop it. In February 2015, Islamic State quickly captured Gadhafi’s hometown of Sirte. Since then, it has controlled an almost 300-kilometer long strip of the Libyan coast. It is believed to have grown to a force of 6,000 men. Libya is especially important the ISIS as a strategic point. Should

Syria and Iraq fall under pressure from the West, Libya could serve as safe haven.

The Islamists have informants and sleeper cells and they move freely along the south, spreading across the country under cover of deceptive peace. Each government, however, claims it has long been warning against ISIS infiltrating Libya and blames the other for failing to formulate a plan to stop it. And so the North African country has become a hub for European foreign fighters who are either unable or unwilling to travel to Iraq or Syria.

Europe is against a military action in Libya before a unity government is formed. Without it, unilateral Western military operations are likely to inflame nationalist sentiment and push more Libyans to Islamic State, a senior European official said.

US forces, however, have realized the danger that ISIS in Libya poses for the West’s security and have carried out their first airstrikes on one of the militant group’s bases in Libya’s territory.

“Islamic State, which has spread across Libya by taking advantage of conflict between the country’s two rival governments, has become too strong to be rolled back without U.S. help,” said Brig.

Gen. Donald Bolduc, the commander of U.S. special-operations forces in Africa, and estimated that American aid will be needed even if the two governments were to unite.



A Pakistan Time-Bomb?

Source: <http://acdemocracy.org/a-pakistan-time-bomb/>

Mar 31 – **Although the Obama Administration may well not recognize it, Pakistan is turning into the U.S.' number one problem in fighting worldwide Islamic terrorism.**

The massacre in Lahore, killing more than 70, and wounding over 340 mostly children and women, targeted Christians on a community playground on Easter Sunday. Large numbers of Muslims were also killed and wounded in the attack that marks a new downturn in Pakistan. It's significant that the Jamaat ul-Ahrar, a splinter group of Pakistan's Taliban, which claimed credit for the attack, pledges allegiance to Daesh [The Islamic State, ISIS or ISIL].

The Taliban suicide bomber's choice of a target in Lahore, Pakistan's most sophisticated and second largest city, marks a new turn in the two decades of terrorist activity. Lahore is the capital of Punjab province with almost two-thirds of Pakistan's 185 million people. Noted for their pragmatism, Punjabis are widely represented in the Pakistan diaspora in the West and despite their religious differences, share much with their neighbors in bordering Indian Punjab.]

Punjab is the power base of its native son Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his brother, the province's chief minister and powerbroker. It had been largely spared showing terrorism over the last two decades and the military's counter-offensive.

The Sharifs' political success has depended on support from the more religious, and financial help from Saudi Arabia. Their civilian rule – Pakistan has spent more than half its existence under military rule – is now in jeopardy. The military has been battling a growing insurgency from Islamic terrorists it out in Karachi, Pakistan's huge port city. [In December 2014, terrorists, massacred 132 children at a military supported Army school in Peshawar, in the northwest frontier province adjoining Afghanistan.]

Pakistan's losses, far greater than those of Western terrorist episodes in the West, have been largely ignored by the foreign media. But this new turn of events, a strike at the heart of the Pakistan civilian regime, signals an

increasing a growing threat to what has always been an unstable country. From its creation, carved from Muslim-majority areas in British India in 1947 in a bloody partition of the Subcontinent, Pakistan originally included two disparate areas at the extremes of the Subcontinent separated by 1500 miles of the new India. That was resolved with a brief war with India when Bangladesh broke away in 1971. But Pakistan was also bound by other contradictions. Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the founding leader of the country who died shortly after its creation, while basing his claims on the distinction of "two nations" in British India, one Muslim, and the other Hindu, like most of Pakistan's leadership including its military were not devout Moslems.

Fanatical Muslim groups have become more and more active despite a campaign by the military to curb their sanctuaries in the Pakistan-Afghanistan areas. Always keying their foreign policy to their Indian neighbors with whom they have fought three wars since independence, Pakistan has drifted in and out of an alliance with the U.S. since Partition. With the U.S.' growing ties to India, anti-Americanism is on the rise in Pakistan.

Washington policy makers had seen Pakistan as a bloc to former Soviet – and even older Russian Imperial – efforts to reach the Indian Ocean and as a counter to Jawaharlal Nehru's alliance with the Soviets. After the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan at the end of 1979, the U.S. used Pakistan as a base to oust Moscow in 1980-82 with the help of NATO allies, and again, after the 9/11 [2001] attack by Osama Ben-Ladin from his base in Afghanistan to oust the Taliban regime.

If the Pakistan military is unable to curb the growing terrorist movements, Pakistani fanatics could well become the most important recruits for Daesh and its attempt to create a worldwide Muslim terrorist network. Contrary to much that has been written, Daesh's recruits come mostly from relatively privileged



disaffected Muslims, not the impoverished mass. With the Pakistanis' large English-speaking minority and its large body of technical immigrants in the West – widely

represented in Silicon Valley, for example – it could add immeasurably to Washington's effort to curb growing international terrorism.

ISIS has changed international law

By Michael Scharf

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160404-isis-has-changed-international-law>

Apr 04 – Two years ago, virtually no one had heard of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). In a January 2014 *New Yorker* interview, President Obama dismissed the group as “Junior Varsity.” Since then, ISIS has emerged as one of the most wealthy, powerful, and dangerous terrorist organizations that ever existed.

ISIS now possesses more than \$2 billion in stolen cash, thousands of captured tanks and bombs, as well as lucrative oil wells and refineries in the large parts of Syria and Iraq that it has taken over.

In these areas, the United States has determined, ISIS is committing genocide against Christians, Shi'a Muslims, and Yazidis. Beheadings, burning people alive, mass rape – these are the methods of ISIS terror.

But the ISIS threat is not confined to the Middle East.

In October they bombed a Russian airliner, in November they attacked Paris and, most recently, on 22 March, ISIS terrorists bombed the Brussels airport and a key train station. These attacks have left 650 Westerners dead and over a thousand injured. Any city in the world could be the target of the next ISIS attack.

As former counsel to the Counter Terrorism Bureau and attorney adviser for United Nations

affairs at the U.S. Department of State, I have been lecturing and writing about the international rules governing use of force for decades.

In my 2013 book, [*Customary International Law in Times of Fundamental Change*](#), I speculated that events unfolding in Syria might bring about a radical change in international law.

It turns out that they have.

In [*newly published research*](#), I reveal

how the urgent need to respond with force to ISIS has redefined the use of “self-defense” in

international law to include attacking a nonstate threat in another country.

The scenario

Since August 2014, the United States has carried out 20,000 bombing and cruise missile attacks against ISIS targets in Iraq and Syria.

Iraq consented to the air strikes in its territory, but Syria didn't. And Russia blocked the United Nations Security Council from authorizing force against ISIS in Syria.

For two years, the United States was virtually alone in its efforts. Russia, China and even the United States' staunchest ally, the United Kingdom, felt that the United States could not justify its bombings under existing international law.

The United States government initially invoked several different legal arguments in arenas such as the UN and U.S. Congress to justify airstrikes against ISIS in Syria.

These included the right of humanitarian intervention (controversial without a UN Security Council resolution), the right to use force in a failed state (equally controversial) and the right of “hot pursuit” (usually used to justify pursuing ships in international waters). None of these had a solid grounding in international law that would have justified violation of another country's sovereign territory.

Finally, the U.S. officials settled on a novel argument under the rubric of self-defense.

Even in the aftermath of the al-Qaida attacks in the United States on 9/11, the use of force in self-defense against terrorists within another sovereign nation had not been viewed as lawful unless the terrorist organization was under the effective control of that nation. This is a position that had been repeatedly reaffirmed by the International Court of Justice.

But the United States argued that such force can be legally justified where a governing authority is



unable or unwilling to suppress the threat operating within its borders.

The shift

That view was not initially accepted by Russia, China, or even the United Kingdom.

However, their position changed in the aftermath of the ISIS attacks on the Russian jetliner and on the Paris stadium and theater. This, in turn, led to the unanimous adoption of a UN Security Council resolution calling on nations to use “all necessary measures” to fight ISIS in Syria.

[UN Security Council Resolution 2249](#), adopted in November 2015, does not clearly endorse a particular legal justification.

But despite its ambiguity, it will likely be viewed as confirming that use of force in self-defense is now permissible against “nonstate actors” such as terrorists when the territorial state is unable to suppress the threat that they pose.

In the aftermath of the adoption of the UN Resolution, Russia and the United Kingdom joined the United States in bombing ISIS targets in Syria.

Today, [sixty-six nations](#), according to Secretary of State John Kerry, are united to fight ISIS.

Implications for the future

The implication of this newly accepted change in the international law of self-defense is that any nation can now lawfully use force against deadly nonstate actors in another country if the government of that country is unable or unwilling to suppress the threat within its borders.

However, use of force under this new approach is still subject to limits imposed by what is

known as [customary international law](#), or the practices that the international community of states customarily follow from a sense of legal obligation. More specifically:

- Only an armed attack can trigger the right to use force in self-defense. Mass terrorist attacks that result in hundreds of deaths meet that threshold. Smaller-scale incidents would not.
- The use of force must be targeted against a terrorist organization and not against the nation where the terrorist group exists, or that nation's military, unless the nation is shown to be effectively in control of the offending group.
- Military action must still meet the [international law principles](#) of necessity, proportionality and discrimination.

While this new authority will certainly prove useful against ISIS, there is a likelihood that it will ultimately be used against a much broader group of threats. Such threats could include a variety of terrorist groups, as well as rebels, pirates or drug cartels.

The number of candidates for such self-defense action is quite large. The U.S. Department of State, for example, maintains [a list of terrorist organizations](#) that pose a significant threat to the United States and its allies around the world. This list includes fifty-eight terrorist groups headquartered in thirty-five different countries (in addition to ISIS in Syria/Iraq).

With so many potential targets in so many countries, one must ask whether the possibility of abuse will ultimately outweigh the benefits of weakening ISIS.

Michael Scharf is Dean and Director of the Frederick K. Cox International Law Center, Joseph C. Hostetler - Baker Hostetler Professor of Law, Case Western Reserve University.

How airport security around the world could change after the Brussels attack

Source: <http://mashable.com/2016/03/30/brussels-airport-security-changes/>

Apr 01 – Travelers know what to expect from airport security: limits on liquids, requirements to remove shoes and belts, occasional pat downs and luggage X-rays.

But these security measures, many put in place after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks in New York City, focus on eliminating attacks on planes — not at the airports. And after the attacks in Brussels, airport security has been thrust into the spotlight.



Airports across the country are working to reevaluate security risks and update procedures. These changes could take several different forms says Jim Hutton, chief security officer of travel risk management company [On Call International](#).

More visible security

Immediately following the attacks, many airports around the world increased the number of security officers on patrol.

"You're going to see a lot more visibility in security presence," Hutton told *Mashable*. "Officers, even military, marked vehicles — things you aren't used to typically seeing in an airport. Perhaps additional X-ray equipment, more tools of the trade. You might be searched more than once; there could be additional screening of luggage."

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is adding security to major U.S. airports and rail and transit stations, according to U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson.

"TSA is also working closely with state and local law enforcement, airport and transit authorities, and the aviation industry in order to augment that security," Johnson said in a statement last week.

Additional security at airport entrances

The two explosions at Brussels' Zaventem airport happened before security checkpoints, by the check-in counter. A similar attack happened in 2011 at Moscow's Domodedovo International Airport when a suicide bomber killed 37 people in the pre-security area. Today, that airport has security checks to enter the public areas of its terminals.

Many airports in the Middle East and Africa check passengers' identification and luggage when they arrive at the terminal entrance. However, western airports are fairly open: It is not necessary to pass through security to enter, only when passing through secure checkpoints to gates.

In the U.S., the TSA is responsible for airport screening at checkpoints. But the public areas are under shared jurisdiction with local authorities. This area is usually monitored by uniformed and plain-clothed security patrol, along with security cameras. However, airport areas before controlled security checks are considered "soft spots," meaning they are more vulnerable.

Ben Vogel, the editor of *IHS Jane's Airport Review*, told [The National](#) that airports may soon consider covert explosives-detection technologies and passenger screening at terminal entrances.

This increased security would be costly as it would require terminal reconfiguration — but Brussels airport is already considering it. Although it will be months until the airport is fully repaired, the airport's temporary check-in area has [enhanced security measures](#) and will have additional baggage screening before passengers reach the departure lounge.

"It's going to be hard to establish a 'hard line' where security begins," Hutton said. "Because, when you think about airports and types of airports, no two are alike. There's LaGuardia that's incredibly crowded, or Logan, that's on the water. The geography of an airport is always different."

Limited access for vehicles

In cases where an airport's security cannot be rearranged, Hutton said that airports could start restricting vehicle access.

In one extreme scenario, Hutton described an airport that would only allow access via a shuttle. All cars — personal or taxis — would park and drop passengers offsite, where they would go through approved, secure transport.

"We need to be imaginative about security," Hutton said. "In cases where you can't change the environment, the change may need to be procedural."

What passengers can do

No matter what security changes are implemented, travelers can contribute to their own safety by being prepared and conscientious.

Hutton suggests that travelers arrive to the airport early to account for any extra security checks, and to be conscious about how they pack their luggage.

"If you don't draw unnecessary attention to your luggage, that makes security's job easier," Hutton said. "Multiply that by 50,000 and security can focus on



the real risks. Be mindful of signage, listen to directions: That can help manage the flow."
"Never assume that anything is going to be the same as when you last did it."

More conversations

"The security challenges we face today should not prompt us to build new walls," United Nations World Tourism Organization Secretary-General Taleb Rifai said at a tourism conference.

He called for the integration of tourism into national and international security agendas, saying that "enhancing security and enabling

more seamless travel should always go hand-in-hand."

But, Hutton said, amidst this talk of increased security, a conversation about personal liberties will also emerge for Americans.

"There are some who swear by profiling, or as they call it, behavioral detection," Hutton said.

"They think it is very effective. But then there are others with significant civil liberty concerns.

"A conversation is going to start about where the hard line of security and the balance between security and freedom and the public will have a great say in what changes, if any, happen."

Is This Machine the Future of Airport Security?

Source: <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/innovation/machine-future-airport-security-180957407/?no-ist>

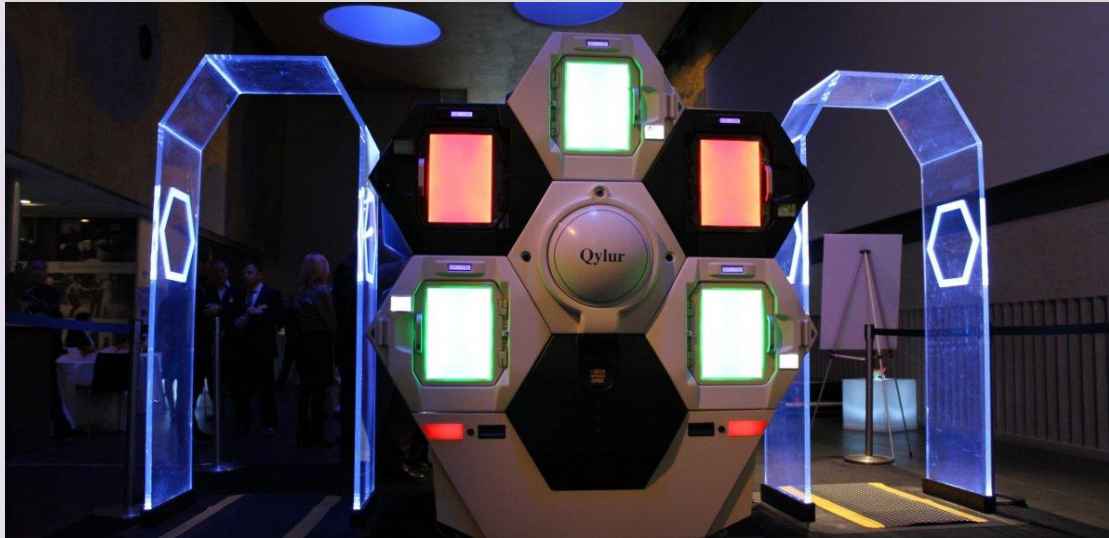


A woman uses the Qylatron at Levi's Stadium. (Qylur)

Nov 2015 – We're all familiar with the security procedures at sports arenas, amusement parks and other large venues. You wait in line, then walk through a metal detector and hand over your bag to a security guard, who quickly sweeps through its contents with a flashlight before handing it back to you.
"What if there was a better way?" says Lisa Dolev.

An Israeli air force veteran and security consultant who specializes in suicide bombings, Dolev wanted to create a better security scanner for years. But watching footage of the Madrid terrorist attacks in 2004 pushed her into action. That evening, she sat down and drew a sketch of a new kind of security machine.





That sketch became the [Qylatron Entry Experience Solution](#), a technology which Dolev says can provide faster, easier and more accurate security screening. The Qylatron is currently being used on a limited daily basis at Levi's Stadium in San Francisco. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Transportation Security Laboratory is also [considering](#) the system for a variety of security checkpoints, including at airports.

The Qylatron looks like a futuristic bee hive, with multiple hexagonal boxes stacked on top of one another. A patron puts his or her ticket in the machine's ticket slot, which opens a door to one of the pods. The person then places a bag inside, and the door locks. Inside the machine, various sensors scan the bag for weapons and other banned items. If the bag is determined to be safe, the door unlocks. If not, an alarm goes off to begin a security procedure.

Dolev is cagey about the details of how the scanning works. "We're in security," she says. But she can say that the machines use a combination of multi-view x-rays, chemical sensors and artificial intelligence.

The artificial intelligence component is, perhaps, the most unique aspect of the Qylatron. The machine's algorithm allows it to "learn" about different objects, making it better at distinguishing threats from ordinary items. For example, a Qylatron in a rainy city might quickly learn the shape of an umbrella.

The Qylatron can also communicate with "peer" machines around the globe to enhance its learning. Peers might include airport security systems or subway security scanners—basically, any machine that has a similar

purpose and is working to detect similar threats.

The Qylatron's intelligence allows it to be personalized based on its venue. A Qylatron at an amusement park might learn how to detect picnic foods and allow them to pass unimpeded, while a machine at an alcohol-free concert venue could quickly learn the signature of vodka hidden in a bottle of Diet Coke.

By scanning patrons' tickets, the machines can also personalize their approach based on known identities. A VIP might get a special welcome message on the machine's external screen. A chef who has come to cook at a venue might be allowed to bring in knives, whereas the same knives in another guest's bag would cause a security alert.

"Each machine needs to have a different algorithm," Dolev says. "It becomes specialized and learns for the venue."

The system can process 600 people an hour—five at a time—and needs only four human operators.

Creating the Qylatron took seven years of research and "an army" of engineers—chemical, mechanical, electrical and industrial—as well as designers, marketers and more. The Qylatron is the signature product of [Qylur Intelligent Systems](#), Dolev's San Francisco-based security company.

The name Qylatron may sound like something from a Star Trek episode. But it was actually inspired by nature. "Qylur" is a sonic echo of the [star-nosed mole](#) (*Condylura cristata*). Star-nosed moles, though blind, can make quick decisions thanks to the thousands



of sensory receptors in their snouts.

Dolev says Qylur technology may have applications other than security, such as agriculture or medical diagnostics. The key is the way the technology uses sensory data in combination with artificial intelligence to make

quick decisions about how to proceed with a specific task.

“That’s what I mean by intelligent machines,” Dolev says. “Machines that make critical decisions and changing decisions.”

2015 Airport innovations

Source: <http://www.airport-business.com/2015/06/top-10-airport-innovations-2015-far/>

AirAsia and Type22 launch Malaysia’s first fully automated self-service bag drop system



This April AirAsia launched a complete self-service bag drop solution – Scan&Fly from Type22 – at Senai International Airport (Johor Bahru), which became the first airport in AirAsia’s network to deploy the system. AirAsia passengers flying from the airport in the south of Malaysia can now print their bag tags at a check-in kiosk before proceeding to the automated bag drop counter. At the counter they simply have to scan their boarding pass and bag tag using a handheld scanner and if everything is in order and the bag satisfies the carrier’s size and weight criteria, it will be automatically deposited into the baggage handling system.

AirAsia has offered self-tagging at select locations since 2013, but passengers have still had to drop their bag at a manned bag drop counter. The introduction of the new system at Senai International Airport marked the first time AirAsia passengers can complete the entire check-in and bag drop process without any assistance from an airline agent. It only takes up to two minutes and 35 seconds to complete the whole check-in process.

Following the implementation of the bag drop system at Senai International Airport, AirAsia also launched home-printed bag tags on two of its routes. The ‘Home Tag’ service, which allows passengers to print their bag tag at home, is now available to passengers flying between Johor Bahru-Kuching and Johor Bahru-Kuala Lumpur. To make use of this service, passengers just have to print their bag tag on an A4 sheet paper when they print their boarding pass, fold the paper and place it in a provided plastic cover, and attach it to their bag. Upon arrival at the airport, they can then drop the bag at a dedicated bag drop counter.

The carrier has also confirmed that it plans to roll out its fully automated self-service bag drop solution at more locations, including Bangkok’s Don Mueang International Airport, Phuket International Airport, Langkawi International Airport and “a few stations in Indonesia”.



Abu Dhabi Airport implements automated document authentication



Abu Dhabi Airports last month invested in an automated document authentication system that will further enhance its security and expedite processing times at the entrance to the security checkpoint.

When a passenger scans their traditional, mobile or home-printed boarding pass, the new system automatically validate the data, checks it for duplicates and cross-references it against the Airport Operational Database and the airline's Departure Control System. The information is then displayed to a security agent on a graphical user interface. The system, SITA's

iValidate, includes four security lanes with automatic gates, four mobile/paper boarding pass scanners and four hand-held wireless boarding pass scanners. It will initially be deployed in Terminal 3 economy, followed by the Terminal 3 business area, and will then be implemented in both economy and business areas in Terminal 1.

"Deploying such an advanced technology is a further demonstration of Abu Dhabi Airports' determination to use the very best the market has to offer. Effectively managing the balance between continuous passenger flow and stringent security measures is a fundamental part of our operations, and the task is even more important in view of our continued growth," Ahmad Al Haddabi, Chief Operations Officer at Abu Dhabi Airports, said. "With this new technology, verifying passenger documentation will be done quickly and efficiently, while at the same time improving the passenger experience. This is all part of our on-going programme to deliver a smooth flowing airport that affords passengers sufficient comfort and time to enjoy all the facilities on offer."

Iberia, Aena and Siemens partner on new check-in and bag drop solution

Iberia gave the passenger more independence and sped up the passenger journey when it launched its



new service enabling departing passengers to obtain boarding passes and luggage tags and to put their luggage directly onto the conveyor belt without assistance, using a machine next to check-in counters 818-819 in Iberia's hub at Madrid-Barajas Airport. The new comprehensive self-check-in system was a pilot project developed in

collaboration with the airport's operator Aena Aeropuertos and Siemens.



“This project is the consequence of the magnificent collaboration in recent years by Iberia, AENA and Siemens Postal Parcel and Airport Logistics, resulting in a high-performance system to consistently improve the passenger experience at Adolfo Suárez Madrid-Barajas Airport,” said Nerea Torres, President and CEO, Siemens Solutions for Airports and Logistics in Spain. “This innovative system is a new advance in ‘traveller empowerment’, giving the passenger more autonomy and saving airport waiting time.”

Enrique Robledo, Iberia’s Director in Madrid airport, commented: “With this equipment made by Siemens Solutions for Airports and Logistics in Spain we launch a global project, led by Aena, which will carry on throughout 2015, in which we will test several systems for improving the customer experience during the passenger and luggage check-in process, lending greater autonomy to the passenger who can now complete the process including the delivery of luggage without assistance. This improvement initiative, within the framework of the Ágora Project, is a continuation of the technological innovation and improvement trend driven by Iberia with the aim of making Madrid Airport one of the leading international hubs.”

The ‘Happy Flow’ biometric passenger token project is launched at Aruba Airport



The first of its kind Aruba Happy Flow project – in which biometrics are used as the key identifier at all airport checkpoints – was launched at Aruba Airport in May. The pilot project, which will run for the next two years, will see facial recognition technology used to identify passengers at check-in, bag drop, border control and aircraft boarding. Once the passenger’s passport and facial image have been linked at the initial check-in stage, they will not have to show their passport or boarding pass again before boarding the aircraft.

The project is the result of collaboration between Aruba, the Netherlands, Aruba Airport Authority, Schiphol Group and KLM, while electronic identity solutions specialist Vision-Box has been awarded the tender to implement the project. Aruba’s Prime Minister Mike Eman heralded the launch of the pilot as “an extremely innovative and important step in the transportation industry for passengers, not only for Aruba, but worldwide”.

Initially, a limited number of KLM passengers travelling with an EU passport will be invited to participate in the Happy Flow pilot. Jos Nijhuis, CEO and President of Schiphol Group, which manages Aruba Airport, commented: “With Aruba Happy Flow, together we have made an innovative step to further improve the comfort for the passenger. This is a unique project where amongst others the public and private passenger processes are combined. I have high expectations



of the results. If the experience and test results are positive, we will further develop this project."

The future of airport security: Thermal lie-detectors and cloned sniffer dogs

Source: <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/11/25/tech/innovation/future-airport-security/>



November 2011 – After the EU's announcement that it will ban "backscatter" x-ray body scanners, airports may have to look harder at alternative security measures. From Bluetooth tracking to thermal lie-detector cameras, we take a glimpse into the weird and wonderful future of airport security.

The check-point of the future

Earlier this year, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) demonstrated its vision for the "checkpoint of the future" -- a series of neon-lit tunnels, each equipped with an array of eye-scanners, x-ray machines, and metal and liquid detectors.

Heralding an end to "one size fits all screening," the association says that passengers will be assigned a "travel profile" and ushered into one of three corridors accordingly.

"Known Travelers," (those who have completed background checks with government authorities) for instance, will cruise through the light blue security corridor with little more than an ID check, while those guided through the yellow "Enhanced" corridor will be subjected to an array of iris scans and sensitive contraband detectors.

Although still at the proof of concept stage, the IATA is hoping to have these colorful checkpoints installed in airports within the next five to seven years.

Thermal lie-detection



Feeling guilty? Got something to hide? A team of UK-based researchers claim to have developed a thermal lie-detection camera that can automatically spot a burning conscience.

The system could be used during customs interviews and at passport control to check whether people entering the country are giving a true account of themselves.



The thermal-imaging camera captures variations in facial temperature in response to questioning. "When someone is making something up on the spot, brain activity usually changes and you can detect this through the thermal camera," said professor Hassan Ugail, who leads the research.

At present, the UK's Home Office and HM Revenue & Customs are sponsoring the system's development, but will not reveal the name of the airport where it's being tested.

Bluetooth passenger tracking

Finland's largest airport is harnessing the tracking potential of a device already carried by most passengers: their mobile phones.



COURTESY OSLO AIRPORT

The new system at Helsinki-Vantaa Airport monitors Bluetooth signals to examine passenger movement around the terminal, and uses this information to predict waiting times in front of the security gate.

For now, the technology is simply helping airport operators with crowd management at busy periods, while providing "opted-in" passengers with accurate waiting-time estimates, lit-up in front of them on flight

information display screens.

Further down the line, Amor Group -- which developed the technology -- says that the system could track any passenger as soon as they enter the car park or bus station and, in time, be used to create "passenger profiles" -- detailing the behavior of individuals to create "targeted retail activity and process optimization."

'Super clone' sniffer dogs

Professor Byeong-chun Lee, who established his reputation in 2005 as the driving force behind the world's first ever dog clone, has bought a new breed of super-sniffers to South Korea's Incheon Airport.

They may look like an ordinary pack of golden Labrador Retrievers, but these dogs are all genetically identical to "Chase," a dog whose legendary snout kept him top of Incheon's drug-detection rankings right up until his retirement in 2007.

While, on average, only three out of 10 selectively bred sniffer dogs trained by the airport's security staff have the nostrils for the job, every single one of the new clone recruits have made the grade -- providing Incheon with one of the world's most formidable teams of drug detectors.

But it's not just contraband smugglers who should fear the arrival of this sniffing super-breed. Lee's next clone will be a high-performance "quarantine dog" -- gifted with an enhanced capacity for detecting the presence of disease in humans.



AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Behavioral Detection Officers

In the United States, the Transport Security Administration (TSA) is not just relying on fancy gadgets and genetically enhanced nostrils to improve security: it's turning to good old-fashioned human instinct.



AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Behavioural Detection Officers (BDOs) have been trained to engage passengers in casual conversation in an effort to weed out suspicious behavior.

According to the TSA, the pilot scheme aims to stimulate the "involuntary physical and physiological reactions" that people display when they are fearful of being discovered.

BDOs are currently operating at



approximately 161 airports nationwide. So next time an airport official starts talking about the unseasonably good weather, chances are they think you've got something to hide.

Israel's top 10 airport security technologies

Source: <http://www.israel21c.org/israels-top-10-airport-security-technologies-2/>

March 2010 – Since the attempted terror attack on board a US airplane last Christmas day, airport authorities around the world are in a race to find novel solutions to fight terror. Israeli strategic and technical tactics feature high on their lists. What's the secret to the country's success in keeping Ben Gurion Airport terror free?

"Israel concentrates on the passengers and not their luggage so we have a real edge over the rest of the world in protecting travelers," says Rafi Sela, a top security consultant and former chief security officer at the Israel Airport Authority. "This is in addition to us protecting the whole airport, while the others merely try to achieve aviation security," he tells ISRAEL21c.

Sela, who advises governments and airport authorities all over the world, has become the leading figure advocating Israel's unique approach to airport security in the past six years.

Through his company AR Challenges, he uses approaches and technology services rooted in Israeli innovation to try to help his clients stay one-step ahead of potential terrorists. The global transportation security consultancy, of which he is president, works with high profile clients including Canada's RCMP, the US Navy Seals and airports around the world.

Making use of homegrown technologies, some of them developed by whiz-kids in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Intelligence Corps 8200 army unit, Sela believes that Israel's strength in airport security is because it boasts near-invisible protective 'rings' of security around the airport and passengers.

Most airports around the world often lack measures as basic as video surveillance, he explains. "The airports are so concentrated on finding your bottles of water and perfumes that they don't even look at you," says Sela. "The security personnel forget that they are in the business of looking for terrorists."

At Ben Gurion Airport you can take a coffee on board. According to Sela, airport security personnel don't care what you take on the plane. "The security in Israel checks you as a passenger, and not the luggage. If you are cleared as a person then who cares what you bring on the plane with you?"

Here's our list of Israel's top 10 technologies to keep our airports safe.

1. Trace-Safe – An alternative to body scans

They're in use in at least 19 airports in the US, but most people balk at the idea of a full body scan which essentially strips a passenger naked using radiation technology. Dangerous for the psyche and also for the frequent traveler who is exposed to numerous doses of radiation, an Israeli company working with a US partner could have the solution.



Trace-Safe from Israel and Raptor from the US have co-developed a chemical process, called [TraceGuard](#), which can free particles from fabric and luggage for speedy detection and analysis.

The technology detects harmful substances and not benign ones like perfume or pharmaceuticals. It doesn't show false alarms,

doesn't need filters or a cleaning. "You only want to detect the substances that you can make explosives or biological agents out of," says Sela.

It can be integrated into scanners and magnetometers and also into a wand that can be passed over both people and luggage.



While Trace-Safe is struggling financially right now, Sela believes that TraceGuard has the potential to bring an end to the use of all other equipment at airports, including the detested body and shoe scanners. “I am among those experts who believe the full body scans are wrong and not healthy for people,” Sela tells ISRAEL21c. “Especially since they are passing through radiation; it defeats the cause.”

2. Suspect Detection System – Tracing the sweat of terror

Suspect Detection System (SDS) is an automated interrogation and background check technology for both travelers and airport employees. It's like a polygraph machine for catching terrorists – an advanced and automated filtering tool that can [identify potential suspects](#) from among tens of thousands of people.



With human selectors and security personnel there is always the danger of introducing human error into the security check. But SDS's VR-1000 has been built with the assumption that very sophisticated terrorists may not be on the wanted lists of Interpol police or Homeland Security.

The technology works like a lie detector to monitor the psychological and physiological fear of a terror suspect and to assuage Americans' fears of being “profiled.” The test works like a robot, searching for cues that only terror suspects are likely to radiate.

3. BellSecure – Consolidating data

BellSecure is an Israeli security company that is so high up on the security chain that it's impossible to locate its website. The new security platform, according to Sela, facilitates real time communication and alerts for both travelers and cargo. The start-up company developed by three Israeli entrepreneurs is now being promoted in both Israel and Canada.

Created by former soldiers in the highly prestigious 8200 IDF Intelligence Corp group, the platform provides the missing link between the identification and verification of people and cargo at the airport with local and worldwide authorities. With many systems in different countries, most of which are incompatible, the BellSecure solution can help to identify a secure and reliable no-fly list that derives data in real time from a multitude of sources.

Sela says that it manages security in a way that the \$14 billion system bought by US security officials will never do. Currently looking for a pilot airport for a test run, BellSecure connects Homeland Security, Interpol data, pictures, voice and video to create a unified database that can be managed worldwide.

4. Eltel – Monitoring the monitors

Eltel, a subsidiary of Elul Group, provides logistics support to Israeli armed forces and government agencies. [Eltel](#) has developed a “smart” computerized training system that helps airport personnel deal swiftly and competently with security risks. This is a unified training system.

“This company owns a very unique competency program, which it can verify at the scanners as to how well a security person is performing,” explains Sela.

“You need to know they feel and how well they are doing when they are monitoring scans. This company provides a continuous competency check program. Nobody else in the world has it. Not only could it help tell managers when staff need a break to rest their eyes, it could create standards on how security personnel are managed and monitored,” he predicts.

The training system not only provides reports, but monitors those standards on a continuous basis.

5. WeCU – Here's looking at you

WeCU aims to blend high-tech with psychology. It presents symbols and images that only certain terror operatives will “see.” Imagine suddenly seeing a picture of your mother projected on an airport wall. That's the idea behind [WeCU](#), which collects unusual responses to its images to trace and foil suspects.





While Sela likes the idea, he foresees that some governments, such as Canada's, may take issue with this particular technology that smacks of 'Big Brother.' "This company has an algorithm that in some countries would be viewed as an invasion of privacy – Canada will never install it. I've told Canada that you can't do security with political correctness. As long as you are doing it without a real plan, it will never work."

If one could combine SDS with WeCU, this approach of profiling terrorists wouldn't be so bluntly viewed as an invasion, suggests Sela.

6. Bust the security line with your own "Biometric VIP" card

Frequent flyers will be happy to know that these biometric cards being issued in Israel by the Airports Authority could make flights easier and safer the world over. No one wants to arrive hours before a flight and have to contend with unpredictable periods of waiting in line.

The biometric scanners are cards similar in size to credit cards that contain personal, biometric information about each traveler. Perhaps in the future they'll be linked to international frequent flyer schemes. You'll have to wait a little longer though, since for now they're only being distributed to El Al's business class passengers as a pilot test.

Although Sela likes the idea, he says this particular company would need a solution like BellSecure's to authorize the check.



7. MagShoe – Keep your shoes on

While numerous Israeli airport security technologies in use around the world are undetectable to the naked eye, many American travelers are already familiar with MagShoe. Instead of the sometimes embarrassing and always inconvenient procedure of removing one's shoes for airport security checks, the Israeli-made [MagShoe](#) lets travelers simply step up to be checked. The device needs only a few seconds to scan for concealed weapons.

If use of TraceGuard's system becomes widespread, the MagShoe will become obsolete, says Sela. But MagShoe is still very effective for tracing objects hidden around the ankle area. Find it beside scanners and x-ray machines across America.

8. Vigilant – Sleeping with one eye open

[Vigilant's surveillance systems](#) stay awake even if security personnel fall asleep. The Tel Aviv-based



company, working with the Pelco company in California, has high-end installations already in place at various US locations including the George Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston, Texas, and the Salt Lake City International Airport in Utah.

The intelligent digital monitoring system improves crime and terror prevention, not only in airports but also on American streets, like in Manhattan for example, one of dozens of locations that's hooked



up to [Vigilant's](#) digital monitoring system. The company's Video Surveillance Center is a fully digital management solution that provides a surveillance wall. It's a turnkey solution for any surveillance center, airports included, that also includes a video motion detector.

9. Briefcam – Step back in time



This Israeli company provides a video synopsis technology that allows security personnel to quickly and effectively review and index surveillance footage. [Briefcam](#) helps to identify individuals at border crossings, at airports, or in and around power plants. Since fewer people are needed to review footage, the potential for human error is drastically reduced, as is the manpower needed to track events and uncover unusual occurrences.

While Sela likes this technology, he says airports going for video surveillance options might prefer the Canadian-Israeli company [Visual Defense](#). Based on technology from the 8200 army unit, Visual Defense can watch thousands of cameras at the same time. It's the only solution used in the subway in New York City in all underground stations. If airports decide to start using video surveillance, this would be the camera management company to use, Sela suggests.

10. ACRO-P.E.T. – Looks like a pen, sniffs out TATP



If the stewards on-board the recently foiled terror attack en route to Detroit had had this device, security ground personnel would have been better prepared for their task-at-hand, explains Prof. Ehud Keinan from the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology. In partnership with American researchers, the professor has developed a pen-like device that “sniffs” out TATP, a main component in explosive detonators, used in terror attacks in Israel, and a compound made famous by the shoe bomber.

Costing about \$25 per “pen” and now sold through the Israeli company [Acro Security](#), the [ACRO-P.E.T. pen](#) (Peroxide Explosives Tester) is one of a number of new chemical-based technologies that work to foil terrorists at airports, before they board an aircraft; and also to investigate suspicious cases and behavior while in flight.



What they don't tell you about Israel's famously tight airport security

By Chris Weller

Source: <http://www.businessinsider.com/israels-ben-gurion-airport-security-uses-secret-sticker-system-2015-6>

June 2015 – A few months ago, I was sitting in the terminal at Ben Gurion International Airport, in Tel Aviv, reading a fellow traveler's account of flying out of Israel. I'd heard horror stories of strip searches and endless lines. I was curious what I was really up against. I wasn't surprised to learn [security is top-notch](#).



Chris Weller/Business Insider I appeared to be a high-level threat at one point in my life.

After all, I had already been searched and questioned twice, once through the window of my taxi and again before the terminal doors. All this and I hadn't even entered the airport yet. **But then I read about the stickers.**

I learned that before any passenger ever gives up his luggage to the fine folks at Ben Gurion International, an employee places a neon yellow sticker on the back of your passport. On it is a 10-digit number. The first number,

ranging from one to six, indicates your perceived threat level to whomever else you're passed along. I got a five.

After I got back, I relayed this story to some friends who were more experienced traveling to and from Israel. My ego deflated a little to learn I didn't actually seem threatening, just more suspicious than average.

For one, I'm not Jewish. That automatically raises some red flags in a country fraught with religious and cultural conflicts. I was also on assignment as a reporter, traveling alone, without so much as an estranged second cousin I could say I knew. The [profiling](#) alarms had to be blaring.

The system isn't official, just the sort of through-the-grapevine rumors that travelers seemed to have agreed is true. So I can't know for sure what would have happened had I gotten a six. But looking back, maybe I don't want to.

As Lia Tarachansky [wrote back in 2010 for Mondoweiss](#), while a one rating "is awesome," a six indicates that "you're f-----." It appears to be reserved for Palestinians, Muslims, and hostile internationals.

Extreme, yes. But effective.

No flight leaving Ben Gurion has ever been hijacked, and the airline servicing Israel, El Al, hasn't seen an attack in more than 30 years.

Too bad [the TSA has yet to find a workable system](#) of their own.

Chris Weller joined Business Insider in 2015 as an Ideas Reporter. Previously, he was a senior reporter at Medical Daily. He has written for Newsweek, The Atlantic, and has appeared on NPR.

Brussels attacks: One of the bombers worked in EU Parliament

Source: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35979965>

Apr 06 – **One of the men who carried out the devastating bomb attacks in Brussels once worked as a cleaner at the European Parliament, officials say.**

He had month-long summer jobs there in 2009 and 2010, the EU Parliament said, without revealing his identity.



Sources, however, say he is Najim Laachraoui, one of the airport bombers.



The Belgian prime minister has defended his country's approach to fighting terror

threats, insisting Belgium is not a "failed state". Charles Michel said everyone in authority had to take a share of the blame for failings before and after 22 March.

The attacks by so-called Islamic State on a Brussels airport and metro station killed 32 people.

Laachraoui, already a major suspect on the run after the Paris attacks in November, was named as one of the two bombers who targeted Zaventem airport.

The EU Parliament said the cleaning firm had provided proof that the person hired had no criminal record at the time.

The BBC's James Reynolds in Brussels says the capital's metro and its airport are gradually reopening.

'Normal life'

Mr Michel said 30 measures were being put place in Belgium, including **a ban on pre-paid mobile phone cards.**

"Our key message today is we return to normal life in Brussels and in Belgium," the Associated Press quoted him as telling reporters.

Image copyright EPA Image caption Prime Minister Charles Michel called for better cross-border intelligence co-operation

"When there is an attack like that of course that's a failure and nobody can deny this," Prime Minister Michel said.

"[But] I cannot accept the idea that we're a failed state."

Belgium has been accused of taking an un-coordinated approach to terror threats because it has multiple institutions representing the country's complex linguistic and political makeup.

The Brussels region alone has six police zones.

According to Belgium's De Tijd newspaper, Mr Michel said it was "short-sighted to say a unified police force could have prevented the attacks".

He said there had been some successes like the recent arrest of the surviving suspect of the Paris attacks last November, Salah Abdeslam, adding it had taken 10 years to track down al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden after the 9/11 attacks in the US.

The prime minister told our correspondent that giving more capacity to Belgian's security services would be "crucial for the next months to succeed".

"This means more equipment but also more capacities for our intelligence services," he said.

He added that his country's geographical position meant that Belgium was a particular attraction for potential attackers.

"Belgium is a small country in the heart of Europe, it means that it is very easy to go to London, Paris etc," he said.

"It is an easy place to organise attacks in other countries of Europe. It means we have to work better with our partners, and we have to upgrade our capacities for security."

The search for the 22 March attackers is not yet over as pictures taken at Zaventem airport show three men entering the terminal building with explosives.

Laachraoui and Ibrahim el-Bakraoui detonated their bombs and the third is thought to have escaped.

Better tactics for dealing with terrorist threats to cities

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160406-better-tactics-for-dealing-with-terrorist-threats-to-cities>

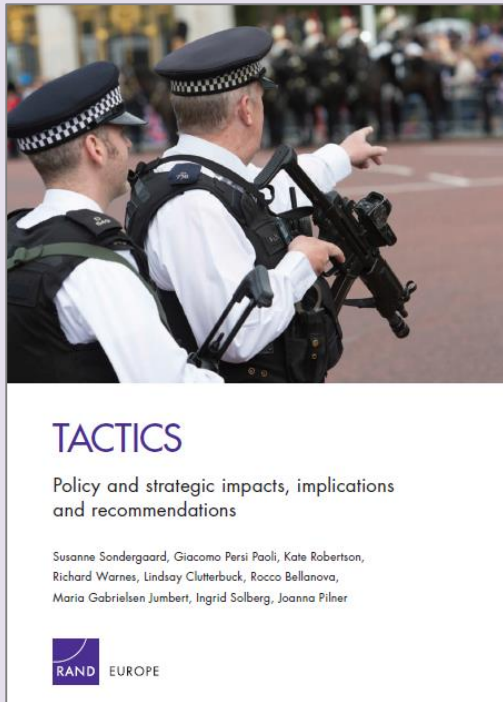
Apr 06 – A new report has highlighted the essential role of counter-terrorism technologies used by diverse partnerships formed across all levels of security services, from international agencies to local law enforcement, when dealing with terrorist threats to European cities.

Tactical Approach to Counter Terrorists in Cities (TACTICS), a project funded by the European Commission, aims to create a more effective counter-terrorism system to be used in urban areas across European



countries. The project was commissioned in light of the increased threat of terrorism in European cities.

RAND reports that as part of the project, RAND



Europe developed and tested a credible terrorist scenario to assess different approaches to the detection, assessment and response to terrorist threats in cities. Eight case studies, focusing on different technology applications in the field of counter-terrorism or public security, were analyzed to extract lessons from previous technology deployments and to provide policy recommendations for the future development and implementation of counter-terrorist technologies.

RAND Europe's five counter-terrorism policy recommendations based on the analysis:

1. Deploy appropriate counter-terrorism technologies that enhance decision making, but pay attention to the evolving technology landscape.
2. Establish partnerships with all levels of national government, law enforcement agencies, private sector security companies and local authorities, while also collaborating with international partners and allies.
3. Where possible, engage with the public, the media and local communities when deploying new counter-terrorism technologies, such as surveillance systems.

4. Carefully consider the extent to which data collection and data sharing during a counter-terrorism operation are proportionate, necessary and justified.

5. Identify and address any potential privacy issues as early as possible before introducing new counter-terrorism technologies.

Richard Warnes, security analyst at RAND Europe, said: "Our scenario showed that deploying appropriate counter-terrorism technologies would significantly enhance decision making during a counter-terrorism operation. However, European countries must identify potential privacy issues before deployment, while also ensuring that the technologies have the capabilities required to deal with terrorist threats."

Warnes continued: "Establishing diverse partnerships with international allies, national governments, law enforcement agencies, private security companies and local authorities, will provide a more complete view of a counter-terrorism operation and will ensure that decisions are made more quickly and effectively. However, extensive data sharing between different parties will require careful consideration, especially when identifying the point at which this becomes justified and necessary during a counter-terrorism operation."

The TACTICS project team has developed a technology-ready concept that could support counter-terrorism operations across European countries. This could be integrated easily into existing organisational, operational and technological processes for counter-terrorism. RAND notes that alongside this technology-ready concept, a strategy has been developed to include a guide to deploying counter-terrorism technologies and a checklist to help European countries make an informed decision as to whether or not the TACTICS counter-terrorism system would be appropriate for them.

Warnes said: "We have developed a concept to facilitate a clearer understanding of terrorist threats and the capabilities required to counteract them. The aim is to enable a faster, more effective and more efficient response from a country's security forces."



— Read more in Susanne Sondergaard et al., *TACTICS: Policy and strategic impacts, implications and recommendations* (RAND, 2016).

New study examines FARC's development of narco-submarines

Source: <https://www.start.umd.edu/news/new-study-examines-farc-s-development-narco-submarines>

Apr 05 – Over the last 40 years, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) has proven to be one of the most violent and formidable non-state actors in the world. Showing sophistication and adaptability, the group has upgraded its former methods of drug transportation in favor of a more covert alternative, according to new START research.

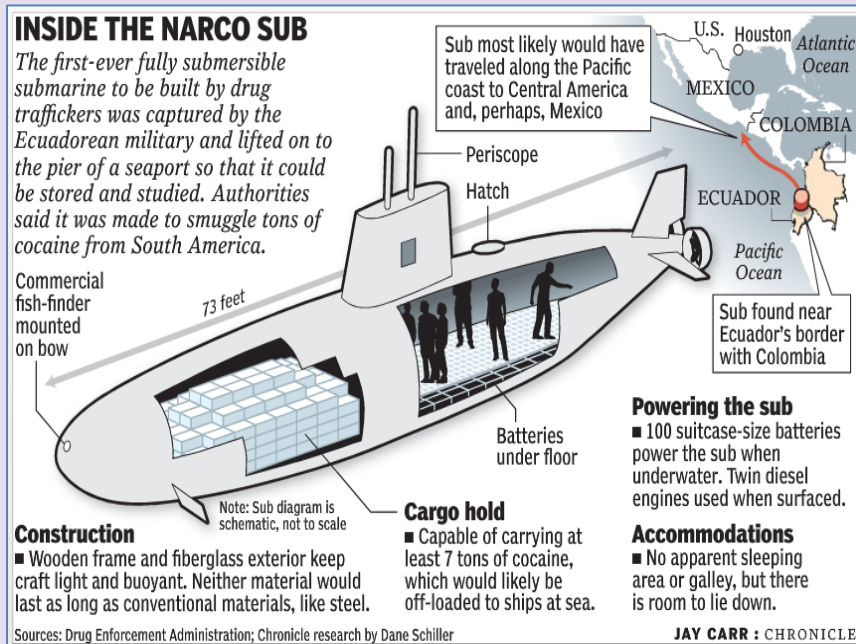
A new article explores FARC's recent evolution and how it now utilizes **narco-submarines**. Part of a

broader series of case studies that discuss the phenomenon of complex engineering tasks by non-state actors, this unique case study outlines the different phases of narco-submarine development, FARC's ability to overcome design challenges, and the implications of its newfound tactical advantage.

The study attributes FARC's success to its financial and human resources, influence, safe havens, and culture of learning.

"The level of commitment demonstrated by FARC to this cause is exceptional," said Michelle Jacome, a START researcher who led the study.

"The iterative process demonstrates how innovation, coupled with motivation and resources resulted in



yet another stand-alone capability acquired by this group. The threat now lies not only in the smuggling of illicit drugs, but the potential dual use of this resource for other more nefarious purposes of transporting other types of materials or weapons across the region."

According to the Jacome, the broader implication of these findings is that clandestine organizations are willing to undertake complex engineering tasks in their efforts to overcome defensive technologies implemented by state actors. Furthermore, FARC now possesses a capability that can be shared with other dangerous organizations.

► To read the full report visit:

<http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1509&context=jss>

Designing Danger: Complex Engineering by Violent Non-State Actors

Source: <https://www.start.umd.edu/news/designing-danger-complex-engineering-violent-non-state-actors>

Apr 04 – In a special issue of the *Journal of Strategic Security*, START experts explore the threat of violent non-state actors (VNSAs) exploiting emerging technologies and executing complex engineering

operations to facilitate their violent and criminal activities. The issue, "Designing Danger: Complex Engineering by Violent Non-State Actors," presents the results of a



series of case studies of VNSAs and their attempts to increase their capabilities through engaging in sophisticated engineering efforts.

The cases studied include:

- The Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) and the development of advanced mortar systems;
- Aum Shinrikyo's chemical and nuclear weapons programs;
- The production of submersibles and submarines by FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia);
- The Zetas transnational criminal organization's construction and maintenance of an expansive radio communication network across Mexico;
- Hamas and the construction of attack tunnel networks from Gaza into Israel; and
- A.Q. Khan nuclear smuggling network.

"These case studies have provided several insights into the decision, implementation and outcomes of engineering efforts undertaken by violent non-state actors," said Dr. Gary Ackerman, director of START's Unconventional Weapons and Technology (UWT) division. "Despite being forced to operate clandestinely and facing the pressures of security forces seeking to hunt them down and neutralize them, at least a subset of VNSAs have shown themselves to be capable of some genuinely impressive feats of engineering."

In his article, "[Comparative Analysis of VNSA Complex Engineering Efforts](#)," Ackerman discusses broader findings across the entire series of case studies, offering a set of hypotheses and potential indicators that can contribute to operational and strategic intelligence assessments.

"If our hypotheses are confirmed by further investigation, many of them can be directly employed as observable indicators to show when a VNSA has the intent to engage in, or is already engaging in, complex engineering efforts," Ackerman said.

Among the most useful of the potential observable indicators: complex engineering efforts become most likely in situations where there have been changes to a VNSA's strategic or tactical environment for which the group is not able to compensate with existing technologies and where the group is prevented from externally acquiring the necessary technology. This was arguably a key driver in the cases of the PIRA, FARC and Los Zetas.

The case studies also showed that the structure and characteristics of a VNSA likely contribute to its pursuit of and success with complex engineering efforts. Further research might confirm that the VNSAs that are most likely to pursue and succeed in complex engineering efforts are those which: (1) have a penchant for taking risks; (2) are willing and able to devote substantial resources to the effort for an extended period of time; (3) can conduct R&D through a specialized organ in a location of relative security; (4) tend to persevere in the face of setbacks; and (5) either already have, or can relatively easily acquire, the necessary expertise.

"[Designing Danger: Complex Engineering by Violent Non-State Actors](#)," is freely available online through the Journal of Strategic Security, a double-blind peer-reviewed professional journal published quarterly by Henley-Putnam University with support from the University of South Florida Libraries.

Active Shooter - When Lock Down Is Not Enough

By Rodney E. Andreasen

Source: http://www.domesticpreparedness.com/Training/Exercises/Active_Shooter_-_When_Lock_Down_Is_Not_Enough/

Law enforcement officers, paramedics, and other responders have received extensive training in dealing with active shooters and the wounds resulting from active shooter incidents. However, the potential force multipliers in all these attacks that are just beginning to receive attention are the potential victims at the scene.

Apr 06 – The frequency of active shooter incidents seems to have increased over the past few years, as revealed in the 2013 Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) [report on active shooters](#). As indicated in the report, no organization is safe, and any organization has a chance of being the target of



these acts. Law enforcement, as well as other first responder, agencies have done excellent jobs in developing response options as well as medical survival techniques. However, much more can be done to better prepare for such threats.

A Growing Need to Train Citizens

Training available for citizens has lagged behind, even as programs to do such have continually evolved. In many cases, there is an attitude that an active shooter cannot be stopped or that it is the job of law enforcement to neutralize such threats. Although this has been the case in numerous incidents, [FBI statistics](#) indicate that 60 percent of active shooter events are over by the time law enforcement or other first responders arrive. Coupled with the fact that the arrival time of law enforcement and other responders averages 5-6 minutes or longer, the number of potential victims multiplies.

Issues surrounding citizen training have hampered measures that would ultimately save lives. One of these issues involves a reluctance to conduct comprehensive trainings to prepare individuals to survive active shooter events. Many organizations require personnel to sit through a short presentation on active shooters only to be given the basics of an active shooter incident, related statistics, and a rudimentary explanation of what they need to do. In some cases, the training involves the following steps to ensure personal safety: go into lockdown (lock doors if possible), turn out the lights, pull the shades, hide under desks, and silence cellphones. These passive options are not wrong, but can become so when no other options are provided.

Actual implementation of measures are, in most cases, never taught or employed within organizations. Current literature and numerous private training companies recommend having more than one option when dealing with active shooters. For example:

Although many organizations still embrace the lockdown-only procedure because it is a quick and easy way to stop or delay a shooter's attempts, this is not always the case. Questions remain about: what would happen if the lockdown fails; what would happen if the active shooter is able to breach the area that is currently in lockdown; and what options victims would have. To answer these questions, two specific incidents represent the impact of not having an options-based approach.

First was the 1999 Columbine High School shooting. The 9-1-1 tapes of the teacher in the library recorded her desperately trying to protect her students by telling them to stay on the floor and under the tables. She was not wrong in what she was telling the students to do because that is all she knew to do, which is reminiscent of the days of the Cold War and the "[Duck and Cover](#)" drills. However, as a result, the students became stationary targets for the shooter.

The second incident was the 2012 shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School. A [report released in November 2013](#) by the Attorney General Office of the State of Connecticut revealed how lockdown was not adequate in an active shooter situation. The school was already in a lockdown mode when the active shooter began the rampage. The attacker merely shot out the plate glass window on the side of the door that was secured and entered the school to commit the crimes. Again there was no wrong in this because this was simply the way it had always been done. This type of incident had never happened there before.

Option-Based Training Programs

Although there is no silver bullet approach to all active shooter events, citizen training can go beyond rudimentary basics to truly prepare all those within a respective organization to survive an active shooter incident. An option-based approach is, at present, the best answer for preparing personnel to survive an attack. The highly successful program developed by the city of Houston called "Run. Hide. Fight." is an excellent starting point for developing an option-based program. However, this approach should be expanded to include other trainings as well.

In much of the recent literature released by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the option-based approach is the common theme, but could be expanded to provide more opportunities for survival in these situations. New programs should use a dual-track approach to be more effective. The first track provides all the basic options to employ in case personnel find themselves in



an active shooter situation. Suggested training topics should include those outlined in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) [Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans](#), which include how to lockdown or evacuate when possible, as well as how to notify personnel of the active shooter's presence. Other subjects that should be discussed include, but are not limited to, how to barricade and, as a last resort, fight. All are recommended by the previously mentioned document and should be viewed as the baseline document for the second track.

The second track involves the actual hands-on application of these techniques in simulated situations. Again, FEMA's guide indicates that training and practice are the keys for successful employment of these options. By using a dual-track training process, the skills needed to perform the operation of active shooter survival becomes second nature. Training on numerous options can help people who find themselves in this situation disrupt the active shooter's path and cause the shooter to take time contemplating the next move. In most cases, these attackers are not targeting specific people, but rather trying to inflict as much harm to people as they can. Removing the opportunity from the crime triangle – capability, opportunity, and desire – disrupts the shooter's linear process and reduces the possibility of the attack occurring. The additional time needed to search for targets consequently provides more time for the arrival of law enforcement personnel.

Training & Practice for Success

Although many may feel that the ultimate responsibility for this training should fall on law enforcement, emergency management, or other identified organizational security specialists, this is not always the case. Numerous commercial programs exist today that provide train-the-trainer instruction and should be sought by those previously mentioned. Many of these programs build off the basic "Run. Hide. Fight." protocol and utilize a dual-track process. Additionally,

materials provided through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security provide a starting point for development of an internal training program for organizations that a training specialist could develop.

Regardless of the method chosen, some effort must be initiated to start the process. For the program to be a success, practice is needed to make this a process that becomes automatic and part of the everyday culture. Just like fire and tornado drills have become the norm for many organizations – especially schools – active shooter drills should become part of the organizational process with support from senior management.

Whether someone trained in an option-based response to an active shooter could make a difference or even stop an active shooter is evidenced in a 2015 incident aboard a French commuter train. Three Americans (two of which were military servicemen) travelling together were able to take down an attacker bent on a mass killing with a pistol and a fully automatic assault weapon. The attacker was stopped when the three passengers made a conscious decision to do something, and the fight portion of an option-based response was employed. The shooter was only able to inflict one gunshot wound and other nonfatal injuries before being subdued. The result was a team effort by the three persons to engage the shooter. They had options.

The lessons taught in the black-and-white 16-mm film's "Duck and Cover" drills in 1951 may have only provided limited protection against an indirect nuclear attack, but there is a key lesson to remember from that film. For those who grew up in the era of the Cold War, the threat was real and measures were taken to learn and practice those drills in school – a dual-track approach. The lessons became second nature and, more than 60 years later, are still remembered by many. Unlike the nuclear attack that never happened, the active-shooter scenario is a real threat that has occurred and will occur again. It is time to resurrect the dual-track approach of the 1950s to address the active shooter preparedness needs of today.

Rodney E. Andreasen, MS, MS, MA, FPPEM, CEM, is currently the emergency management director for Jackson County, Florida, and has served in that capacity for 15 years. He served 21 years in the United States Air Force in a variety of assignments in the United States and overseas. He retired from active



duty in 1999 with the rank of master sergeant. In 1999, he was selected to develop trainers and training programs for the Florida Department of Revenue. In 2001, he was selected for his current position. He is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi with a Master of Science degree in Technical and Occupational Education, Auburn University-Montgomery with Master of Science degree in Justice and Public Safety, and the Naval Post Graduate School with a Master of Arts degree in Security Studies-Homeland Security and Defense. He is a certified Florida Professional Emergency Manager (FPEM) and Certified Emergency Manager (CEM).



Counter-Terror Expert: “Knife Intifada linked to abuse of women in shame-honor cultures”

Source: <http://www.jerusalemonline.com/news/middle-east/israeli-palestinian-relations/counter-terror-expert-knife-intifada-linked-to-abuse-of-women-in-shame-honor-cultures-20294>



In an exclusive interview with counter-terror expert Nancy Hartevelt Kobrin, she explains that not incitement but the abuse of women in shame honor cultures is what is prompting the high level of female participation in the Knife Intifada.

April 06 – As we speak, Israel is experiencing a wave of terror known as the Knife Intifada. Since September 2015, 34 people have been killed and 413 others have been injured in 213 stabbing attacks, 83 shootings, and 42 car-ramping attacks that occurred within our country. Most of these terror attacks take place in Jerusalem and over the green line, although some also take place in Israel proper. Indeed, a couple of days ago, there was a terror attack in Rosh Ha-Ayin that was implemented by a female terrorist. This leads us into discussing another important trend of this wave of terror, which is the increasing number of women and girls who are choosing the path of terrorism. In an exclusive interview with JerusalemOnline, Israeli-American counter-terror expert Nancy Hartevelt Kobrin explained that the main cause of the high-level participation of women in the

Knife Intifada is not the widespread incitement emanating from the Palestinian Authority's leadership but rather the abuse of women in shame honor cultures. While she thinks that the incitement definitely is problematic and encourages young Palestinian women to wage terror attacks following the outbreak of the Knife Intifada, she insists that nevertheless it is a secondary motivating factor: “As a psychoanalyst, I look to early childhood development and child rearing practices. I look beyond the normally offered explanations such as poverty, lack of jobs, the internet, social media, etc. I do not dismiss these factors but I consider them secondary to the core problem. The problem is very early developmentally because of the way the female terrorists are



choosing to bond to the other through violence.”

The concept of a shame honor culture is quite complex for a Westerner to understand for such societies function completely differently from American and European societies. According to Kobrin, in shame-honor cultures like the Palestinian Authority, the group is considered more important than the individual: “In Arab Muslim culture, there is a well-known saying that Heaven ‘lies under the feet of the mother.’ The only female that a boy can touch growing up before he marries is his mother. This creates an obsession with the female.

Her ird (vagina) is the site of family honor. She is objectified from the beginning. If she ever damages her ird, the eldest brother is tasked to kill her. The honor killing for family members is really about loss of control over the female and hence a great humiliation for the males in the family if her vagina becomes tainted. Honor can only be cleansed by spilling blood.”

“The female has no way to redeem her honor,” Kobrin explained. “Shame honor cultures revolve around an obsession with the female and blood vengeance. Thus, the female grows up under a death threat. This causes tremendous annihilation anxiety, which she carries within herself unconsciously day in day out. This is in turn communicated unconsciously from one generation to the next and also communicated to the boys because all children are psychologically dependent upon their mother. Wherever you have domestic violence, it is terrorism. It then becomes a hop skip and a jump to having it externalized and transformed into political violence. They are interlocking violence. Annihilation anxiety of this ilk has been completely underestimated as to the impact on her developing psyche as a little girl.”

Kobrin stressed that a Palestinian woman can only obtain honor by having a male baby. She noted that as a result of this reality, baby boys in the Palestinian Authority are objectified from birth as “an object of honor. Life begins as an object and one learns to treat others as objects, not as people with real needs. Needs are considered dirty and contaminating in shame-honor cultures. A member must constantly purify him or herself through projection onto the other, which is feminized. The female is considered unconsciously the contaminated object. Whenever and wherever

a culture has a ‘Heroic Mother,’ it is a cover-up for the denigrated female. It is a defense mechanism against dependency needs and an overcompensation for being terrified of the female and her body – the fact that she is life giving. The males cannot really believe that a female so devalued is so powerful i.e. giving birth while they can’t. The males are unconsciously terrified of the female. That is why they go to such great lengths to control her. Power, control and submission replace intimacy.”

In Arab Muslim culture, it is considered a major taboo for a child to separate psychologically from the mother: “This means that they do not go through the same developmental phases as in the West. They do not go through separation and individuation. It is not a calm maternal attachment environment. It is instead one of maternal bondage and its accompanying sadomasochism. The boys feel smothered by their mothers. People are objects to one another. In shaming environments, children do not get to play. Play is extremely important to developing nuanced feeling and thinking about the world. This is the time that little children work through their scary feelings about themselves and others. Play helps them to separate out fantasy from reality. Play is vital to developing an independently functioning personality. Maternal attachment is key. This very special relationship is between the mother and the baby. It is within this bonding experience that the ABCs for empathy and morality are acquired. The mother is the cultural and emotional interpreter for the baby. We rarely think about how we come to think. It is a complicated process that we just take for granted but with many people especially those who become violent, we can surmise that they had very early problems linking emotions to words. They speak and they look normal but they are skating on thin ice emotionally. They are particularly susceptible to ideological falsehoods because their thinking is not adequately developed nor is it grounded in reality. If someone can’t separate from their mother psychologically that person can’t see ‘the forest from the trees.’ They have a cognitive impairment. Extreme ideologies act like a girdle for a fragile personality filled with rage. The shame honor group mentality is more on the order of a herd –



image: the Arab street. They are not, by and large, independent thinkers. They have 'thoughts without a thinker.'

"A shame honor culture is a culture of terror and to live under a death threat," Kobrin noted. "Terror can unconsciously drive a group toward acting out irrational thoughts. Where there is a cult mentality, there is a 'reverse superego' that is a poorly developed superego, the Jimmy Cricket that tells us right from wrong. Instead, their superego has it in the reverse -- what is bad is good and what is good is bad in their culture. Violence is learned behavior in the home by age three as well as the need to hate and the need to have an enemy. So even before these kids get to social media, the social environment has brainwashed and traumatized them through the maternal bond. However, we should never blame the female as it is very difficult for her; we need to have understanding for her. To blame is to fall into the trap set by a shame honor environment."

According to Kobrin, Palestinian women have eternalized the male hatred of the female as self-hatred and this encourages Palestinian men and women, boys and girls to become terrorists: "She has internalized the cultural expectations of a shame honor culture, which hates the female because it depends on her but it also wants to kill her off. They are conflicted emotionally and most especially unconsciously. The other is always feminized. The female is the target of group rage and she underpins the psychological dynamics of this group. She is the shock absorber of the group's rage. However, she is killed off in order to purge the mounting rage of the group and then it recycles once again. It is very difficult for her (as well as a little boy because he is his mother's appendage) to grow up in this kind of environment. Shame destroys a fledging sense of identity in a child. The impact of shaming is enormous and its ramifications are carried over into adulthood. That is why when I hear the Palestinians talk about their humiliation and suffering, it is four times more than we realize because it resonates and is magnified by their early childhood experience growing up in a shaming humiliating laden environment. Even before they carry out an attack, they have been pervasively shamed. They are crushed by their own dysfunctional violent culture. It is as if they have become addicted to being humiliated,

which of course is not a good thing as it is causing them to act out murderous rage."

"Since the group self is more important than the individual self, he or she does not have the opportunity to develop a solid evolving sense of identity and so carrying out a terrorist act is a way to gain an identity albeit perverse -- 'Hey look at me 'I'm a suicide bomber' or 'I stabbed a Jew' or 'I ran over a Jew and killed him/her,'" Kobrin noted. "In each of this incidents, note that the perpetrator is actually bonding/fusing to another human being albeit violently. In the case of suicide bombing, they cannot die alone. This is a variant on murder-suicide routinely found in the West in domestic violence but the men don't have to kill themselves; they can just kill their wife or daughter or sister as an honor killing. This kind of death fusion is called traumatic bonding (also terror bonding, parasitic bonding) in psychology. It is not enough to just have a death wish or to be obsessed with death or to have suicidal thoughts. It has moved beyond that to where dying has become a failed attempt at understanding what mortality is all about precisely because they do not have a life in the shame honor culture, which is so oppressive."

While many counter-terror experts look to the authoritarian father when trying to understand the psychology behind Palestinian terrorism, Kobrin believes that they should instead focus on the mother for every Palestinian male terrorist was once a little boy who was the object of his mother's honor: "This is a narcissistic enmeshment as the baby boy has his own needs but he can never get them properly met because again needs are considered dirty in a shaming environment. Shame makes you feel defective. With guilt, you feel remorse and can make reparations and admit that you have done something wrong. This is not the case in a shame honor society. You never want to admit that you are wrong -- you are then identified as a female. Think of the hatred of the homosexual. The other is always perceived as feminized. The Jew in Arab Muslim culture is viewed as feminized -- this is *dhimmi* -- the subjected protected class. Its verb in Arabic means to blame. Islam chose to subjugate its Judeo-Christian roots or annihilate them in the case of Al Qaeda, ISIS, etc."



According to Kobrin, the Palestinian female terrorists of the Knife Intifada are largely motivated by their early childhood experiences: “They never learned to put feelings to words. This is not acceptable in a shame honor culture. It is even difficult to write about this because it is as if to wash one’s dirty linen in public. But I must do so because it is such a serious problem and it seems to me to be very poorly understood. Most counter terrorist experts understand the concept of “honor” and how to give honor. They understand, to an extent, ‘humiliation’ but from my experience, they have difficulty understanding the full ramifications of growing up in a chronically shaming environment and how that buries deep within the soul of the child a “psychological improvised explosive device” waiting to be activated later on in life, especially adolescence when you have surges of hormones, etc.”

Kobrin has just published her fourth book titled *The Jihadi Dictionary*, where she seeks to explain the psychological mindset of jihadists to the military, the Police, the intelligence agencies, and other concerned citizens and to note its relevance to shame honor cultures: “I came to realize by working with the military and police that they rarely have the opportunity to study early childhood development. Just think of Palestinian narratives – you go out into the world and you die. Just think too of the graphic imagery created by the jihadis globally and locally. While a jihadi and her supporters may believe in martyrdom and paradise, they are not consciously aware of the unconscious psychological meaning of what they are doing. They are completely blind psychologically – highly dissociated and in denial. The graphic imagery of the attack sites (like in serial killing which is psychotic) creates body parts, blood, death and chaos. It is their attempt to separate from their mother. Body parts are a part object representation of the mother’s body. The more violent the more regressed the behavior, the more poorly developed the terrorist is psychologically. The more terrifying its impact will be. Terrorism is about where the terrorist’s internal world of their poorly developed mind meets external reality.”

For Kobrin, it is very interesting how the female suicide bombings of the Second Intifada were transformed into the individual attacks involving stabbings, car ramming and shootings in the

Knife Intifada: “The women and under aged females partaking in this unwittingly still continue to participate in the ongoing downward spiraling of the shame honor culture killing off its females. They are still *unconsciously* proxies even a bit robotic, manipulated by the unspoken psychodynamics of their dysfunctional families. Take for example the issue of modesty. A headscarf allegedly removed by an Israeli soldier was waved as the red flag motivating the female to attack. This is a supreme manipulation of the preexisting underlying dynamics of the shaming environment, which I have described above and the obsession with the female embedded in Palestinian culture. Furthermore, a series of the females have been described as having had family problems and arguments severe enough to cause them to seek suicide via the soldiers. We saw it reported that several of the women had had problems at home and chose to act out the violence under the guise of the political.”

Thus, the creation of the female suicide bomber of the Second Intifada has backfired because it has led to these females of the Knife Intifada turning their efforts toward their group and engaging in over shaming,” Kobrin noted. “For example, an interesting tweet was reported – ‘Women of Palestine protect Al Aqsa Mosque while our nation’s men are sound asleep.’ They are trying to emasculate their own males who are already emasculated. There are no limits to the violence. Yet these females buy into the copy-cat effect that we often see in high school suicides. It is destructive imitative behavior.” For Kobrin, it is wrong to refer to this trend as women’s liberation like some in the West do for these female terrorists are buying into the problem instead of moving forward to a more productive communal life and nation-building, which is something constructive: “To blame the other rather than assume responsibility for one’s own problems is never an effective solution. Again to raise a little girl and to tell her that death is the goal is a perversion. It is a misuse of her life. It is a culture bent on its own suicide.”

In Kobrin’s book *The Banality of Suicide Terrorism*, she argued that in order to halt this present wave of terrorism known as the Knife Intifada, the little girl must be protected and nourished rather



than devalued; violence against women must end; and the child abuse must come to a halt: "The family is the microcosm of a society. Your society will only be as strong and healthy as your littlest female. If your family system is dysfunction as in a shame honor culture, your society is going to be dysfunctional and that is why you are seeing the Palestinian Authority on the brink of collapse. This is the result of mistreating the female. We want the best for every little girl. They are more important than the first-born male because they grow up to make the brain of the next generation of children. The shame honor culture has it completely backwards. Just think of the Arab spring – it got off to this big start and then it completely collapsed into chaos and violence, which is a reflection of their internal worlds – their minds. They do not have stable psychological infrastructure. I hasten to add that Israel and especially Netanyahu's Mayor Miriam Feirberg has done a tremendous job with Tipat Khalav, which does prenatal care and early childhood development. More of this should be encouraged and financially supported."

If Israel seeks to move beyond the Knife Intifada, Kobrin stresses that there needs to be more cultural mixing between Jews and Arabs in Israel: "All programming to improve relations between all the different sectors of Israeli society should be facilitated. Hebrew speaking kids should be encouraged to study Arabic as Arabic kids should be encouraged to learn Hebrew. There should be more funding for bilingual education. Fear happens when you do not know the other. All joint ventures between the Israeli Arab/Palestinian and Israeli Jewish populations are positive steps. I was saddened to learn that SodaStream's efforts were not embraced by the government. As an immigrant, I don't know all the politics but there is a lot more we can do."

Kobrin believes that all children in the State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority should be educated to remove hate from their vocabulary:

"They should drop the word hate and replace it with intensely dislike. If a person uses the word 'hate,' they are telling me that they split the world into good and bad, black and white – essentially that they have not been able to establish for themselves a middle ground where life is a blend with grey. If we drop the word 'hate,' we can begin to turn down the volume on all the aggression and accompanying terror. We don't need to be terrified."

"It is so important to try to get to the root of the problem rather than thinking that just by dealing with the incitement, it will all go away," Kobrin concluded. "The incitement is a symptom of the underlying problem of the shaming environment. We deserve better than a band-aid solution. Only by getting rid of the shaming and allowing children to move forward and separate from their mother psychologically will it get better. Remember too that not all of the society is carrying out the violent acts but only some because they are more susceptible and we can surmise more fragiley put together emotionally." According to Kobrin, the personalities of some of the teenage terrorists is "so underdeveloped that they need to have a 'companion' in order to carry out an attack. They can't act alone and when they do, it is destructive and not positive. (Remember everything is reverse in their world – what is good is bad and what is bad is good.) Teens are still growing mentally and physically and hopefully maturing but since they are embedded in a destructive culture, it becomes very difficult to move beyond the violence. We have a long way to go."

The problem will unfortunately get worse before it gets better. It will take generations. The bottom line is that the Arab Muslim society, the Palestinian society, has to take ownership of the shaming problem. Only they can change the family dynamics. When they change, there will be less violence. That is my prediction."

Dr Nancy Hartevelt Kobrin is a fellow at The American Center for Democracy and a psychoanalyst with a PhD in Aljamia (Old Spanish in Arabic script). She is author of The Banality of Suicide Terrorism, also in Hebrew; Penetrating the Terrorist Psyche and The Maternal Drama of the Chechen Jihadi.



Only 3 US Airports Screen Employees Daily Before Work

Source: <https://www.clarionproject.org/news/only-3-us-airports-screen-employees-daily-work>

Apr 07 – At Senate Commerce Committee session, lawmakers heard that [only three airports](#) in the United States require their employees to undergo a security check before they begin their work day.



“Atlanta, Miami, Orlando. What about the other 297 airports nationwide?” asked committee co-chair Senator Bill Nelson (D-Florida).

TSA (Transportation Security Administration) head Robert Neffenger answered that while the TSA has “increased the inspection of employees five-fold in the last five months,” more needs to be done.

Neffenger said that all airports were asked to provide a report by the end of the month assessing their vulnerabilities.

A 2015 [TSA committee concluded](#) most airports could not afford daily employee screening. In addition, they said the full screening would not “appreciably increase the overall system-wide protection.”

“No single measure can provide broad-spectrum protection against risks or adversaries,” the committee concluded. “Therefore, risk-based, multi-layered security offers the greatest ability to mitigate risks through the application of flexible and unpredictable measures to protect commercial aviation.”

The report argued daily screening “is incapable of determining a person’s motivations, attitudes and capabilities to cause harm, among other limitations.”

The Senate committee also heard from Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson, who assured the Senators recent reports that 73 airport employees were suspected to have terrorist ties were misleading.

“It’s not that they’re suspected terrorists. It’s that they hadn’t been vetted through all available databases,” [Johnson said](#). “We have since corrected that problem and the cases have been resolved.”

After filing a Freedom of Information Act request, CBS’ Washington bureau learned last month at which airports improperly-vetted staff worked. The airports included Sea-Tac Airport in Seattle, Hartsfield-Jackson in Atlanta, Logan Airport in Boston and Orlando International, Orlando-Sanford and Memphis International.

Sweden charges man with preparing suicide bombing

Source: <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-sweden-security-idUKKCN0X411M>

Apr 07 – Sweden is charging a 20-year-old man with terrorism for allegedly building a suicide bomb with the intent of staging an attack in Sweden.

The Prosecution Authority said on Thursday that it believed the man had intended to join the jihadist group Islamic State in Syria. Instead, he was detained in Turkey last June and sent back to Sweden.

“My belief is that he obtained, stored and combined liquids and objects with the purpose of making a suicide bomb,” prosecutor Ewamari Haggkvist said in a statement. “The criminal act that was in preparation could have seriously harmed Sweden.”

The man’s identity was not disclosed, in line with usual Swedish legal procedure.

EDITOR’S COMMENT: In Sweden? Really? Amazing! They supposed to be immune!



Muslim migrant who lied that he was a child raped a 15-year-old mentally ill virgin after he was placed in children's care home – then claimed asylum

Source: <http://pamelageller.com/2016/04/muslim-migrant-lied-raped-15-year-old-mentally-ill-virgin.html/>



Apr 06 – An Afghan migrant who raped a mentally ill 15-year-old girl at a psychiatric clinic in Sweden has been found to have lied about being underage.

Convicted rapist Ali Bahmani claimed to be 16 years old, but a dental examination later found him to be 'at least 19.2 years,' court documents state.

The rape took place at a children's psychiatric clinic in central Stockholm where both Bahmani and the victim were inpatients, ten days before he had even applied for asylum.



Attack: Afghan migrant Ali Bahmani, who claimed to be 16, but was found to be 'at least 19', raped a 15-year-old mentally ill girl at a children's psychiatric clinic in central Stockholm (pictured)

Bahmani and the victim had been watching television with members of staff at the children's psychiatric care ward in Stockholm the evening of December 4, 2015.



When the staff left the room 'for a few minutes', Bahmani climbed on top of the victim, held her down on the sofa, and raped her, court documents state.

She later told police that: 'It happened so suddenly that she did not make a sound. She had not had sex "for real" before.

Rape: Bahmani and the victim(not pictured), who suffers from PTSD and anxiety, had been watching television at the clinic, and when staff left the room 'for a few minutes', Bahmani raped her on the sofa



'When staff came into the room, Ali Bahmani jumped up and pulled up his trousers. She lay shocked in foetal position with her trousers around her ankles, she cried and was afraid.'

The teenager immediately accused Bahmani of sexually assaulting her, and police were called to the psychiatric clinic where he was detained. Bahmani denied rape, claiming the sex had been consensual because, while the victim had not spoken during the attack – and he admitted to noticing that she was crying during the assault – he said she told him she consented 'with her heart'.

Sweden welcomed more migrants and refugees per capita than any other EU nation in 2015, with some 165,000 people arriving in the country.

While asylum is granted to all refugees, asylum for migrants is needs-based and the application process can be long and arduous, particularly after the recent influx.

However, all unaccompanied underaged migrants are automatically granted asylum in Sweden, and as a result, there have been several cases of new arrivals lying about their age.

The rape in Stockholm took place just a few weeks before the well-publicized murder of Swedish social worker Alexandra Mezher.

Miss Mezher, 22, was stabbed to death by a Somali migrant at a refugee centre in Molndal, near Gothenburg in January this year. The centre housed unaccompanied underaged migrants, and Miss Mezher had stepped in to stop a fight between two residents.

Youssaf Khaliif Nuur, who has been charged with murder and attempted murder, had originally claimed to be 15 years old, but is now believed to be 'at least' three years older.

The victim told police that she had not spoken to Bahmani before the rape, apart from a exchanging a few sentences in English.

However, she had felt on several occasions that Bahmani had walked very close to her, and had raised this with both staff at the clinic and her mother.

Bahmani was formally arrested the following day, December 5, but documents from the Swedish Migration Agency shows that he did not apply for asylum in Sweden until December 14.

Bahmani claimed to have been born in Afghanistan in November 1999, but had no passport or proof of identification when he arrived in Sweden in the autumn.

An examination carried out during the investigation found that Bahmani had 'a teeth development showing a higher age, most likely over 19.2 years'.

In a police interview after his arrest, Bahmani admitted to officers that he was 19 years old, but later claimed to be 17 – neither of which collaborate with his supposed date of birth.

The 15-year-old victim had been admitted to the children's psychiatric clinic several times since April 2014, spending a total of four months as an inpatient.

At the time of the rape, the victim, who suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder and severe anxiety disorder, had been in their care since November.

It is not known why Bahmani had been admitted to the clinic, but a psychological evaluation during the investigation found him to suffer be mentally ill.

Bahmani has been sentenced to psychiatric care, after which he will be deported and banned from entering Sweden until 2026.

Stockholm district court concluded that Bahmani was 'probably born in 1996', and also ordered him to pay the victim 115,000 Swedish kronor (£9,990) in damages.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Strange way how Swedes define and cost "damages" when comes to innocent people... A lot of work need to be done in age identification as well – globally.

Rio Olympics: What's the worst that could happen?

By W. Alex Sanchez

Source: <http://blogs.blouinnews.com/blouinbeatworld/2016/04/08/rio-olympics-whats-the-worst-that-could-happen/>

Apr 08 – The Brazilian government, presidential scandals aside, is focused on ensuring that the upcoming Summer Olympics and Paralympics in Rio de Janeiro occur



successfully and peacefully. The event is expected to attract between [350 to 500 thousand foreign tourists](#), not counting the [10 thousand athletes](#) that will compete in 42 different sports. The question is: what security-related incident is Brasilia trying to prevent?

The obvious answer is some type of terrorist operation, with the 2015 attacks in Paris and Brussels by ISIS serving as a recent and tragic precedent. In fact, the Paris attacks occurred while a friendly soccer match between France and Germany was taking place at the Stade de France. Moreover, there is already the precedent of one successful terrorist attack during an Olympic event: the 1972 Munich attacks carried out by the Palestinian Black September group, which killed 11 Israeli Olympian athletes and one German police officer.

In order to prepare for the worst-case scenario, the Brazilian security and defense forces will carry out an unprecedented operation. Brazilian Defense Minister Aldo Rebelo announced in March that [38 thousand military personnel](#) will be deployed, with 20 thousand in Rio itself, not counting personnel from other security agencies. According to the Brazilian [Defense Ministry](#), **Rio will be divided into four defense command sections (CDS Deodoro, CDS Maracana, CDS Copacabana and CDS Barra da Tijuca) in order for the security forces to better monitor the Olympic venues.** Rio certainly appears to be ready for the Olympics from a security perspective as the **defense commands are training for any type of incident, be it a terrorist attack or even nuclear, radiological or biological threats.**

Nevertheless, this preparedness program has not been scandal-free. Case in point: In late March, [Colonel Adilson Moreira](#) from the National Force for Public Security resigned after sending an e-mail to his colleagues that was critical of President Dilma Rousseff.

It is worth noting that, some protests aside, the Brazilian government has successfully organized major sporting events in recent years, namely the 2013 FIFA Confederations Cup and the 2014 FIFA World Cup. Moreover, Gustavo Palhares, a partner at [Furriela Advogados](#) (a São Paulo law firm with a branch in Washington DC), told me that “for the past decade, the city and state of Rio have invested in security, particularly to ‘pacify’ the favelas [shantytowns]; although crime has not disappeared in Rio, the city is more prepared than ever to host the Olympic Games.”

Indeed, as Palhares explained, **rather than some terrorist attack à la Munich 1972, the major concern regarding the upcoming Games is crime, i.e., the possibility of tourists or athletes being robbed (or worse) by the city’s numerous gangs.** Unfortunately, there have been recent incidents that stress this possibility. For example, in January, [four people were killed and 11 were injured](#) when criminals attacked a bar in Rio’s western area, in Vargem Pequena. Then, in mid-March, a member of a [Pacifying Police Unit \(Unidad de Policia Pacificadora, UPP\)](#) was murdered by unknown bandits in broad daylight during a routine patrol. Finally, and in an ironic development, [Lieutenant-Colonel Murilo Angellotti](#) of the Copacabana division of the Military Police (BPM) was recently the victim of a robbery. When he left his home on Sunday, April 3, three men held him at gunpoint and stole his car. Palhares clarified that “these crimes occurred in areas of the city where the Games will not take place.”

The aforementioned examples demonstrate that crime in Rio has been contained, rather than completely eradicated. Certainly, it would be naïve to believe that crime in a city like Rio (with a population of [well over six million](#)) could be fully solved via the pacification operations.

Ultimately, it is necessary to place potential crimes (not terrorist attacks) during the Olympics in the context of Brazil’s current tense political situation. Should foreign tourists or Olympian athletes be mugged, as Palhares explains, this will negatively affect President Dilma Rousseff’s image, “especially at a moment when she is in a political war to save her presidency.” **While the possibility of a terrorist attack in Rio is arguably extremely remote**, even a wave of robberies may be enough to hurt the president.

W. Alejandro “Alex” Sanchez Nieto is an international security analyst who focuses on geopolitics, military and cyber security issues in the Western Hemisphere. His research interests include inter-state tensions, narco-insurgent movements and drug cartels, arms sales, the development of Latin American military industries, UN peacekeeping operations, as well as the rising use of drones (UAVs) for civilian and security uses in Latin America. He regularly appears in different media outlets like the Toronto Star, New Internationalist, Russia Today, Al Jazeera, Fusion, BBC, Le

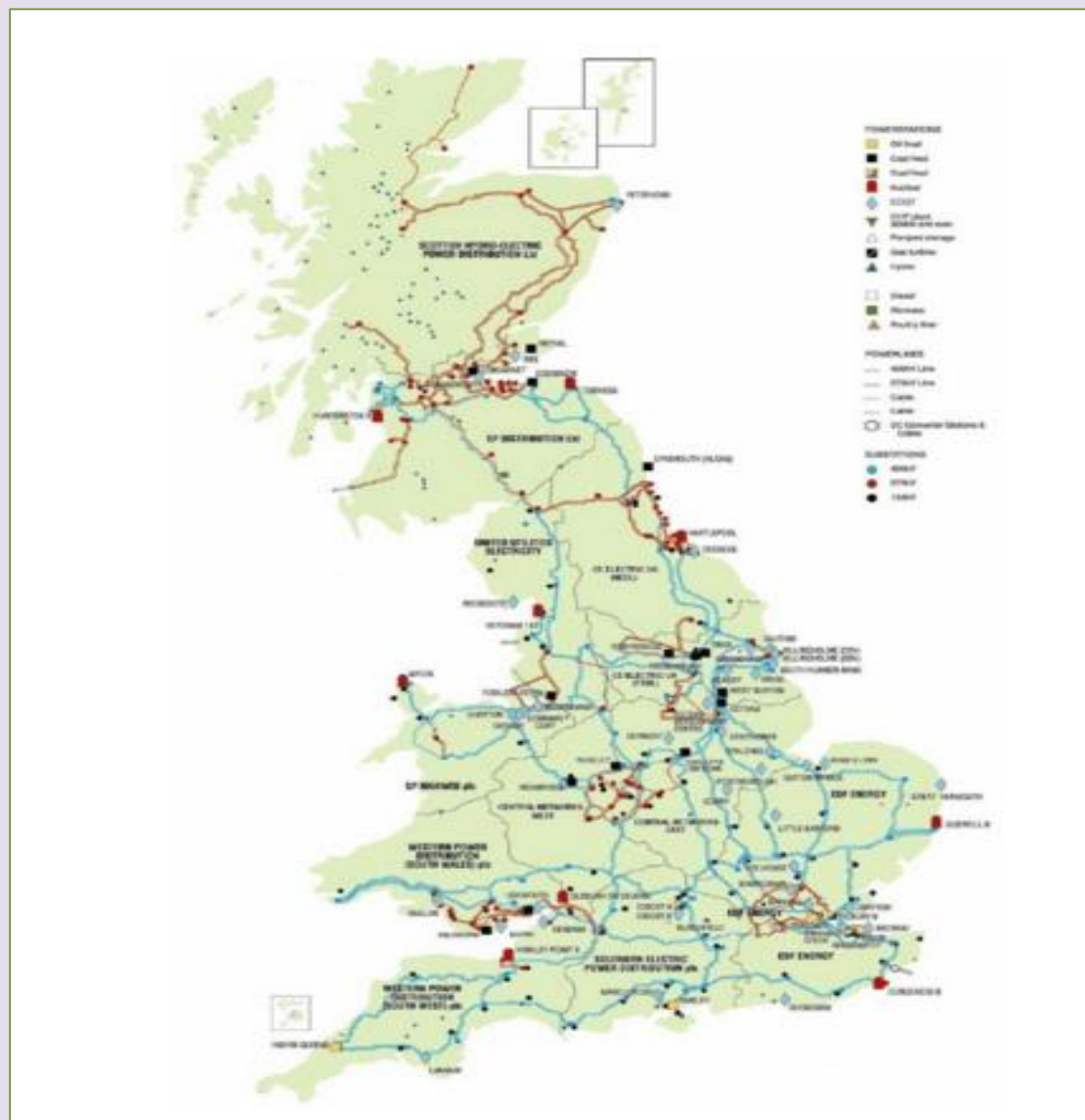


Figaro, El Comercio (Peru), Opera Mundi (Brazil) and the Washington Diplomat, among others.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: I think that when an analyst writes about a specific subject he analyses data and connect dots; instead he put down what Brazilian authorities believe or would like to believe. In short he concluded that Brazil is almost immune from international terrorism! Time will show if this is true or false but the main question is: what if it is false? Again only the military is prepared for a CBRE attack – not a single word on civilian preparedness and of course NOT A WORD on health/hospital preparedness to deal with mass contaminated victims.

Map of The UK's Electricity Supply System Network Grid

Source: <http://britishbusinessenergy.co.uk/electricity-supply-system/>



Apr 02 – The map above was created by The Telegraph and “shows the energy generation and distribution network in the UK as of 2010.” (Scroll down for fully interactive version)

If you zoom-in you'll see the following:



- **Power stations:** Oil fired, Coal fired, Nuclear, Dual Fuel, Nuclear, Combined Cycle Gas Turbine (CCGT), Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Plant, Pumped Storage, Gas turbine, Hydro, Diesel, Biomass, and Poultry!
- **Powerlines**
- **Substations**
- **Operating company by region**

EDITOR'S COMMENT: What is exactly the reasoning for providing such detailed information to public?

Brussels terrorists initially planned to attack in France, prosecutor says

Source: <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/04/10/europe/brussels-attack-arrests/index.html>

Apr 10 – Terrorists who attacked the Belgian capital last month initially planned to strike again in France, but changed their minds as investigators closed in, authorities said Sunday.

"Numerous elements in the investigation have shown that the terrorist group initially had the intention to strike in France again," the Belgian prosecutor's office said in a statement.

Investigators say that the same ISIS network was behind the Paris terror attacks in November and the suicide bombings in the Belgian capital last month.

When the terrorists discovered French investigators were moving fast in their investigation of the November attacks, they changed their plans, the Belgian prosecutor's office said.

"Eventually ... they urgently took the decision to strike in Brussels," the prosecutor said.

Salah Abdeslam, a key suspect in the Paris attacks, was arrested by police in Brussels on March 18. Just four days later, suicide bombers struck at the city's airport and subway station, killing 32 people.

The terror cell had planned to attack high-profile targets in Paris, CNN affiliate BFM reported, citing a source close to the investigation.

A laptop recovered by investigators in Brussels last month included a list of targets in Paris including the financial district, known as La Defense, and a Catholic association, BFM reported.

In November, Paris prosecutor Francois Molins said that investigators had learned that Abdelhamid Abaaoud, the ringleader behind

the Paris attacks in November, had planned a suicide attack on La Defense.

Sunday's announcement came a day after authorities identified Mohamed Abrini, believed to be the third and lone surviving suspect in the Brussels airport attacks.

'Man in the hat'

Authorities said Abrini confessed to being the "man in the hat." He was seen in Brussels airport surveillance images wearing a dark hat and rolling luggage carts with two men believed to be the suicide bombers.



Authorities charged him with participation in terrorist activities, terrorist murders and attempts to commit terrorist murders, the prosecutor's office said.

Abrini is one of six people detained in raids Friday across the Belgian capital. In addition to the Brussels attack, he has been tied through surveillance video and DNA to November's terror attacks in Paris. Those attacks killed 130 people.

Earlier Saturday, the prosecutor's office said it identified the second person seen in surveillance footage from the subway attack in Brussels.



Osama Krayem -- also known as Naim al Hamed -- is seen along suicide bomber Khalid El Bakraoui, according to the Belgian federal prosecutor's office.

He has also been charged with "participation to the activities of a terrorist group and terrorist murders," according to the prosecutor's office. European security agencies believe Krayem, or Hamed, played an operational role in the attack.

Belgium has emerged as a hotbed of extremism, exporting more foreign fighters per capita to Syria than any other Western European nation, according to the International Center for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence.

The Brussels and Paris attacks "point to a broad and sophisticated terrorist network in Belgium," the London-based think tank said.

Essential Commandments in Combating Islamic Jihad

By David Bukay

Source: http://moderndiplomacy.eu/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=1341%3Aessential-commandments-in-combating-islamic-jihad&Itemid=488#.Vwk5hiVn3t4.linkedin

Apr 09 – The international relations is comprised by states that keep their national sovereignty and



security by defending its borders and territories. The terrorism phenomenon is not new through history, but in contemporary politics, due to the sophisticated weapons, it endangers national security and exacerbates the international structure.

Islamic terrorism, which constitutes more than 90 percent of world terrorism, is the utmost lethal and must be taken highly

seriously. There is no "impossible" when they consider options and scenarios, and they might use all kind of weaponry available to achieve their targets, from chemical to nuclear. All Muslim groups clearly declare: "we will win since you love life while we love death." It is in accordance with the Qur'an declaration, in Sural al-Nisā' (4:74) and Surat al-Taubah (9:111).

Therefore, it is a must to eliminate the political, religious, and managerial leaders of the terrorist organizations. It is a critical condition in the war on terror perpetrators as the most effective way in decreasing the terrorist organizations' influence its ability to act. By leaders it means not only the top, but also the field leaders. Most important, this definition includes mainly religious leaders. In Islam as one can clearly observe the religious leaders, the Imams, are the most important, as they give the religious clearance and legitimization to the terrorists activity. They excel in spreading and disseminating the deep vicious incitement of hatred for the terrorists

The other side of the war on terrorist organizations are the Arab military regimes. Any observation will clearly exhibit that Arab military regimes were the best in fighting and containing effectively the Islamic movements and groups. Unfortunately, the US has helped to demolish the political coercive authoritarian order existing in the Middle East by removing the military regimes, in Iraq, in Egypt (thank to al-Sisi who has taken back the political power), in Libya, and in Yemen, and continues its policy to topple Asad regime in Syria. The result, the Middle has entered the age of Islamic Tribal Anarchic Winter, in which we find failed states, acute un-stability, and chaos in the entire area. The military regimes, although being oppressive and dictatorial, are the last and best chance of the Arab regimes to survive as relatively open states. The alternative are Islamic regimes ruled by and according to the Shari'ah.

Homicide bombing is a combined personal and group activity: The individual needs the organizational framework for the success of his action, while the organization cannot be effective without his activity. However, the most successful war against terrorist perpetrators is not against the individual, 'the person with the belt' which is a disposable raw material, but the organization itself. In order to succeed in the liquidation of terrorism, the elimination of the



organization's leadership, it is a crucially imperative to employ as a continuous strategy operations of the targeted killing.

The Old Testament has a clear answer: "Whoso sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed". 'The Iron Law of Oligarchy,' formulated by the sociologist Michaels, teaches us that leaders wish to preserve their status and position in the organization, and will do everything to keep that aim. This is precisely the reason that their elimination is critical. Thompson proved this reality in his study on the British lessons in Malaysia and Vietnam.

It must be determined: the alternative to targeted killings is attacking the sites from which the terrorists set out, the implication of which would be huge damage to the surroundings. Anyone who understands that it is imperative to combat terrorism must also eliminate its leaders. And if someone raises the approach that these are political or religious leaders, the response should be loud and clear: Terrorist organizations have no political leaders. By definition they are illegitimate squads worthy of liquidation. Characterizing terrorist leaders as political leaders is a logical contradiction. Are Bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri, Arafat, and Baghdadi political leaders? Were the leaders of the terrorist groups in Europe, Japan and South America political leaders? If so, why were they liquidated with extraordinary success? Elimination of terrorist leaders is a necessity. One who is involved in indiscriminate murder cannot expect to be treated any differently. Nobody really serious would react to Bin Laden's execution negatively; and this would be exactly the reaction to the Elimination of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. This demand also applies to religious leaders. Countries have two chains of command: The political echelon, which commands, and military echelon, which executes those commands. In contrast, there are three levels in the Islamic terrorist groups constituting a different type of subordination: The terrorist operational echelon; the command and logistical echelon; and the religious echelon, which affirms and legitimizes the homicide bombings through Fatawā'.

Another important commandment is to understanding terrorism sources that is to fight the educational and religious system. Beyond the pre-emptive activity, the main struggle is in the realm of interdiction of the educational and religious factors: abating the hatred transmitted to the youth from birth without even understanding why and creating effective alternatives to the Islamic "Istishhād (homicide) culture".

The Muslims begin with the politics of the Jihadi ideology of hatred from birth. The children learn to hate before they learn anything else: At home, in school, in the Muslim Schools, Madāris, in youth movements, in summer camps, and in the mosques. They receive a gigantic dose of demonic venomous poison vis-à-vis the free world, and they hate the infidels because they are who they are. Hatred is in their food and drink and it is the fuel that directs and motivates the murders, the horrors of massacre and the lynching. That is why the "Third Generation," those young Muslims who were born, raised, and educated in the West are the most extreme in Jihad activity.

The Arab-Islamic authoritarian regimes and the patrimonial political and religious leaders are aiming at channeling the rage and frustrations of the masses to the outsider enemy. These political systems horrify and oppress its inhabitants; keep them in poverty and wretchedness, without any hope of social progress and economic prosperity and are still in power by externalizing the guilt toward the outsider enemies, their embodiment: the US and Israel.

The situation has been challenged by Sa'ad Bin-Tefla: "The violence of slaughter, anarchy and bloodshed is a cultural phenomenon. The religious faction sets the rules: To achieve victory or martyrdom in order to restore the Islamic Empire, which stretched from China to Andalusia; the Arab media assists them by painting the world in black and white; and the Arab culture stokes the fire."

In the words of the intellectual Said al-Hamad of Bahrain "A 'culture of backwardness,' which dominates the Arab world led Arabs and Muslims into quixotic wars against the West. It also includes the 'culture of terrorism,' which adopts the approach of beheading and executing people; and the 'culture of hatred' which propagates in the minds and consciousness of the youth hatred for the world and for people whose opinions and thoughts are different than theirs."

The Tunisian thinker al-'Afif al-Akhdar claims that "Islamist thought is incapable of accepting human thought. The world must condemn the Islamist education and media as an imperative step towards eliminating the ideology of terrorism."

The Iraqi intellectual, Dr. Kazem Habib points out the importance of fighting educational-religious incitement



Most of the religious schools, the large majority of the Imams in the world's mosques, and most of the preachers on the Arab TV channels educate to violence and spread hatred and animosity towards people of other religions. They do not acknowledge the other; they do not show tolerance towards non-Muslims, and disseminate hatred against Muslims, treating them as Kuffār.

There are ample researches, documents and evidence of what is being taught in the Madāris and delivered in the mosques. Egypt has found an interesting solution to the fanatic religious preaching in the mosques. All religious preachers (Imams) are civil servants receiving their salaries from government, which tapes and films their preaching (Khutbah) as a precaution step. Any violation of the rules means they are fired and indicted to jail.

Bernard Lewis provides us with the insight that there is no supremacy of legal-religious authority in Islam like in Christianity, capable of imposing fixed religious laws on the terrorists. Each organization has the religious leadership that it accepts and each one can interpret the laws of the Qur'an and the Hadīth as he sees fit. They are fully convinced that their actions are compatible with the demands of Islam.

For that, it is important to emphasize three dimensions:

a) One must not treat the Apocalyptic Global Jihad Groups as a phenomenon of crime, which can be resolved by means of economic improvements. It is well proven: poverty leads to crime but never to terrorism.

b) One must not despair as if the war against fanatic terrorism cannot be won. Despite the mystification of terrorist activity and media's glorification, it can and must be vanquished.

c) One must not create moral equivalence, and the media is the chief responsible for that, between the terrorists, who are the epitome of evil, and the countermeasures taken by retaliatory states, which express legitimate steps to preserve freedom and maintain security. The struggle is for its legitimate existence and it takes precedence over moral values. It must be fought; it can be prevailed.

Another important commandment is to avoiding terrorist institutionalization as a political power. Action must be taken to rout the terrorist organizations out before they are institutionalized, before they strike deep popular roots, and become a guerilla force that controls territories supported by the masses. The best proof to this is Israel's failure to strike the Hezbollah organization and Hamas, before they became the central Shi'ite force in Lebanon and the admired Sunni force among the Palestinians. When these groups institutionalized, it is no longer possible to liquidate them.

The test in understanding the importance of an all-out war on terrorism is by of the following analogies:

a) What would you do if a terrorist is threatening your own family, and you have the weapon and the opportunity to liquidate him beforehand? Wouldn't you put him down?

b) What would you do if you receive authorized evidence about a genuine possibility that your family will be hit, and you can liquidate the terrorist beforehand?

c) How would you react when you are being fired upon from a mosque or a hospital, and your family is being threatened to death? Wouldn't you shoot back to save them?

d) Will you act in a pre-emptive manner when terrorists push baby carriages filled with explosive vests and missiles?

e) Will you make certain to strip-search pregnant woman, you know she is transporting explosives?

f) How will you act if terrorist leaders plan to liquidate civilians in homicide bombings, but are surround themselves with children for their personal protection?

The free world must change its lenient treatment of Muslim terrorism. The Saudi intellectual Mash'ari al-Dhaydi has written

The time has come for those who turn a blind eye to notice that the enemies of freedom have exploited the atmosphere of freedom to spread their religious fanaticism. People who disseminate this ideological-political platform are greatest enemies of freedoms. Fundamentalist terrorism knows no borders, and must be dealt with before it will be too late.

At the same time one needs put great efforts as to preparing an all-out war on the money transfer. There is no existence to any activity and organizations and other groups without money. He, who really wishes to combat terrorism effectively, must be prepared to exert all energies on the financial roots that support the Apocalyptic Global Jihad Groups. Terrorism is a monumental financial business, with a turnover of billions of dollars.



Paradoxically, these funds can solve a significant portion of the social and economic problems in the Arab-Muslim countries. Rich Arab-Oil states fund terrorism as “protection money”, as a payoff in order to appease the threat and to distance it from them. Charity and welfare organizations are the most significant factors in terrorism and incitement, brainwashing the masses with colossal hatred and lies of ignorance.

The West cannot win the war against radical Islam merely with the most sophisticated military strategies. Winning requires understanding the role of Sharī'ah in developing a global ideological and political movement supported by a parallel "Islamic" financial system to exploit and undermine Western economies and markets. This movement is the foundation and the major funding source for the political, economic, and military initiatives of the global Islamic movement. Sharī'ah finance is the lethal weapon in the arsenal of Islam. The end goal is to impose that ideology worldwide, making the Islamic Ummah, supreme.

Experts have estimated the Islamist propaganda machine's bill to be about 100 billion dollars during the last two decades alone, which makes it the largest propaganda machine in history, even larger than the communist propaganda machine during the Soviet era.

Many Arab-Muslim countries, especially Saudi Arabia, transfer funds donated for charitable causes to finance activities of radical Islamic terrorist groups. This method of funding is a pattern of action, as part of the Islamic concept of conducting “a holy war through financial means” (al-Jihād bil-Māl). Ample evidence shows that funds collected for charitable causes, including for the poor and the needy, find their way to terrorist hands.

Most of the activity is done through mosques and the religious institutions, purchased and financed by a huge flow of money: recruitment, socialization, ideological, indoctrination and preparation for and dispatch of terrorist homicide bombings. A cycle of guidance and activity is established, through electronic means and printed material, with internal focus of attention and externalization of the blame to the colonialist infidels.

The British researcher, Adams, proved in the mid-80's that no organization can survive without funds and the flow of huge moneys. Once the monetary pipeline is closed, the organization is doomed. Money is the lifeblood flowing in the bodies of the terrorist organizations and enables their activity. They need and receive and are dependent on a huge flow of money, and unfortunately they get it. A confrontation in the economic and monetary realm is no less important than the operative military steps. The war on this matter must be conducted ruthlessly and systematically examining all of the Islamic charity organizations, most of which serve as a most vital conduit for the terrorist organizations. One ought not to be impressed by humanitarian and social activity because in practice, most of the money is earmarked for the families of homicide bombers, aid for imprisoned murderers, purchase of real estate and houses for families whose houses were destroyed and directly support of terrorism actions.

The optimal way to deal with terrorism and overcome it is by destroying its economic infrastructure and stopping the flow of money and toughening the control on money laundering. All of the various “charity funds” which work for terrorism must be liquidated, their funds confiscated and their heads convicted of directly supporting terrorism.

The challenge is not only to identify the charity organizations that support terrorism, but to convince the Free World's governments to work out: to act decisively against banks that cooperate with them and to isolate economically and politically state-sponsored activity.

Last but not least is acting to consolidate international cooperation. This is perhaps the important pre-requisite, the aspired policy, and yet no less elusive issue. In the wake of the September 11, the traumatized world was promised that an international coalition would form, like the one against Hitler and the one against Saddam Hussein, in order to liberate the world from the nightmare of the new Huns. It yet did that not happen, and the march of the folly of irresponsible Western leaders, who are oblivion to the threatening situation, continue. Unfortunately, the free world has learned nothing and internalized nothing, and beyond verbal declarations there is no intention to take substantive action.

Fighting Islamic terrorism effectively is achieved only when the Free World unite its abilities, spiritual and physical. Winning over evil can truly cope with the challenges of the Islamic apocalyptic fanaticism. Paraphrasing Martin Luther King, 'We have learned to fly the air like birds and swim the sea like fish, but we have not learned the simple art of cooperating against evil.'



Indeed, this is a matter of dead or alive in the case of Islam. Cooperation is really needed policy in the political, intelligence and security realms, with the objective of establishing a consortium of countries combating terrorism. As long as the cartel of 'Global Jihad Groups' exists, and the countries threatened by terrorism do not agree on a joint policy, Islamic terrorism will continue to succeed and thrive. The free countries must cooperate, to unite forces in a genuine profound manner in order to facilitate terrorism's collapse. The war on terrorism is a war of nations supporting freedom against gangs crazed by fanatical ideology, lacking all human compassion and with no human inhibitions to achieving the objective of subduing the free world.

This is a war, which must end with a clear, unambiguous victory, without it the world will return to the darkness of the Middle-Ages, as the researcher Ferguson stress. Europe will not be saved, without American intervention, as it was the situation in two World wars. Thus recommendation of researchers is to consolidate a joint policy, not only concerning intelligence, which is already exists, but especially on the political echelon and the military activity. Otherwise, these fanatics will succeed in bringing their past of the 7th century into the future of our humanity.

Concluding remarks. Islamic Jihad is a worldwide strategic lethal threat. It is a plague, which may set on fire the whole world. If it is not stopped, it will succeed in bringing the Islamic past of the 7th century back to the future of humanity. The battlefield is horrible: any scenario is possible, even the most unimaginative and most unbelievable one: biological, chemical, and atomic warfare is potentially at the hands of fanatics, which are determined to use it. This is the new era of total terrorism, in which there are no human rules and no moral, and there is total de-humanization of "the infidels".

The gravest mistake is to regard terrorism as criminal phenomenon, which can be solved by social concessions and economic improvements. The second grave mistake is to think that should be a combined policy of fighting terrorism and finding a political horizon. The war against terrorism is total, and the aim is to liquidate it, without any concessions. The third grave mistake is the pervasive despair that one cannot win out this war, and it will continue to be a painful part in modern life. The fourth grave mistake is making a moral equivalence between terrorist perpetrators, who are the total evil, and the counter-terrorist activity of governments. The fifth grave mistake is to deal with terrorism on the judicial ground. If so, it should be executed only in special military courts, and with special judicial procedures of emergency legislation.

The war over Islamic terrorism it can be won out with determination, resilience, and with decisiveness. If one does not initiate, not only the war erupts, but the price in human casualties and suffering will be unbearable. International organizations, negotiations, mediation and policy of appeasement are not only futile and useless, but encouraging these tyrants to continue with their deeds. Defensive measures will not succeed even in the short run. Its threats will definitely grow, and the price needed to fight against it in the future will be much higher.

Since the Free world is under existential threat, military power against brutal and vicious tyrants is demanded and it is crucial to be fought without hesitations and limitations. The natural desire to stability and adherence to peace is justified. But when it comes to paralyze the needed offensive against existential dangers of Islamic terrorism, it becomes a crime. The liquidation the terrorist groups' leaders at all levels and preventing financial flow to terrorist organizations are a crucial must.

However, if the Free World continues its oblivious policy as if Islamic terrorism, which has no mercy, no restraints, nor do they obey any basic human laws, is nothing serious, it would be defeated and lost. In the words of Amil Imani, Islam is a formidable enemy in a Trojan horse. Islam is based on hatred and war-mongering with the aim to conquer the world; to submit and subdue humanity; and to bring it back to their 7th century desert. Islam has penetrated the democracies with the aim of replacing civility and liberty with the barbarism of theocracy, and it aims to destroy all the virtues that freedom offer.

Muslims in Western democracies, Imani continues, exhibit incredible audacity as to shamelessly demand that their benevolent hosts surrender their liberties and legalize and adopt the Shari'ah. Once it is recognized, to any extent, it will reach out to submit free society to its laws and rulings. Islam is incompatible with democracy and liberalism; Islam is in total contrast to human rights, freedoms and basic civil liberties. The hydra of Islam is lashing out. It will devour the free world and it assuredly slaughter all who stand against them. Yet, the Free World does not listen; it ignores the lethal hazards; and it does nothing out of paralyzed fear. It is



imperative that we fight this lethal danger with the same determination that we fought other enemies of freedom such as Nazism, Fascism, and Communism.

We need a new kind of leadership, committed, courageous, who is not afraid to face the truth, to tell the truth, and to mobilize and motivate for the truth, aimed at fighting back in order to keep our freedoms possibly our existence as free society. The model is the leadership of Winston Churchill in WWII. On May 15 1940, Churchill addressed his immortal speech, to tell his people the truth of "blood, sweat and tears".

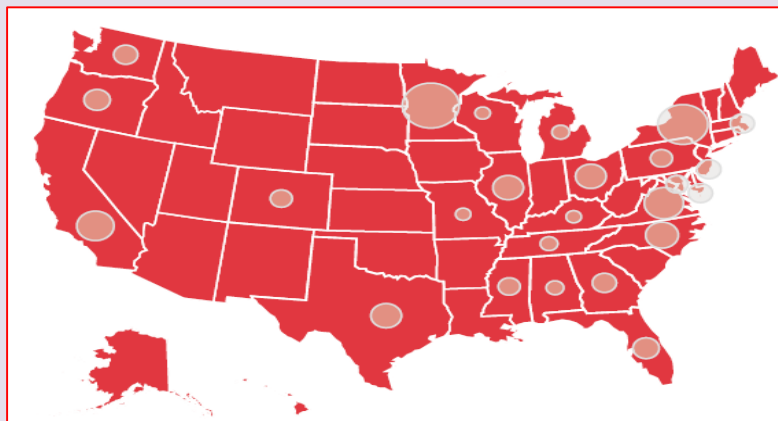
"What is our policy? Our policy is to wage an all-out war against evil and hideous terror very few of it has been existed in the dark history of human crime. You ask what is our objective? The answer is only one word: victory. Victory by all the means and the abilities we can allocate... Because without victory, there will be no existence to our nation... And there will be no power for the generations to come to push mankind forward. Let's move forward together, with our combined power, and by God's help we will prevail."

David Bukay, School of Political Sciences, the University of Haifa.

New data explores foreign fighters from the United States

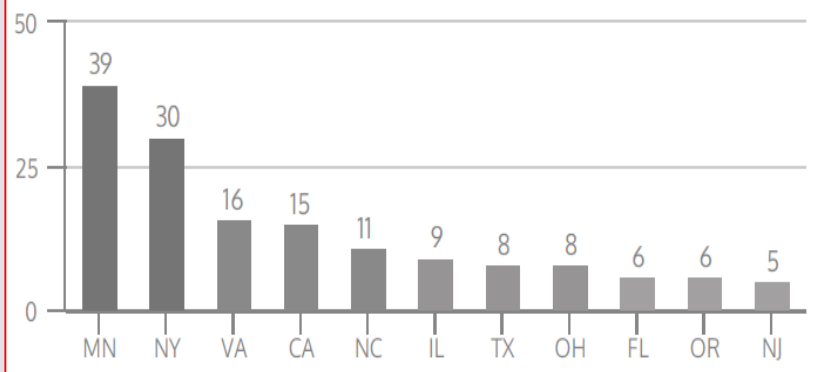
Source: www.start.umd.edu/pubs/START_PIRUS-FF_InfographicSeries_April2016.pdf

A new report from START examines data on foreign fighters who have departed for overseas conflicts from more than 100 cities in 25 states across the United States, from 1980 to 2015. START's Profiles of



Radicalization in the United States-Foreign Fighters (PIRUS-FF) database includes information on 242 individuals who have been publicly identified in open sources as having left, attempted to leave, or expressed an interest in leaving the United States for the purpose of supporting the activities or

interests of a foreign non-state armed group or foreign regime, and were motivated by religion, ethnicity, or other ideology. PIRUS-FF contains over 100 variables on all phases - pretravel, travel, and return - of the foreign fighter life cycle.



The report, **a series of info graphics**, from START examines those variables, highlighting topics including:

- Foreign fighter "hot spots"
- Associated militant groups
- Success rates and plot outcomes
- Radicalization and internet usage
- Comparison between al-Qaida and ISIL foreign fighters
- Relationships with facilitators and foreign groups



Terrorists from groups besides ISIS crossing U.S.-Mexico border, U.S. Rep. Ron DeSantis says

Source: <http://www.politifact.com/florida/statements/2016/apr/04/ron-desantis/terrorists-groups-besides-isis-crossing-us-mexico/>

"Recent reports state that the U.S. Customs and Border Protection has apprehended several members of known Islamist terrorist organizations crossing the southern border in recent years."

*Ron DeSantis
on Wednesday, March 23rd, 2016 in a House Oversight Committee National Security Subcommittee hearing*

Apr 08 – Instead of worrying about ISIS infiltrating the country, U.S. Senate candidate and Rep. Ron DeSantis is concerned that members of other terrorist groups have already been caught trying to sneak across the border from Mexico.

The Ponte Vedra Beach Republican called a hearing of the House Oversight Committee's National Security subcommittee to discuss what to do about what he considered a growing threat.

"Recent reports state that the U.S. Customs and Border Protection has apprehended several members



of known Islamist terrorist organizations crossing the southern border in recent years," he said March 23, 2016.

DeSantis has made terrorism a central issue in his campaign. On April 4, 2016, he embarked on a series of town hall-style events in Florida he dubbed the "Defeat the Jihad Tour."

We've checked hyperbole by politicians that ISIS is invading via the southern border time and time and time again. Because there's no hard evidence it is happening, those claims range from Mostly False to Pants On Fire!

But we don't often hear politicians warn about about immigrants with ties to other terrorist organizations being caught secretly heading into the United States. According to some reports, those apprehensions do happen, although experts told us any true threat may be a bit exaggerated.

More than ISIS

When we contacted DeSantis' office, a spokeswoman pointed us to a 2015 article from the *Houston Chronicle* as the source of his statement. The newspaper [published a report for elected officials](#) from the Texas Department of Public Safety that said shifting law enforcement sources to protect the border led to crime problems in other parts of the state. But the report also said that authorities had detained several people with ties to Islamist terrorist organizations, a point the *Washington Post* highlighted in a follow-up. The Texas agency told the *Post* that the *Chronicle* had not

properly obtained the report, which they said wasn't meant for the public.

Along with human traffickers, drug-cartel and gang members, law enforcement personnel in recent years had several run-ins with so-called "special interest aliens." These are people coming into the United States from 35 Middle Eastern, African and Asian countries associated with terrorist groups.

Texas reported 439 cases of people from these countries — including Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Pakistan and Syria — either caught crossing



the border or presenting themselves at ports of entry without permission to enter. The report also said authorities had reported 143 "land border crossing encounters with watch-listed individuals in southwest border states between November 2013 and July 2014."

These encounters included one with an alleged member of al-Shabaab, the Somalia-based group responsible for the 2013 mall massacre in Nairobi, Kenya. In June 2014, he said he had been trained for a suicide attack in Mogadishu but escaped and surrendered to African Union troops, who stopped the attack. That account was unverified and the person sought immigration benefits from the United States, the report said.

The report also noted the 2008 apprehension of a Somali named Ahmed Muhammed Dhakane, whom the government said had ties to terrorist groups al-Shabaab, al-Itihaad al-Islamiya and al-Barakat. Dhakane had crossed into Texas and helped move an unknown number of suspected Somali terrorists, as well, although he had claimed he was seeking asylum for religious persecution in Somalia. He was sentenced to 10 years in prison in 2011.

It further said one U.S. citizen had smuggled 272 Somalis into the United States through Cuba and Mexico until January 2010. Although he claimed he had been approached by al-Shabaab members for help smuggling people, he said he'd refused, the report said.

Also detained were three Sri Lankans, one of whom said he was a member of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and was on his way to Canada.

There are many more instances than what was detailed by Texas officials, too.

A 2006 House Committee on Homeland Security report said that "each year, hundreds of illegal aliens from countries known to harbor terrorists or promote terrorism" are found trying to cross the border along the Rio Grande Valley. It said members of Hezbollah "have already entered the United States" across the border prior to 2005.

A Government Accountability Office report from August 2009 said Border Patrol apprehended three people with "links to terrorism" at southwest border checkpoints in fiscal year 2008.

An updated 2012 report from the House Committee on Homeland Security said 1,918

"special interest aliens" were stopped at the border from fiscal years 2006 to 2011.

Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, said the common thread in these types of reports is not so much that notorious terrorists had been arrested, but that immigrants with ties to terrorist organizations had been caught.

"I haven't seen this as a method that terrorists have regularly used," he said of infiltrating the southern border. "There are more efficient ways to get in where you don't have to violate U.S. law."

That's not to say the border isn't porous, because immigrants from other countries continue to arrive via Mexico.

Five Pakistanis and one Afghan were caught by Border Patrol agents near the Arizona border in November 2015. U.S. Customs and Border Protection records checks didn't turn up any "derogatory information." That same month, eight Syrians — two sets of parents and four children — were stopped at the Texas border, but Homeland Security said they were regular migrants who weren't evading authorities.

Rand Corporation political scientist Colin Clarke said there are many challenges to enforcing border security beyond domestic policy. He noted places like Ecuador, which in 2008 dropped its visa requirements for admission. Lax policies make it much easier for groups to attempt getting into the United States. In 2011, three Pakistani citizens pleaded guilty to trying to smuggle in a member of the Pakistani Taliban from Ecuador. It is possible and plausible that terrorists would cross the Mexican border, Clarke said. But while it's a problem worth addressing, it's not something Americans should panic about. Unlike Europe, which has extensive, hidden support systems that could assist infiltrators, a terrorist coming to the United States wouldn't easily live off the grid for long.

"Getting across the border is one thing, having a network of logistics in place to put together what's needed to conduct an effective attack is another altogether," he said.

Our ruling

DeSantis said, "Recent reports state that the U.S. Customs and Border Protection has apprehended several members of



known Islamist terrorist organizations crossing the southern border in recent years."

There have been several reported incidents along the U.S.-Mexico border of several agencies encountering people on terrorism watch lists or with ties (or suspected ties) to terrorist groups. There also have been a number of people from countries associated

with terror groups stopped by authorities, although that's not an indication they're terrorist infiltrators. **Experts noted that while border security is always a concern, this issue is far from a pressing crisis.**

The statement is accurate but needs some clarification about the threat involved. We rate it Mostly True.

Somali piracy is down, not out

Source: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-3529397/Somali-piracy-not-out.html>



An armed Somali pirate stands on the shore near Hobyo town in 2010 looking at the hijacked Greek cargo ship MV Filitsa anchored off the coast ©Mohamed Dahir (AFP/File)

Apr 08 – The pirates who once ruled the seas off Somalia are little more than a memory now, but while they are forgotten they are not gone. The trial in Paris of seven men accused of killing a French sailor and kidnapping his wife during the height of Somali piracy in 2011 is a reminder of the deadly terror the pirates once spread.

However, experts and former pirates alike warn the scourge may yet return.

"There hasn't been a proper pirate attack on a commercial vessel in over two years," said John Steed, Horn of Africa manager for the US-based non-profit Oceans Beyond Piracy. "But the guys haven't gone away and nothing's changed on the ground."

Anti-piracy patrols by international warships and armed guards aboard commercial vessels which continue to chug fast and far past the

Somali coast, have suppressed piracy, not stopped it.

The last wave of piracy began in 2005 and reached its peak six years later when Somali pirate gangs attacked 237 vessels and, at year's end, held 11 vessels and 216 hostages, earning on average more than \$2 million (1.8 million euros) for every ship ransomed. Back then the total economic cost of Somali piracy was estimated at \$6.9 billion (6.1 billion euros). Much of that cost was down to counter-piracy actions including the deployment of warships, the extra fuel burned by vessels racing through the pirate ranges and the hiring of private armed security teams aboard ships. These costly measures worked and Somali piracy dropped off dramatically so that by 2013 no commercial vessels were successfully boarded.



Now some Somali pirates have turned to a new activity, fishing, and are finding themselves up against a new enemy: foreign trawlers.

The anti-piracy navies have no mandate to stop illegal fishing and private guards have no interest in it, while Somalia, making an unsteady recovery from decades of war, lacks either a coastguard or a navy.

"There's now no risk to illegal trawlers who can fish at will," said Steed.

Pirates turned fishermen

Somali pirates turned fishermen grumble about the foreign trawlers and have threatened to take up arms again.

"Now we are fishermen but where is the fish?" asked Abdulahi Abas, a former pirate in the coastal town of Garacad. "Foreign trawlers are taking all the fish."

"I joined the pirates in the first place because of those illegal fishing vessels, and now we have left the piracy business, we cannot fish in our own waters," Abas said.

Some of those illegal vessels have been attacked. Last year the Iranian fishing boat Siraj was hijacked while its partner vessel, Jaber, escaped after a gunfight with pirates.

On any given day there are scores of foreign trawlers illegally pulling fish out of Somalia's territorial waters. Among the worst offenders are Iranian, Spanish and Taiwanese vessels, according to Oceans Beyond Piracy.

"Illegal fishing is giving pirates the excuse they had in the beginning," said Steed, "But it is just an excuse. These are criminals whether they are kidnapping at sea or on land."

Today there are around 46 pirate hostages left in Somalia. Twenty-six are the crew of the Taiwanese trawler the Naham 3 accounts who have been held for over four years, while 15 others were captured aboard the Siraj last year.

The others are Kenyan soldiers and citizens seized on land and held by pirate gangs not

drawn to the seaborne element of their kidnapping trade.

Forgotten hostages

These are, said Steed, the forgotten hostages. The crew of the Naham 3 come from Cambodia, China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam but a crew's value to shipowners and insurance companies disappears with the vessel which is now wrecked.

Middle-aged French couple Christian and Evelyne Colombo were attacked in September 2011. Seven Somali men on trial in Paris for Christian's murder and Evelyne's abduction deny attacking the couple's catamaran yacht as it sailed from Yemen to Oman, killing the husband and dumping his body in the sea. Evelyne was rescued 48-hours later by Spanish commandos who killed two of the suspected pirates and arrested the other seven.

Steed points out that piracy remains attractive when there are few other options. Along Somalia's coast basic government services are absent, jobs scarce and options limited.

"Take the navies away and stop hiring armed guards and the whole thing starts again," he said.

Instead of fishing equipment, ice-making factories, storage facilities and access to markets, Somalia got warships ghosting along the horizon.

Former pirate Ahmed Yare can sometimes see the warships and the foreign trawlers from the shoreline at his home close to Eyl, a onetime pirate stronghold. "The situation is not helping me here, I don't have a job and I cannot go to fish freely in my own waters because of those foreign trawlers," he said.

"They are taking all the fish and I say it will bring back the piracy business, and this time it'll be even worse."

Pirates abduct six Turkish crew off Nigeria

Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/middle-east/Pirates-abduct-six-Turkish-crew-off-Nigeria-report/articleshow/51780324.cms>

Apr 11 – Pirates off the coast of Nigeria have attacked a Turkish cargo ship, kidnapping six crew members in a region which has seen increasing piracy in recent years, a Turkish maritime news agency reported Monday.



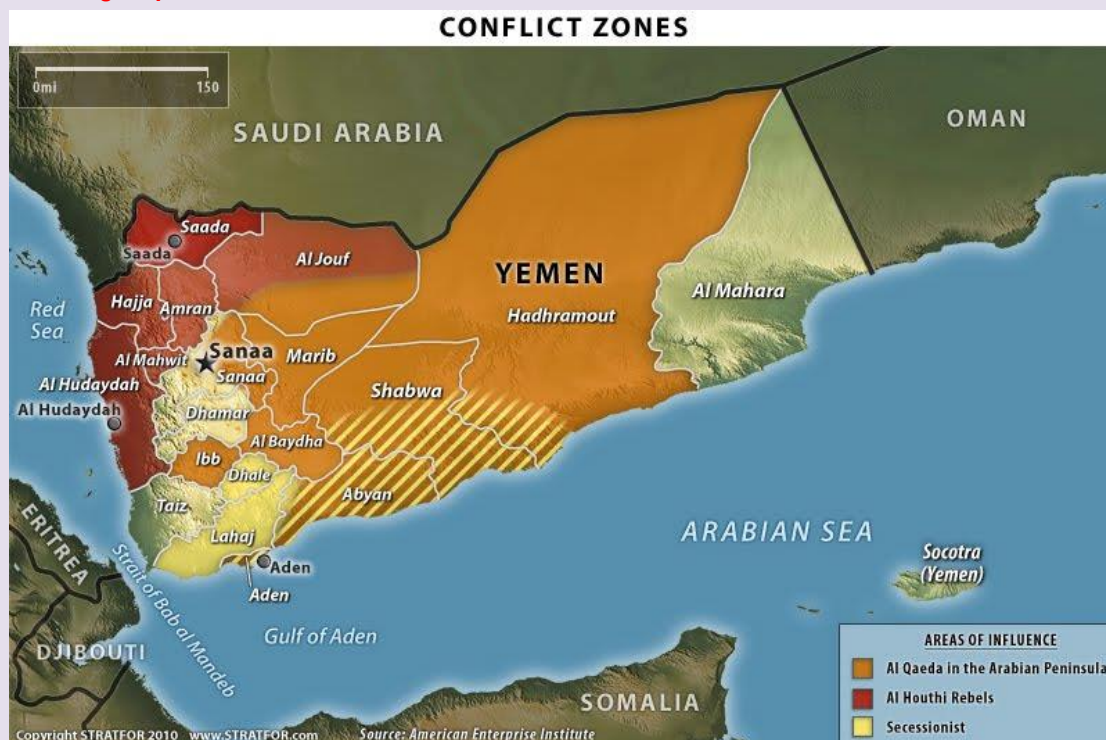
The Deniz News Agency said pirates abducted the ship's mechanical engineer, electrician, navigator and three captains. The ship is owned by Kaptanogul Shipping, which told the news agency that both the kidnapped crew, and those who remained on the ship, were "in good health".

It was unclear how many crew members were aboard the M/T Puli, which was carrying chemicals, when it was attacked. Company officials said the pirates have not contacted them. **At the end of 2015 pirates kidnapped crew members from Lithuania, Ukraine and Poland in the area which is increasingly a piracy hotspot.**

Special Report: Al Qaeda emerges stronger and richer from Yemen war

Source <https://www.yahoo.com/news/special-report-al-qaeda-emerges-stronger-richer-yemen-094136852.html?nhp=1>

Apr 08 – **Once driven to near irrelevance by the rise of Islamic State abroad and security crackdowns at home, al Qaeda in Yemen now openly rules a mini-state with a war chest swollen by an estimated \$100 million in looted bank deposits and revenue from running the country's third largest port.**



If Islamic State's capital is the Syrian city of Raqqa, then al Qaeda's is Mukalla, a southeastern Yemeni port city of 500,000 people. Al Qaeda fighters there have abolished taxes for local residents, operate speedboats manned by RPG-wielding fighters who impose fees on ship traffic, and make propaganda videos in which they boast about paving local roads and stocking hospitals.

The economic empire was described by more than a dozen diplomats, Yemeni security officials, tribal leaders and residents of Mukalla. Its emergence is the most striking unintended consequence of the Saudi-led military intervention in Yemen. The campaign, backed by the United States, has helped Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) to become stronger than at any time since it first emerged almost 20 years ago.

Yemeni government officials and local traders estimated the group, as well as seizing the bank deposits, has extorted \$1.4 million from the national oil company and earns up to \$2 million every day in taxes on goods and fuel coming into the port.



AQAP boasts 1,000 fighters in Mukalla alone, controls 600 km (373 miles) of coastline and is ingratiating itself with southern Yemenis, who have felt marginalized by the country's northern elite for years.

By adopting many of the tactics Islamic State uses to control its territory in Syria and Iraq, AQAP has expanded its own fiefdom. The danger is that the group, which organized the Charlie Hebdo magazine attack in Paris last year and has repeatedly tried to down U.S. airliners, may slowly indoctrinate the local population with its hardline ideology.

"I prefer that al Qaeda stay here, not for Al Mukalla to be liberated," said one 47-year-old resident. "The situation is stable, more than any 'free' part of Yemen. The alternative to al Qaeda is much worse."

Saudi Arabia, meanwhile, is struggling to extricate itself from the Yemeni quagmire a year after intervening in the country's civil war. Riyadh is determined to deny bitter rival Iran sway over another Arab capital. It has focused on attacking the Houthis who have seized parts of northern Yemen and who are allied to Iran.

But despite thousands of aerial bombings, the Saudis and their Gulf allies have failed to push the Houthis from the capital Sanaa. An estimated 6,000 people, half of them civilians, have been killed. A temporary ceasefire between the internationally recognized government, which is backed by the Saudis, and the Houthis is due to begin on April 10.

In a recent statement issued by the Saudi embassy in Washington, Saudi officials said that their campaign had "denied terrorists a safe haven in Yemen."

And yet, AQAP's strength is growing.

A U.S. counter-terrorism official said AQAP remained one of al Qaeda's "most potent affiliates." The United States launched its deadliest air strike yet on the group on March 22nd, killing around 50 of its fighters at a military base outside Mukalla.

"The group's bomb-making expertise and long-standing ambitions to carry out attacks using novel or complex tactics underscore (the) threat," the official said.

A senior Yemeni government official said the war against the Houthis "provided a suitable environment for the ... expansion of al Qaeda." The withdrawal of government army units from their bases in the south, allowed al Qaeda to acquire "very large quantities of sophisticated and advanced weapons, including shoulder-fired missiles and armed vehicles."

As well, the coalition's preoccupation with fighting the Houthis "made it easier for al Qaeda elements to expand in more than one area," he said. "And this is why al Qaeda has today become stronger and more dangerous and we are working with the coalition now to go after elements of the group ... and will continue until they are destroyed."

Anatomy of an economic empire

Barely a week after Saudi Arabia launched "Operation Decisive Storm" against the Houthis in March last year, Yemeni army forces vanished from Mukalla's streets and moved westward to combat zones, security officials and residents said.

The city's residents were left defenseless, allowing a few dozen AQAP fighters to seize government buildings and free 150 of their comrades from the central jail. The freed included Khaled Batarfi, a senior al Qaeda leader. Pictures appeared online of Batarfi sitting inside the local presidential palace, looking happy and in control as he held a telephone to his ear.

Tribal leaders in neighboring provinces told Reuters that, in the security vacuum, army bases were looted and Yemen's south became awash with advanced weaponry. C4 explosive

and even anti-aircraft missiles were available to the highest bidder.

And just as Islamic State seized the central bank in Mosul in northern Iraq, AQAP looted Mukalla's central bank branch, netting an estimated \$100 million, according to two senior Yemeni security officials.

"That represents their biggest financial gain to date," one of the officials said. "That's enough to fund them at the level they had been operating for at least another 10 years."

In a sign that AQAP not only wants to get rich but also seeks official recognition as a quasi-state, it unsuccessfully sought permission from the Yemeni government to export crude oil in October and collect a share of the profits, according to a tribal leader and two senior officials.

Yemen's government refused, fearing the deal would give de



facto recognition to the internationally blacklisted group. "Al Qaeda sent a mediator to the government to get them agree to listen to this deal," the tribal leader, who is in southern Yemen, told Reuters.

"Their offer was they need the official documents from the government to sell crude oil, and they would get 25 percent of the profit, and 75 percent for the government."

The government rejected the offer, said both the tribal leader and Badr Basalmah, a former transport minister in Yemen's government.

"Yes, that happened," Basalmah said, speaking by telephone from the Saudi capital of Riyadh. "The government refused completely to have anything to do with this deal because it would give authority and legitimacy to al Qaeda."

On the waterfront

In Mukalla port, a thriving fuel smuggling network enriches AQAP daily.

Tribal sources, residents and diplomats told Reuters the militants gained control of the ports in Mukalla and Ash Shihr when they first stormed the cities in April last year. The militants began imposing tax and custom tariffs on shippers and traders.

"The group is experiencing a period of obscene, unprecedented wealth and luxury," one resident of Mukalla told Reuters.

A current official in the transport ministry estimate AQAP's daily revenue at \$2 million a day. Some local traders put it as high as \$5 million a day from customs duties and smuggled fuel, according to Basalmah, Yemen's former transport minister.

"You will find hundreds of oil trucks there smuggling fuel from one area to another where they are selling it," said Basalmah.

Abdallah al-Nasi, governor of neighboring Shabwa province, where AQAP controls some territory, said the group has become the de facto fuel supplier. "They sell the fuel to whoever buys it," Nasi told Reuters by phone. "The government-run petrol stations buy from them and sell it on to the citizens."

Tribes who work with al Qaeda now control much of the country's oil infrastructure. Six white oil tanks on a beach between Mukalla and Ash Shihr are linked by pipeline to the Masila oilfields which are estimated to hold more than 80 percent of Yemen's total reserves.

After army forces withdrew from the area last year, armed local tribes linked to al Qaeda took charge. That prompted major companies operating there – state-owned PetroMasila, Canada's Nexen Energy and France's Total – to shut production and end exports. A PetroMasila official said that small amounts of oil are still being extracted for use in provincial power generators. Total said it has not restarted operations. Nexen did not respond to a request for comment.

Robin Hood

It is a dramatic change of fortune for a group that was founded in the late 1990s and merged with al Qaeda's Saudi branch in 2009. After a campaign of suicide bombings and attacks against the Yemeni government, and two foiled bomb plots on U.S.-bound airliners, AQAP was forced into retreat by assaults from Yemeni tribes and troops as well as persistent U.S. drone strikes.

Now the group has embarked on a brazen campaign to shake down state-owned firms, including the national oil and mobile phone companies. **AQAP uses the money it extorts to win favor among its subjects.** Elisabeth Kendall, a Yemen scholar at Oxford University, calls it a "Robin Hood" strategy.

In January, a copy of a demand issued by AQAP circulated on local media. The notice, on AQAP letterhead, demanded \$4.7 million from the national oil company's bank account in Mukalla.

"May God grant that all serve the country and the faithful," the note said.

A top government security official said the oil company paid the full \$4.7 million. A source at the bank said it had paid only \$1.4 million. A representative of the oil company declined to comment.

Officials at the three biggest national mobile phone companies, MTN, Sabafone and Y Telecom, said AQAP had also demanded payments of \$4.7 million each from them. The firms all said they refused to pay.

Late last year, AQAP canceled payroll taxes in areas it controls because it deemed the practice un-Islamic. In a video posted on YouTube in November, the chief of al Qaeda's Sharia court in Hadramout – the coastal region where Mukalla is capital – announced it would repay



government workers taxes they had paid. In the video, a bureaucrat is shown counting out wages for a worker from a bulging wad of Yemeni currency.

"The poor have been paying alms to the rich and the rich don't pay, and it's the tyrants and oppressors who are the ones getting this money," AQAP fighter Ali bin Talib al-Kathiri said in another video. "Because those oppressors have not implemented God's law, they've eaten up the people's money in sin."

Kathiri died in January in a gun battle with southern tribesmen. But AQAP's populist strategy is paying off, said Oxford University's Kendall.

The group regularly posts pictures of its fighters repairing damaged bridges and paving streets in Hadramout and other cities under its control. It says the money for the repairs comes from groups such as Guardians of Sharia or Sons of Hadramout, names AQAP has taken on as part of a rebranding effort to emphasize its local origins.

In one video posted on Feb. 28, AQAP members deliver free medical supplies and equipment to the kidney dialysis and cancer wings of a local hospital. The boxes of supplies are sealed with the tape of a Western pharmaceutical company.

"These are some medicines from your brothers, the Guardians of Sharia, to al-Jamii hospital which was going to be closed ... because of no money," says one fighter whose face is blurred out. The video also shows a hospital official saying he had received money from al Qaeda to pay workers' salaries.

A popular haven?

The group has exploited sectarian grievances to brand their state-building project as a liberation movement. "So many areas fell to us after the Houthis left because we are the entity that people trust," AQAP leader Batarfi said.

In the five coastal provinces stretching from the government's temporary seat in Aden to Mukalla, a familiar pattern has recurred in recent months. Al Qaeda forces storm a town, plant their flags, and then watch as local leaders acquiesce.

Citizens say they are tired of moving and would rather live with al Qaeda's control.

"With al Qaeda, if you resist, you never know when they could come and assassinate you," one Yemeni sheikh said.

AQAP has also learned to be less cruel than its rival, Islamic State, which has struggled to gain a foothold in a population repelled by its brutality. While AQAP has resorted to killing suspected "sorcerers," and carried out stonings of at least one man and woman accused of adultery, residents and the group's online media suggest such incidents are rare.

And even when AQAP publicizes punishments, their videos and photographs never show the level of gratuitous gore that Islamic State revels in. Rather than resorting to mass beheadings, AQAP has detained or put under house arrest several dozen army officers and other figures they see as a threat, activists said.

One Mukalla resident said her life had changed little since AQAP swept through the city. "We carry out our lives normally, they walk among the people," she told Reuters by phone. "Of course they're trying to create a popular haven."

A regional diplomat who follows Yemen says that if al Qaeda manages to successfully root itself as a political and economic organization, it could become a more resilient threat, much like al Shabaab in nearby Somalia.

"We may be facing a more complicated al Qaeda," the diplomat said, "not just a terrorist organization but a movement controlling territory with happy people inside it."

Four questions Belgians should ask about the Patriot Act

By Lacey Wallace

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160411-four-questions-belgians-should-ask-about-the-patriot-act>

Apr 11 – In March, three bombings in Brussels claimed thirty-two lives and injured more than 300. The Islamic State, or ISIS, claimed responsibility for the attacks.

These events are disturbingly similar to the November 2015 terror attacks in Paris that claimed 130 lives – and for which ISIS also claimed responsibility.



The attacks added a sense of urgency to calls for Belgium to enact its own counterterrorism bill. It is a call the French government has already answered. After the attacks against Charlie Hebdo last January, France passed a surveillance law giving the government greater authority in counterterrorism investigations. Valérie Pécresse, a minister under former president Nicolas Sarkozy, described the pending legislation as a “French Patriot Act,” suggesting that France looked to the U.S. law, which was passed just 45 days after September 11, 2001, as a model. Increased use of surveillance is a worldwide trend. According to a [2013 study](#), 35 of 60 countries examined have increased regulation and monitoring of online activity. Several human rights groups, including Amnesty International, have criticized these measures as a violation of privacy and free expression.

I have been studying how the U.S. media is covering the French surveillance law, and how this derivative law compares to the U.S. Patriot Act. If Belgium decides to pass similar legislation, what questions should Belgians ask about these existing laws?

1. What powers do the laws grant?

Under the French surveillance law, investigators can now monitor phone calls and emails of suspected terrorists without a court order. Officials only have to obtain permission from an administrative committee, the National Commission for the Control of Intelligence Techniques. This committee is managed by French Prime Minister Manuel Valls and consists of magistrates, members of parliament and senators. In the U.S., it is the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court, or FISA court, that serves this purpose.

Unlike a traditional courtroom, the FISA court is closed to the public. Hearings include only the judge, attorneys licensed to practice in front of the U.S. government and other government officials. The secrecy is designed to prevent the exposure of classified information. For this reason, the FISA courts have sometimes been criticized as a “rubber stamp” for the National Security Administration.

In the U.S., the final decision on whether to grant a surveillance warrant is in the hands of a federal judge. In France, by contrast, only a few of the surveillance committee members are judges. The rest are politicians. In theory, this means that the French surveillance committee may be more vulnerable to political manipulation. Given recent criticisms of the FISA court, however, this may not be the case in practice. According to one source, the court accepts at least 75 percent of government requested warrants without modification.

There are cases in which the U.S. Patriot Act authorizes warrantless searches, but these can be used only to obtain records of phone numbers dialed, materials accessed and so on,

not the content of phone calls or communications.

2. Online activities watched, too

Another major element of the French surveillance law is the requirement that Internet service providers permit the French government to routinely monitor suspicious online behavior.

French intelligence services have the right to place recording devices, cameras and keylogger technology that keep track of all keystrokes in real time. The recordings can be stored for a month.

Metadata can be kept for five years. Metadata is information about a consumer’s phone or Internet use. Phone metadata can include all the information surrounding a phone call, such as the caller’s number and the receiver’s number, time and location of the call, and how long the call lasts. However, metadata does not include the content of the phone call itself. Internet metadata can include information such as websites visited, TV shows streamed or emails sent.

The Patriot Act also allows for the NSA to collect metadata. If the government feels there is threat, a petition can be made to the FISA court for a warrant. This warrant allows the government to force phone companies to hand over private information on certain customers.

In June 2013, Edward Snowden, a government contractor, revealed the NSA had a program called PRISM. The program uses extensive data mining efforts to collect Internet communication data and analyze it for patterns of terrorist or other potential criminal activity.



After the Snowden leaks, legislators pushed for Patriot Act reform, largely to end bulk data collection. In 2015, the U.S. passed the Freedom Act, which now requires a public advocate at FISA court hearings to argue for protection of private data. The Freedom Act also prevents the U.S. government from collecting phone record data. Instead, companies like Verizon are required to collect this information and maintain records that the government can search on request.

3. How has the public reacted?

An opinion [poll](#) conducted in May 2015 found that **60 percent of Americans believe the Patriot Act should be reformed**. Just 34 percent said the government should keep the act in its current form.

In contrast, an opinion [poll](#) conducted in April 2015 found that about two-thirds of French citizens were in favor of restricting civil liberties to support counterterrorism. Just after the November 2015 terror attacks, this number jumped to more than 80 percent.

While public support for measures like these is usually high after a terrorist attack, these poll results indicate that support decreases as attention to a terrorist attack fades, and as challenges with implementation, controversial cases and related issues surface in the mass media.

4. Are these laws effective?

Of course, the French surveillance law didn't stop the attacks in November 2015. Understanding why may help Belgium lawmakers craft a more potent law.

One identifiable shortcoming is limited resources. According to the Guardian, the French intelligence agencies have roughly 500 to 600 employees, while there are about 11,000 people on their watch lists, including more than 1,000 citizens who have recently traveled to Iraq or Syria.

Another problem: The French intelligence agencies are reluctant to share communications between each other due to the fear of leaked information.

When the agencies do communicate, the process is slow. This creates even more strain. The Patriot Act has also not been as effective as some had hoped.

In 2015, Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz stated that bulk data collection had not resulted in any major case developments. This was partially due to the amount of information collected about ordinary citizens. It took several years for U.S. officials to find ways to improve data collection.

The Heritage Organization claims that about thirty terrorist attacks were prevented between 2001 and 2010 through measures provided by the Patriot Act. However, thirty states and Washington, D.C. have experienced terrorist attacks since 2001.

There is no guarantee that even with the most sophisticated surveillance technology out there today, passing a bill or law to collect private information on citizens will protect us from terrorist threats and violence. Even more vexing: the nature of intelligence gathering means we may never know exactly how many attacks have been prevented by the Patriot Act, the French surveillance law – or a similar law that Belgium may soon pass.

Lacey Wallace is Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice, Pennsylvania State University. Ashley Boyer, a masters student of public administration at Pennsylvania State University, contributed to this article.

Overwhelming majority of British Muslims reject suicide bombers, terrorism: Survey

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160411-overwhelming-majority-of-british-muslims-reject-suicide-bombers-terrorism-survey>

Apr 11 – The survey of 1,081 British Muslims, commissioned by Channel 4 — and which is representative of the U.K. population and more accurate than other polls because it was carried out face-to-face and avoided going through umbrella organizations — found that **96 percent of British Muslims do not sympathize with radical Muslims who take part in suicide bomb attacks.**



The vast majority of those surveyed show similar levels of support to the wider British public in support for British institutions and a feeling of belonging to Britain.

The broadcaster [reports](#), however, that in terms of some social attitudes there were significant differences compared to the rest of Britain.

Channel 4 notes that an overwhelming majority of those surveyed expressed an explicit rejection of violence committed in the name of Islam. **Ninety-six percent said they did not have any sympathy for suicide bombers and those committing other acts of terrorism as a form of political protest. Seventy-seven percent did not support introduction of Sharia law.**

Seven percent, however, said they would support such laws.

The survey found other responses to be encouraging. Ninety-one percent of British Muslims felt a strong sense of belonging to their local area – a higher percentage than the national average of 76 percent of Britons. Also, 88 percent of British Muslims thought Britain was a good place for Muslims to live and 86 percent felt a strong sense of belonging here.

Seventy-eight percent of British Muslims said they would like to integrate into British life.

On some social and cultural issues, however, a large number of British Muslims are out of step with the wider population. Fifty-two percent did not believe that homosexuality should be legal in Britain, and 47 percent said it was unacceptable for schools to allow homosexuals teachers to teach in schools.

Only 34 percent of British Muslims said they would inform the police if they thought somebody they knew was getting involved with people who supported anti-regime militants in Syria.

Trevor Phillips, former chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, told Channel 4: "Hearing what British Muslims themselves think, rather than listening to those purporting to speak on their behalf, is critical if we are to prevent the establishment of a nation within our nation. Many of the results will be troubling to Muslims and non-Muslims alike – and the analysis of the age profile shows us that the social attitudes revealed are unlikely to change quickly.

"The integration of Britain's Muslims will probably be the hardest task we've ever faced. It will require the abandonment of the milk-and-water multiculturalism still so beloved of many, and the adoption of a far more muscular approach to integration."

Why the US is sending B-52 bombers to battle ISIS

Source: <https://www.yahoo.com/news/why-us-sending-b-52-bombers-battle-isis-204109330.html?nhp=1>



Apr 10 – **As part of a larger effort to bolster its fight against ISIS (aka Islamic State), the United States is deploying the B-52 bombers – the first time the Pentagon is sending the aircraft to the Middle East since the 1991 Gulf War – officials said Saturday.**



An unknown number of B-52s will be based at Al Udeid air base in Qatar, replacing the B-1 Lancer bombers that were withdrawn from the fight in Syria in February, to undergo maintenance and upgrading. The officials could not disclose the exact number of B-52s sent due to "operational security reasons."

"The B-52 demonstrates our continued resolve to apply persistent pressure on Daesh and defend the region in any future contingency," said Air Force Lieutenant General Charles Brown, commander of US Air Forces Central Command, using the Arabic acronym for ISIS, Al Jazeera reported.

With the withdrawal of the B-1 bomber, the total number of bombs dropped on ISIS fell to an eight-month low in February, according to statistics published by the US Air Force, Fox News reported.

Despite flying only 7 percent of strike missions against ISIS in Iraq and Syria, B-1s dropped nearly 40 percent of all the bombs. In addition to carrying many more bombs than USAF fighter jets, the B-1 could loiter over the battlefield for up to 10 hours at a time. It can fly at supersonic speeds meaning it can be anywhere over Iraq and Syria in minutes.

The B-52s could be a good replacement, since it can also linger over an area for up to 12 hours at a time. The 60-year-old B-52s – based in Louisiana and North Dakota – are among the oldest active aircraft in the US Air Force, and still dominate the force's long-range bomber fleet. Launched in the 1950s during the Eisenhower administration, the aircraft became iconic during the Cold War, due to its capabilities,

and was the first plane to drop a hydrogen bomb, on the Bikini Atoll islands in 1956.

Though it was slated to retire some years ago, the 185,000-pound aircraft has continued to be deployed in conflict areas, as The New York Times reports, owing to its rugged design that allows it to be deployed in any part of the world, and can carry a wide range of bombs and up to 70,000 pounds of bombs, mines, and missiles.

"There have been a series of attempts to build a better intercontinental bomber, and

they have consistently failed," Owen Coté, a professor of security studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology told the New York Times last December. "Turns out whenever we try to improve on the B-52, we run into problems, so we still have the B-52.

Heavy bombing during the 1972 Christmas destroyed large sections of Hanoi in North Vietnam, resulting in the deaths of thousands of civilians, subsequently tainting the usage of the aircraft in conflicts. The killings sparked widespread international condemnation, and prompted the Pentagon to

make significant changes to it. In recent years, laser-targeting pods have been added to the wings' bombers in order to allow them to drop guided "smart" bombs, the New York Times reported.

The B-52 bombers being deployed in Qatar will now be able to deliver precision weapons and carry out a range of missions without endangering civilian lives, the US officials said.

"Accuracy is critically important in this war," said Lieutenant Colonel Chris Karns, spokesman for the Central Command, Reuters reported. "Carpet-bombing would not be effective for the operation we're in because Daesh doesn't mass as large groups. Often they blend into population centers. We always look to minimize civilian casualties."



The Syrian Civil War: An Interim Balance Sheet

By Efraim Inbar

Source: <http://www.meforum.org/5948/syria-civil-war-balance-sheet>

Apr 06 – Intensified diplomatic efforts by the international community to put an end to the civil war in Syria are unlikely to reach a political long-term arrangement before the warring parties are exhausted by the conflict. It is often weariness that brings armed conflicts to a close, rather than a promising political solution offered by a disinterested mediator or international conference.

Significantly, no protagonist seems to have overwhelming power to enforce its preferred solution. The Sunni powers, such as Saudi Arabia and Turkey, tried to unseat Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, the ally of Shiite Iran, but displayed weakness that was exploited by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards and Hezbollah. Even American aid to the Sunni rebels was ineffective. The much feared Islamic State (IS), born as a result of the disintegration of Iraq and Syria, was not strong enough to tackle the Assad regime successfully. The Russian military intervention was able to strengthen Assad's grip over parts of Syria, but was not enough to restore his rule over the entire country.

This means that Syria will remain divided among several warring factions for some time to come. The fractured country will continue to be an arena in which local chiefs will try to expand their areas of control and in which outsiders will compete for influence. Fluidity and ambiguity will continue to characterize the arena.

This equivocal situation is producing winners and losers, but it is Iran that is emerging with the upper hand. Assad is still in power, which means Tehran retains its clout in Damascus, a former capital of an Arab empire. Damascus is also the linchpin to Beirut, where the Shiite Hezbollah, an Iranian proxy, exercises effective power. Moreover, the Syrian crisis has amplified the threat perception of IS in the West, making Iran a potential ally in western attempts to curb radical Sunni Islamists. Such perceptions also help Iran strengthen its control over Iraq. Iran has been successful in preserving the Shiite corridor, a key objective in its quest for hegemony in the Middle East and for projecting force further away.

Russia emerged as a beneficiary of the lingering Syrian crisis even before its military intervention in September 2015. It was successful in providing the diplomatic mechanism that enabled Obama to renege on his ultimatum against Assad's use of chemical weapons, and has effectively defended the Assad regime at international forums. The Russian intervention on Assad's behalf also signaled that Moscow is a reliable ally, a message that resonates well among the political elites of the Middle East and beyond.

In addition, Russia preserved its strategic assets on the Syrian coast in the eastern Mediterranean after investing for years in the build-up of its Mediterranean flotilla.

In contrast, the Syrian turmoil provided plenty of proof that the US, under Obama, is not adept at dealing with Middle East realities. One early example was the Obama administration's initial inclination to try to engage foes, such as Syria (and Iran). A defining moment of American weakness was the retreat from threats to use force against Assad for crossing the chemical weapons red line (August 2012).

The American campaign against IS has provided additional evidence about the retreat of American power in the Middle East. In August 2014, after a confused and long decision-making process, the US concluded that the territorial conquests of IS are evolving into a significant threat to American interests and ordered its air force to raid installations of IS in Syria (and Iraq). Unfortunately, the gap between the goals and the capabilities of the US and its allies bolstered IS's dual message about the weakness of the decadent West and its own invincibility. By the beginning of 2016, the war against IS appeared stalemated. The US failed to induce local actors to cooperate effectively against it, and the limited air campaign has been insufficient.

In contrast, it was Russian air support that secured a victory for Assad against IS (the March 2016 conquest of Palmyra). The Russian intervention underscored American passivity even as it elicited dismissive statements by Obama, who called it a quagmire



for Russian forces and absolved himself of the need to take any action. Obama did not specify how he would respond to Russian aircraft targeting US-supported rebel factions in the civil war other than to underline that the US would not directly confront Moscow. The tacit expectation that Syria would turn into a Vietnam or Afghanistan experience for Russia turned out to be unfounded.

Turkey appears to be at a loss after several years of futile support for Syrian rebels. The destabilization of Syria has underscored Turkey's long porous border, which exposes the country to terrorist attacks. At the same time, the influx of a multitude of refugees fleeing the mayhem has exacted an economic price on Ankara. Turkey's crucial support for IS has been gradually revealed, the full diplomatic cost of which remains to be seen.

While Turkey has shown itself ready to confront Iran by proxies in Syria, underscoring the Sunni-Shiite fault lines and the regional Persian-Turkish rivalry, that readiness may well precipitate Iranian support for Kurdish militias, which constitutes a national security threat. Turkey also miscalculated in November 2015 by shooting down a Russian fighter, an action that triggered a deterioration in Turkey's strategic position by reviving the Ottoman-Russian historical enmity.

In addition, Turkey's Syrian policy has had the unintended consequence of empowering the most virulently anti-Turkish Kurdish elements. These Kurds have achieved a measure of

autonomy in several regions in northern Syria, and have earned some Western support thanks to their effectiveness against IS. Still, the limited self-rule the Kurds have established, and the international attention they have attracted to their cause, will not be enough for state-building. For them to achieve full autonomy, they will have to overcome internal discord and their lack of territorial contiguity.

Israel continues to be a spectator as the Syrian tragedy unfolds, with occasional pinpoint interventions when immediate national security interests are at stake. The disappearance of the Syrian military threat to Israel is not, of course, inimical to its interests. But the entrenchment of Iran in Damascus, with substantial Russian help, constitutes a critical national security threat to Israel, because it strengthens the radical axis led by Iran in a Middle East from which the US has largely retreated. The possibility of opening a new front on the Golan Heights is a secondary issue that also needs the attention of the Israeli military.

The Syrian arena provides Israel with diplomatic opportunities to nourish relationships with reluctant actors. Jerusalem must work under the assumption that Syria cannot easily be fixed and that conflict is likely to continue. Israel's interactions within its strategic environment are inherently limited. The use of force, often inevitable in our neighborhood, must be carefully calibrated in light of domestic and international constraints.

Efraim Inbar, a professor of political studies at Bar-Ilan University, is the director of the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies and a Shillman-Ginsburg fellow at the Middle East Forum.

German intelligence confirms 29 former operatives have joined ISIS

Source: <https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/29-isis-recruits-allegedly-former-german-nato-soldiers/>



Apr 12 – A new report published by the German secret service (Military Counterintelligence Service, MAD) states that 29 former German soldiers have either directly defected to ISIS or joined Islamic State ranks after ending military service in the German Army.

Furthermore, some 65 active German soldiers are currently under investigation for sympathies with terrorist groups such as Jabhat al-Nusra and ISIS. A recent



study conducted by the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT) and published on April 1 says that between 720 and 760 Germans are believed to have traveled to join IS.

In a similar case, a former Dutch soldier named Israfil Yilmaz joined jihadist ranks in Syria and was very public about his decision, even calling for fellow Islamist Europeans to join the caliphate. A picture of him can be viewed below:



Since 2007, only 17 German soldiers have been fired due to suspected sympathies with terrorist organizations despite some 320 military cases on the matter. Social Democratic Party (SPD) MP Hans-Peter Bartels, who is responsible for oversight of the army, said on Tuesday that "Islamism isn't the main problem of the Bundeswehr (German Army), however, he did mention that "it represents a real danger that we have to take seriously." Alarmed by the revelations, the German Defense Ministry now wants MAD to take greater steps to ensure that jihadists are not infiltrating the German Army, including background checks and investigating links to militant groups deemed terrorist by NATO. "Just like other fighting forces, the Bundeswehr can be attractive for Islamists who want to acquire weapons training," Bartels said. "But to my knowledge there is so far no systematic push by Islamist organizations to infiltrate the army." This report comes as ISIS has conducted bloody terrorist attacks in both Paris and Bruxelles recently.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: The German case revealed a gap in recruiting soldiers that need to be closed as soon as possible. A similar gap has been recorded with gang members in the US that joined the Armed Forces to gain combat/guns' experience to be used later in the streets. Another proof of inability to connect the dots!

Former UK Official Who Popularised the Term 'Islamophobia' Admits Error

by Raheem Kassam

Source: <http://www.meforum.org/blog/2016/04/islamophobia-advocate-admits-error>

Apr 10 – The former head of Britain's Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), Trevor Phillips, has admitted he "got almost everything wrong" on Muslim immigration in a damning new report on integration, segregation, and how the

followers of Islam are creating "nations within nations" in the West.

Phillips, a former elected member of the Labour Party who served as chairman of the EHRC from 2003 to 2012, will present "What



British Muslims Really Think" on Channel 4 on Wednesday. An ICM poll [released](#) to the *Times* ahead of the broadcast reveals:

- One in five Muslims in Britain never enter a non-Muslim house;
- 39 percent of Muslims, male and female, say a woman should always obey her husband;
- 31 percent of British Muslims support the right of a man to have more than one wife;
- 52 percent of Muslims do not believe that homosexuality should be legal;
- 23 percent of Muslims support the introduction of Sharia law rather than the laws laid down by parliament.



Trevor Phillips, who commissioned an infamous 1997 report on "Islamophobia," says he "got almost everything wrong" on Muslim immigration.

Writing in the *Times* on the issue, Phillips admits:

Liberal opinion in Britain has, for more than two decades, maintained that most Muslims are just like everyone else... Britain desperately wants to think of its Muslims as versions of the Great British Bake Off winner Nadiya Hussain, or the cheeky-chappie athlete Mo Farah. But thanks to the most detailed and comprehensive survey of British Muslim opinion yet conducted, we now know that just isn't how it is.

While serving as chair of the Runnymede Trust, Phillips commissioned a 1997 [report](#) on Islamophobia and Britain, which, according to both Phillips himself and academics across the country, popularised the phrase which has now become synonymous with any criticism – legitimate or not – of Islam or Muslims.

Chris Allen, writing in *Durham Anthropology Journal*, noted in 2007:

It has been a decade since the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia was established, a Commission that through its

1997 report, "Islamophobia: a challenge for us all" ("the Runnymede report") not only raised an awareness of the growing reality of anti-Muslim and anti-Islamic hostility in Britain, but also marked the onset of what might be described as 'the first decade of Islamophobia'. In doing so, the Runnymede report propelled the word 'Islamophobia' into the everyday common parlance and discourses of both the public and political spaces.

Phillips says his new data shows a "chasm" opening between Muslims and non-Muslims on fundamental issues such as marriage, relations between men and women, schooling, freedom of expression, and even the validity of violence in defence of religion. He notes – echoing an article on Breitbart London just two weeks ago that reveals a growing disparity between older and younger Muslims in Britain – that "the gaps between Muslim and non-Muslim youngsters are nearly as large as those between their elders."

And while he is cautious to note that many Muslims in Britain are grateful to be here, and do identify with role models such as Hussain and Farah, there is a widening gap in society with many Muslims segregating themselves.

"It's not as though we couldn't have seen this coming. But we've repeatedly failed to spot the warning signs," he admits. "Twenty years ago... I published the report titled *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All*, we thought that the real risk of the arrival of new communities was discrimination against Muslims. Our 1996 survey of recent incidents showed that there was plenty of it around. But we got almost everything else wrong."

His comments will come as a blow to those who continue to attack elements in British society who are concerned about Muslim immigration and integration, and in fact may even go some way to shoring up comments made by U.S. Presidential candidates Donald Trump and Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) seeking to slow down or pause the rate of Muslim immigration into the West.

We estimated that the Muslim population of the UK would be approaching 2 [million] by 2020.

We underestimated by nearly a million. We predicted that the most lethal threat to Muslims would come from racial attacks and social exclusion. We completely



failed to foresee the urban conflicts of 2001 that ravaged our northern cities. And of course we didn't dream of 9/11 and the atrocities in Madrid, Paris, Istanbul, Brussels and London. For a long time, I too thought that Europe's Muslims would become like previous waves of migrants, gradually abandoning their ancestral ways, wearing their religious and cultural baggage lightly, and gradually blending into Britain's diverse identity landscape. I should have known better.

And Mr. Phillips even acknowledges that the mass sexual grooming and rape scandals that are plaguing heavily Muslim populated towns across Britain are because of Muslim – not "Asian" – men. He writes: "The contempt for white girls among some Muslim men has been highlighted by the recent scandals in Rotherham, Oxford, Rochdale and other towns. But this merely reflects a deeply ingrained sexism that runs through Britain's Muslim communities" – in a nod to those who have long protested this to be the case in the face of political, media, and even police cover ups.

Even left-wing columnist Yasmin Alibhai-Brown told him: "[W]e [liberal Muslims] are a dying breed — in 10 years there will be very few of us left unless something really important is done."

Phillips comments: "Some of my journalist friends imagine that, with time, the Muslims will grow out of it. They won't."

And indeed he lays the blame at the feet of the liberal, metropolitan elite, media classes:

Oddly, the biggest obstacles we now face in addressing the growth of this nation-within-a-

nation are not created by British Muslims themselves. Many of our (distinctly un-diverse) elite political and media classes simply refuse to acknowledge the truth. Any undesirable behaviours are attributed to poverty and alienation. Backing for violent extremism must be the fault of the Americans. Oppression of women is a cultural trait that will fade with time, nothing to do with the true face of Islam.

Even when confronted with the growing pile of evidence to the contrary, and the angst of the liberal minority of British Muslims, clever, important people still cling to the patronising certainty that British Muslims will, over time, come to see that "our" ways are better.

In terms of solutions, Mr. Phillips opines on "halting the growth of sharia courts and placing them under regulation" ensuring that school governance never falls into the hands of a single-minority group, "ensuring mosques that receive a steady flow of funds from foreign governments such as Saudi Arabia, however disguised, are forced to reduce their dependency on Wahhabi patronage" and an end to the "silence-for-votes understanding between local politicians and Muslim leaders — the sort of Pontius Pilate deal that had such catastrophic outcomes in Rotherham and Rochdale."

Mr. Phillips's comments echo those of the Czech president, and research from across Europe that revealed attitudes amongst Muslims on the continent have hardened. The younger the Muslim, the more likely they are to hold hard-line views, one recent study found.

Raheem Kassam is a Shillman-Ginsburg fellow at the Middle East Forum and editor-in-chief of Breitbart London.

Islamic State allowed 50 terrorists to return to UK

Source: <http://www.dnaindia.com/world/report-islamic-state-allowed-50-terrorists-to-return-to-uk-2201318>

Apr 13 – There is fear that the reason behind the move could be to carry out attacks in the region. **The Islamic State terror group reportedly allowed around 50 British recruits to return home from IS strongholds in Syria and Iraq over the past few months.**

According to *The Times*, British counter-terrorism agencies are investigating documents that give permission to IS fighters holding UK passports to leave the region. This raises fears that they could be plotting attacks in Britain.

The so-called **leaving permissions or exit cards**, found among thousands of documents obtained by the Syrian website Zaman Al Wasl, include a British Iraqi dubbed Abu Bakr al-Iraqi, whose commander gave him permission to leave for "work" in July 2014.



The exit cards, only a few of which were disclosed to the newspaper, are thought to provide a bureaucratic vouchsafe for fighters to be able to safely cross the ISIS border as the group is known to execute deserters.

The documents leak, which covers the very early days of IS rule in northern Syria and some of northern Iraq, first emerged last month and exposed the meticulous detail with which IS administers its recruitment process.

Other than "work", the cards included fighters leaving for "family circumstances" and "meeting his mother".

Saeed Hamid, an IS fighter from Birmingham, was given permission to leave but appears to have not returned to the UK before being killed. The family of the 21-year-old were later sent a picture of his dead body. They have been cooperating with UK counter-terrorism police and security services with their investigations.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: The problem is that UK allowed them to return. Strip them from their citizenship and let them live their dream in the country they choose to serve. Even if future cooperation is desired, it is evident that security authorities cannot look after all suspects and they are a lot!

10-fold increase in number of children Boko Haram uses in suicide attacks

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160412-10fold-increase-in-number-of-children-boko-haram-uses-in-suicide-attacks>

Apr 12 – **The number of children involved in 'suicide' attacks in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger has risen sharply over the past year, from four in 2014 to forty-four in 2015**, according to a UNICEF report released yesterday. **More than 75 percent of the children involved in the attacks are girls.**

"Let us be clear: these children are victims, not perpetrators," said Manuel Fontaine, UNICEF Regional Director for West and Central Africa. "Deceiving children and forcing them to carry out deadly acts has been one of the most horrific aspects of the violence in Nigeria and in neighboring countries."



unicef 

Beyond Chibok

Over 1.3 million children
uprooted by Boko Haram violence

On 14 April 2014, over 270 schoolgirls were abducted in the town of Chibok, North-East Nigeria. The world was shocked. A global movement started demanding their return. #BringBackOurGirls

Since then, at least 1.3 million children have been uprooted by Boko Haram violence across four countries in the Lake Chad region. The world barely noticed. #BringBackOurChildhood

UNICEF Chad/2015/Laurent Duvalier



UNICEF says that the report, **Beyond Chibok** — released two years after the abduction of over 200 schoolgirls in Chibok — shows alarming trends in four countries affected by Boko Haram over the past two years:

- Between January 2014 and February 2016, Cameroon recorded the highest number of suicide attacks involving children (21), followed by Nigeria (17), and Chad (2).
- Over the past two years, nearly 1 in 5 suicide bombers was a child and three quarters of these children were girls. Last year, children were used in 1 out of 2 attacks in Cameroon, 1 out of 8 in Chad, and 1 out of 7 in Nigeria.
- Last year, for the first time, “suicide” bombing attacks in general spread beyond Nigeria’s borders. The frequency of all suicide bombings increased from 32 in 2014 to 151 last year. In 2015, 89 of these attacks were carried out in Nigeria, 39 in Cameroon, 16 in Chad, and 7 in Niger.

The calculated use of children who may have been coerced into carrying bombs, has created an atmosphere of fear and suspicion that has devastating consequences for girls who have survived captivity and sexual violence by Boko Haram in North East Nigeria.

Children who escaped from, or were released by, armed groups are often seen as potential security threats, as shown in recent research by UNICEF and International Alert. Children born as a result of sexual violence also encounter stigma and discrimination in their villages, host communities, and in camps for internally displaced persons.

“As ‘suicide’ attacks involving children become commonplace, some communities are starting

to see children as threats to their safety,” said Fontaine. “This suspicion towards children can have destructive consequences; how can a community rebuild itself when it is casting out its own sisters, daughters and mothers?”

Beyond Chibok assesses the impact conflict has had on children in the four countries affected by Boko Haram. **The report notes that:**

- Nearly 1.3 million children have been displaced;
- About 1,800 schools are closed – either damaged, looted, burned down or used as shelter by displaced people;
- Over 5,000 children were reported unaccompanied/separated from their parents.

UNICEF says it is working with communities and families in Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and Niger to fight stigma against survivors of sexual violence and to build a protective environment for former abductees.

Together with partners, UNICEF provides safe water and life-saving health services; helps to restore access to education by creating temporary learning spaces; and delivers therapeutic treatment to malnourished children. UNICEF also provides psychosocial support to children to help them cope with emotional distress.

UNICEF says that the response to this crisis remains severely underfunded. This year, only 11 percent of the \$97 million needed for UNICEF’s humanitarian response has been received. UNICEF is calling for increased commitment from donors to support conflict affected children and women in Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, and Chad.

— [Read more in *Beyond Chibok: Over 1.3 million children uprooted by Boko Haram violence* \(UNICEF, April 2016\).](#)

Beefed-up Security Sought at U.S. Airports

Source: <http://www.emergencymgmt.com/safety/Beefed-up-security-sought-at-US-airports.html>

Apr 06 – Democratic senators including Martin Heinrich of New Mexico said Tuesday that the Brussels airport bombing that killed more than 35 people and injured hundreds more last month was “a wake-up call” that should prompt the U.S. government to beef up security at perimeter areas of airports, train stations and other transportation hubs.

Heinrich joined Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., and other Senate Democrats at a news conference Tuesday to unveil a series of security-related amendments they hope to attach to a Federal Aviation Administration funding bill under consideration on the Senate floor this week.



The proposals include doubling from 30 to 60 the number of government “viper teams”



that stop and search suspicious passengers in public areas before screening, often using bomb-sniffing dogs.

They also want more federal grants to train law enforcement officers in how to prepare for and respond to mass shootings at vulnerable transportation areas.

“These are common-sense approaches that say we are going to respond to this terrorist threat and we’re going to protect Americans and we are never going to give in,” Heinrich told a Capitol Hill news conference. “Americans enjoy every day traveling around this country, visiting their grandkids, engaging in commerce, going on vacation — we need to protect that, and that is what this proposal really does.”

The Democratic proposals are in addition to a bipartisan measure also under consideration in the Senate that would tighten the screening of workers who have access to airport restricted areas.

However, civil libertarians raised concerns about the Democratic initiatives, including proposals to expand the viper teams that aim to identify suspicious actors before they enter security areas. Peter Simonson, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of New Mexico, said the strategy is “not smart security” and appears to violate Fourth Amendment protections against unreasonable search and seizure.

“Roving bands of agents randomly searching and detaining travelers at a handful of transit stations, absent credible evidence of an impending attack, is simply harassment with no

real security benefit,” Simonson told the Journal in an email.

Simonson noted that federal courts “have carved out an exception to the probable cause requirement where airports are concerned,” but that the viper teams have extended that exception “to all transit contexts, detaining and searching travelers at railroad stations, bus stations, ferries, car tunnels, ports, subways, truck weigh stations, rest areas, and special events.

“This is a significant expansion of authority that we don’t believe meets constitutional requirements,” he said.

Schumer suggested that the changes, if approved by Congress, could be implemented at airports across the country.

“We need to tighten security in vulnerable areas in our biggest airports so the tragedy that struck Brussels doesn’t land on our doorstep,” Schumer said. “We have to have all air security be better at all airports big and small.”

Daniel Jiron, spokesman for the Albuquerque International Sunport, said the airport is generally supportive of security upgrades, but that airport officials would want to see details and cost estimates before endorsing the Democratic proposals.

“Anything that’s going to enhance security and safety at our airport in general we’d be supportive of,” Jiron said.

James Fuller, a Roswell native and former aide to former Republican Sen. Pete Domenici, served as chief of staff of the Transportation Security Administration in Washington from 2004 to 2005. Fuller said the Democratic senators’ proposals unveiled Wednesday make sense.

“I think the senators’ proposal is timely,” Fuller said. “It’s something we struggled with when we first started putting forward a higher level of security in all of the transportation hubs. The softest and most concerning location in an airport ... is at the baggage terminal, because it’s unsecured and it’s high-traffic. There are plenty of opportunities to hide a very large weapon. The challenge you have is the balance you have to maintain between facilitating transportation and commerce and securing that environment as best as possible.”



EDITOR'S COMMENT: Remember above statements when the next airport terrorist bloodshed will happen! Too much concern about rights from people relaxing behind their desks...

Stop Asking 'Why Do They Hate Us?'

By A. J. Caschetta

Source: <http://www.meforum.org/5951/why-do-they-hate-us>



Every time there's a mass casualty Islamist terror attack, the Western intelligentsia pops the same question

Shortly after the latest ISIS suicide bombers struck in Brussels on March 22, German Green Party MP Franziska Brantner tweeted "Why do they hate us so much?" The intelligentsia's ignorance perseveres in spite of the answer right in front of them: it's not hatred but an ideology called Islamism that compels violence.

We are now almost 15 years beyond 9/11, and it's time to stop asking this question after every major jihadist attack.

First, the obligatory disclaimer: "they" refers to Islamists and "we" to everyone else, including moderate Muslims (with all due respect to Donald Trump).

The self-indulgent introspection began in earnest on October 14, 2001, when Fareed Zakaria asked in *Newsweek* "Why Do They Hate Us?" Zakaria blamed the victim. US support of "Israel's iron-fisted rule over the occupied territories" and various other "oppressive police states" in the Arab world is the cause. Zakaria acknowledged briefly the "total failure of political institutions in the Arab world" but still blamed the U.S. for having "neglected to press any regime there to open up its society." That essay ends with the

admonition that "We have no option but to get back into the nation-building business."

Several days later in *LA Weekly* John Powers concurred that American support for "brutal, undemocratic Middle Eastern regimes" is the root of the problem and concluded that "they hate us because we don't even know why they hate us."

The question persisted throughout the next decade and returned with new vigor in 2015, a year that began and ended with ISIS attacks in Paris. On November 13, 2015, while the dead in the Bataclan concert hall and in the streets of Paris were still being counted, Bill Maher asked guests on his television show "why do they hate us?" (they blamed "the Bush Doctrine") before concluding that "we still don't know the answer."

On December 7, 2015, Hisham Melhem asked the same question in *Politico* and found the answer in poor assimilation and rampant Islamophobia from San Bernardino to the *banlieues* of Paris. After the Brussels attacks *Politico* ran an unsigned op-ed titled "Why Do They Hate Us So Much?"



bemoaning Europe's growing populism and nativism. Moustafa Bayoumi raised this question in *The Nation*, answering that "Only when we face up to our delusions and actions and stop torturing others into silence will we be able to keep ourselves out of darkness."

Has the West learned nothing in the past decade and a half? Why do we still ask this question when the answer is clear?

The theological underpinnings of the most violent strain of Islamism (what some analysts call bin Ladenism) are found in four doctrines, all easily grasped. Together they make up the ideology that seeks to conquer the world. All who oppose it are treated in a way that only seems like hatred because we cannot imagine any other motive for the violence.

First, the Doctrine of [Loyalty and Enmity](#) prevails among Islamists whose dichotomous world view is comprised of Dar al-Islam and Dar al-Harb. Mark Sageman [translates](#) these two as the "Land of Islam" and the "Land of Conflict." Loyalty and a strict adherence to Sharia law are demanded of all who inhabit Dar al-Islam, while everyone else is the ultimate "other." Islamists consider the West to be Dar al-Harb.

Second is the Doctrine of [Offensive Jihad](#). Whether they are following [Ibn Taymiyyah](#), [Syed Abul Ala Maududi](#), [Sayed Qutb](#), [Abdus Salam Faraj](#), or [Osama bin Laden](#) himself, Islamists have internalized the doctrine of loyalty and enmity to the extent that they believe engaging in offensive jihad is the only way to remain faithful to Muhammad's example. Offensive jihad is often portrayed as a defensive jihad against ideological "attacks" emanating from Dar al-Harb.

Third is the Doctrine of Martyrdom. People misunderstand suicide terrorism by thinking that only hatred could cause someone to seek revenge in an act that requires his death. This in fact is wrong, for not only do Islamists from [Hamas](#) to [Hezbollah](#) and even [bin Laden](#) claim that they love death like we love life, but they also make a distinction between suicide, which is committed "out of depression and despair" according to [Ayman al-Zawahiri](#), and martyrdom, which is carried out "to service Islam." The one thing witnesses remember about the Hezbollah suicide bomber who killed 141 Marines on October 23, 1983 is that he was [smiling](#) as he drove his truck into their compound in Beirut, Lebanon. When Palestinian suicide bombers detonate themselves, their comrades and families [celebrate](#) their wedding to dark-eyed virgins, not their hatred.

Last is the Doctrine of [Takfir](#), an Arabic term referring to the process whereby an Islamist accuses a moderate or heterodox Muslim of being insufficiently Islamic and therefore no longer worthy of the protection conferred by the doctrine of loyalty. Those so identified become just another enemy from Dar al-Harb. Only takfir, not hatred, can explain the preponderance of Muslims killed by Al-Qaeda and ISIS.

Those who fail to understand the ideology of Islamism will remain confused by it, attributing the violence to hatred because they don't understand the real motives. So like battered spouses, victims of Islamist violence continue trying to alter their behavior in futile attempts to make "them" love "us."

A.J. Caschetta is a senior lecturer at the Rochester Institute of Technology and a Shillman-Ginsburg fellow at the Middle East Forum.

Latest European Terror Threat Snapshot released

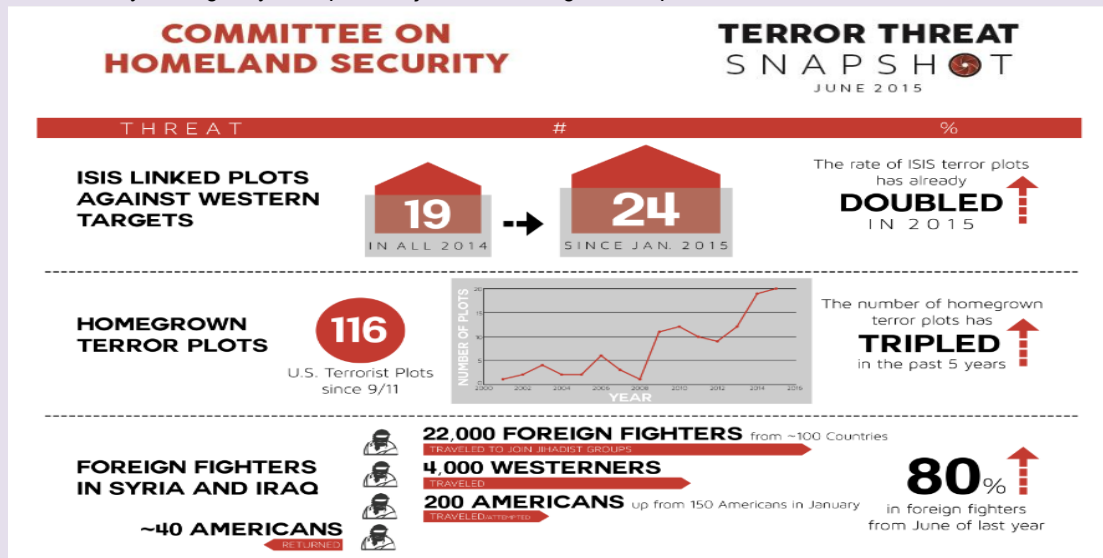
Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160413-latest-european-terror-threat-snapshot-released>

Apr 13 – Representative Michael McCaul (R-Texas), chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, has the other day released the latest [European Terror Threat Snapshot](#). The product is a periodic Committee assessment of the Islamist terror threat environment across Europe. It supplements the Committee's monthly [Terror Threat Snapshot](#) which examines the broader Islamist terror threat the United States, the West, and the world.

McCaul said: "The United States and our allies face an increasingly lethal Islamist terror threat. A global jihadist network operating from safe havens is exploiting Western security



gaps to orchestrate a widespread terror campaign, particularly in Europe. Battle-hardened European fighters groomed by ISIS are returning home from Syria to commit acts of terror with the support of local extremist networks, as we have tragically seen in Paris and Brussels. These operatives are also potentially a plane-flight away from our shores. Given the magnitude of the threat across the continent, we are likely seeing only the tip of the jihadist iceberg in Europe.”



Key takeaways in the European Terror Threat Snapshot:

- Over the last year, ISIS-linked attack plots in Europe have unfolded at a rate of nearly two every month. There have been at least thirty-five ISIS-linked plots to launch attacks across Europe since 2014, including the November 2015 Paris and March 2016 Brussels attacks.
- According to Europol, as many as 5,000 European Union (EU) citizens have traveled to Syria and Iraq.
- More than 1,000 have returned already returned to just four countries – the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Belgium.
- ISIS terror operatives have exploited the largest flow of refugees and migrants since the Second World War to infiltrate Europe undetected. EU member states reported nearly two million instances of illegal bordercrossings involving around one million people last year. European jihadists are also attempting to radicalize and recruit refugees settling in the European continent.

► The complete European Terror Threat Snapshot is available [here](#).

2015 was the most lethal year for terrorism in Europe in a decade

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160413-2015-was-the-most-lethal-year-for-terrorism-in-europe-in-a-decade>

Apr 13 – Aon Risk Solutions, the global risk management business of Aon plc, the other day released its annual [Terrorism and Political Violence Map](#), highlighting 2015 as the most lethal year for terrorist violence in Europe in nearly a decade, as terrorists increasingly

target private citizens and public gatherings. This marks the first net increase in global terrorism risk ratings since 2013, with the risk ratings of eighteen countries experiencing an increase and thirteen countries seeing a decrease.



AON says that for the first time since Aon and the Risk Advisory Group jointly began collecting empirical data to create the map in



2007, shootings have overtaken bombings in the Western world, while the targeting of civilians in public spaces has become more commonplace. Since January 2015, nearly one-third (31 percent) of all attacks in the Western world targeted private citizens and public gatherings.

The global threat posed by ISIS dominates many of the map findings this year, as the group entered a more aggressive phase of mounting mass casualty attacks in 2015 and early 2016, with the United States, France, Turkey, and Belgium all affected. The terrorist organization's activities have contributed to sustaining or increasing risk levels in more than a dozen countries worldwide. Far-right activism

as well as civil unrest risks stemming from the European migrant crisis and the increasing influence of extremist parties have also driven rating increases.

"Our 2016 map demonstrates increasing regional instability and a growing spectrum of potential risks," said Scott Bolton, director in Crisis Management at Aon Risk Solutions. "The threats highlighted in the map should encourage business leaders with global footprints to adopt a more strategic risk management approach to limit the impact of attacks on their people, operations and assets. Understanding how they are exposed to the peril is key to achieving this outcome."

"The most business-threatening political violence risks continue to emerge from war and sudden changes in government control, such as those which occur through coups d'état," said Henry Wilkinson, head of Intelligence and Analysis at The Risk Advisory Group plc, which has collaborated with Aon to produce the Terrorism and Political Violence map since 2007. "These are less manageable risks and our findings flag several countries where there is heightened probability of both. Businesses need to be flexible and robust in how they anticipate and manage risks in the fluid world the map depicts. This requires actionable assessments that take both a strategic and a more detailed operational view of the markets in which they seek to thrive."

[Click here to access the new Aon Risk Map portal.](#)

Section of 9/11 Commission report linking Saudi Arabia to 9/11 attacks may be declassified

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160413-section-of-9-11-commission-report-linking-saudi-arabia-to-9-11-attacks-may-be-declassified>

Apr 13 – The 9/11 Commission interviewed hundreds of witnesses and compiled a report of more than 800 pages. The report's last chapter of the report, however, has been classified for the last thirteen years.

The White House said that within the next sixty days it will decide whether or not declassify the 28-page chapter.

Those familiar with the contents of the classified document indicate that it would reveal a Saudi Arabia-based support network which helped the hijackers 9/11 in the United States. Fox News reports that Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-New York) and former Senator Bob Graham (D-Florida), who co-chaired 9/11 Commission, both believe that the 9/11 victims'



families deserve to read the report before president Obama visits the Middle East – and Saudi Arabia – on 21 April.

Graham told CBS News' "60 Minutes" that the report offers details of a network of Saudis who supported the hijackers while they (the hijackers) were on the West Coast and helped them to enroll in flight school.

When asked whether the Saudi network included Saudi government officials, rich Saudis, and Saudi charities, Graham replied: "All of the above."

The investigation into the 9/11 terrorist attacks established that the first hijacker arrived in the United States in January 2000, and flew to Los Angeles after attending an al-Qaeda conference in Malaysia. Fifteen of the nineteen hijackers were Saudi nationals.

They 9/11 Commission found that the hijackers arrived in the United States with no experience in the West and little English. Still, they quickly found comfortable housing in San Diego and enrolled in flight schools – and evidence shows that the hijackers managed all this as a result of the close assistance given them by Saudi intelligence agent Omar al-Bayoumi.

Fox News notes that on the day he met the terrorists, Bayoumi was in contact with Anwar al-Awlaki, a New Mexico-born radical Islamist imam at a San Diego mosque, who was a senior Al-

Qaeda recruiter and motivator.

After the 9/11 attacks, al-Awlaki left the United States for Yemen, where he founded Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Al Awlaki was killed by a U.S. drone strike in September 2011.

"Those are a lot of coincidences, and that's a lot of smoke. Is that enough to make you squirm and uncomfortable, and dig harder — and declassify these 28 pages? Absolutely," former Congressman Tim Roemer (R-Indiana) told CBS.

Former Representative Porter Goss (R-Florida), told the *New Yorker*: "It's about the Bush Administration and its relationship with the Saudis."

The published 9/11 Commission's report, released in 2003, contained the sentence: "[...] we have found no evidence that the Saudi government as an institution or senior Saudi officials individually funded the organization."

Unofficially, Saudi Arabia said it would welcome the declassification of the twenty-eight pages.

"If the president is going to meet with the Saudi Arabian leadership and the royal family they think it would be appropriate that this document be released before the president makes that trip, so that they can talk about whatever issues are in that document," Gillibrand said.

Saudis warn of economic reprisals if Congress passes 9/11 bill

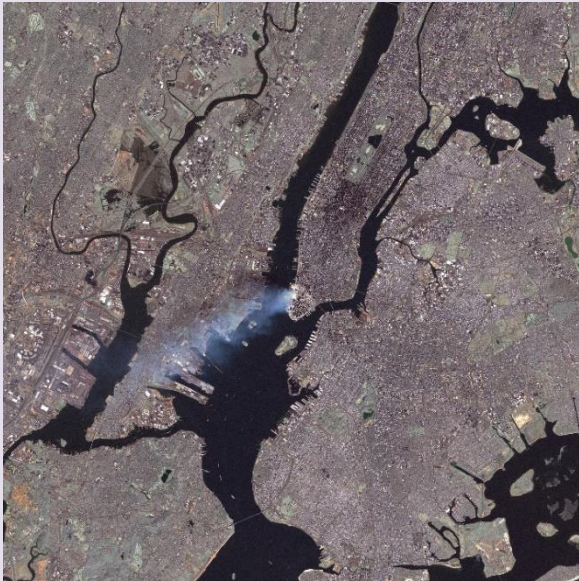
Source: <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/04/16/politics/saudi-arabia-government-9-11-congress-bill/>

Apr 17 – **Saudi Arabia is warning it will sell off billions in American assets if the U.S. Congress passes a bipartisan bill that would allow victims of 9/11 and other terrorist attacks to sue foreign governments.**

Saudi foreign minister Adel al-Jubeir issued the warning to U.S. lawmakers last month during a visit to Washington, two senior State Department officials told CNN. A source with knowledge of the Saudis' thinking said investments would be put in jeopardy if this bill passes, so they are trying to protect themselves from risk.

The story was [first reported](#) Saturday by The New York Times.

The Obama administration has, in turn, applied heavy pressure on Congress to block the bill. Top officials from the State Department and Pentagon warned Senate Armed Services Committee staffers last month that the bill could bring economic risks to the U.S.



The Saudis did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Asked if President Barack Obama would veto the legislation if passed by Congress, a senior administration official told CNN that "rather than entertain a hypothetical, we believe there needs to be more careful consideration of the potential unintended consequences of its enactment before proceeding with legislation."

"We would welcome opportunities to engage with the Congress on that discussion," the official added.

In February, Secretary of State John Kerry said the legislation could "expose the United States of America to lawsuits and take away our sovereign immunity and create a terrible precedent."

The bill, co-sponsored by Sens. Chuck Schumer, D-New York, and John Cornyn, R-Texas, opens the door for families of 9/11 victims to sue foreign states and financial partners of terrorism.

Former Sen. Bob Graham, the co-chair of the 9/11 congressional inquiry, told CNN's Michael Smerconish Saturday morning that he is "outraged but not surprised" by the warning from the Saudi government.

"The Saudis have known what they did in 9/11, and they knew that we knew what they did, at least at the highest levels of the U.S. government," Graham said on "Smerconish."

The government of Saudi Arabia, a longtime and key strategic U.S. ally in the Middle East, has never been formally implicated in the 9/11 attacks and Saudi officials have long denied any involvement. But [15 of the 19 hijackers](#) were Saudi nationals, and in February, Zacarias Moussaoui, the so-called "20th hijacker" who pleaded guilty to participating in an al Qaeda conspiracy in connection to the 9/11 attacks, [alleged](#) members of the Saudi royal family supported al Qaeda.

Twenty-eight pages of the 9/11 Commission Report, which are said to focus on the role of foreign governments in the plot, [remain classified](#). Saudi officials asked [the U.S. to release the redacted 28-page section in 2003](#), saying this would give them the opportunity to defend themselves against claims of involvement.

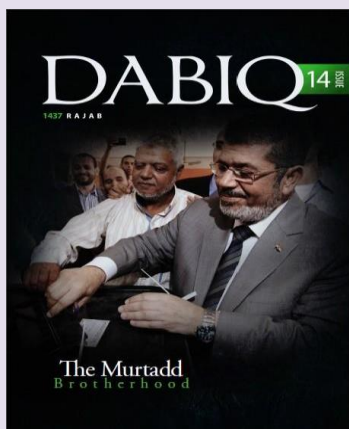
But the Bush administration refused, saying the material would jeopardize their ability to gather intelligence on suspected terrorists. The Obama administration has carried on that policy.

Families of both victims and survivors in the 9/11 attacks filed a lawsuit against the Saudi government, [but the suit was thrown out](#) last year when a federal judge ruled that the kingdom had sovereign immunity in the case

ISIS Has Hit List of Western Muslim Leaders

Source: <https://www.clarionproject.org/news/isis-names-hit-list-western-muslim-leaders>

Apr 13 – The latest issue (number 14) of the [Islamic State's propaganda magazine, Dabiq](#), published



April 13, contains a hitlist of Muslim leaders in the West, specifically naming 21. A 22nd (Nihad Awad of the Muslim Brotherhood-linked Council on American Islamic Relations) is pictured, but not named.

Those whom the Islamic State is targeting are listed in a section entitled "Kill the Imams of Kufr (the infidels) in the West."

It includes leaders from the US, Canada, the UK and Australia.

The list of leaders is very diverse and includes several who are linked to Islamist groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood, despite the fact that the Islamic State's ideology is directly descended from that of the Muslim Brotherhood. Indeed the theme of the issue, entitled *The Murtadd Brotherhood*, is focused on the illegitimacy of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Others on the hit list are Salafi leaders, Sufis or politicians. It even includes one jihadist, Abū Basīr at-Tartūsī.

The section closes with an exhortation to kill these and other unnamed leaders. *Dabiq* writes:



“One must either take the journey to dār al-Islām, joining the ranks of the mujāhidīn therein, or wage jihād by himself with the resources available to him (knives, guns, explosives, etc.) to kill the crusaders and other disbelievers and apostates, including the imāms of kufr, to make an example of them, as all of them are valid – rather, obligatory – targets according to the Sharī’ah, except for those who openly repent from kufr before they are apprehended.”

The list shows the extent of the Islamic State’s adherence to the doctrine of [takfir](#), which enables them to brand any Muslim who does not submit to their authority and hold by their interpretation of Islam a heretic worthy of death.

Clarion Project is reprinting the entire list here:

Hamza Yusuf	Tawfique Chowdhury	Keith Ellison,
Suhaib Webb	Waleed Basyouni	Huma Abedin
Muhammad al-Yaqoubi	Abdullah Hakim Quick	Muhammad Abdul Bari,
Hisham Kabbani	Abū Basīr at-Tartūsī	Sayeeda Warsi,
Yasir Qadhi	Mohamed Eliabiary,	Waqar Azmi,
Bilal Philips	Arif Alikhan,	Sajid Javid,
Pierre Vogel	Rashad Hussain	Ajmal Masroor

Note: Although Nihad Awad’s name does not appear in the section, his picture does appear at the beginning of the section. One is therefore led to assume he has also been included on the hitlist.

Nigeria Chibok girls 'shown alive' in Boko Haram video

Source: <http://www.terrorismwatch.org/2016/04/nigeria-chibok-girls-shown-alive-in.html>

Apr 15 – **A video released by Nigerian Islamist group Boko Haram appears to show some of the schoolgirls kidnapped two years ago from the town of Chibok.**

The video, apparently filmed in December, was sent to the Nigerian government and shows 15 girls in black robes identifying themselves as pupils abducted from the school.

Some of those filmed have been identified by their parents.

It is the first footage of the girls to be seen since May 2014.

The kidnapping of the 276 girls triggered the global social media campaign #BringBackOurGirls, involving US first lady Michelle Obama and a host of celebrities. But despite their efforts, most of the girls are still missing.



Border Fence Down: Border Patrol Union Says Breach Brings Terrorist Concerns

By Lana Shadwick

Source: <http://www.breitbart.com/texas/2016/03/29/border-fence-down-border-patrol-union-says-breach-brings-terrorist-concerns/>



Mar 29 – **The head of the National Border Patrol Council says a breach in the fence along a ten-mile area in remote areas of the Mexico-Arizona border should cause concern about terrorist threats.**

An email from a Border Patrol agent reported that the stretch along the Arizona-Mexico border had the fence cut in order to allow access into the United States from Mexico.

Arizona Public Media reported that the president of



the National Border Patrol Council (NBPC) testified in a congressional hearing last week that **cameras caught the images of two trucks crossing the area**. Border patrol officials were not at the spot to catch them at the time of the illegal crossing.



Brandon Judd, the president of the 16,500 member national union said, **“The scariest part is that we don’t know what was in those vehicles.”**

The Arizona publication said he warned that illegal border crossings on the Mexico border from individuals from Pakistan is expected to increase more than three times in this year alone.

Judd added, “Those numbers should alarm everyone and we are seeing a similar trend from other key countries like Bangladesh, Albania and Brazil.”

In August of 2014, then Texas Governor Rick Perry said a record number of illegal immigrants from Syria, Pakistan and Afghanistan have been apprehended at the U.S.-Mexico border, as reported by Breitbart News.

Breitbart Texas’ Brandon Darby reported in January of 2015 that leaked internal training documents from U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) revealed that Border Patrol agents received guidelines that instructed them that even if illegals are caught crossing the border, the vast majority are off-limits to federal agents. A trusted federal agent in the CBP provided exclusive copies of the documents to *Breitbart Texas* and also agreed to an interview on the condition of anonymity. The “catch and release” directive of the Obama Administration violates the “Priority Enforcement Guidelines” (PEP) by refusing to process or deport anyone who entered the country illegally after December 31, 2013.

Breitbart Texas has reported that in the past, ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) could place a 48-hour hold on illegal immigrants when they were wanted on immigration related issues. The PEP program replaced the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) Secure Communities Plan. The policy was released by DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson in November of 2014. The executive order gives ICE ERO (Enforcement and Removal Operations) officers who are in control of the process, the authority to decide who is going to be removed. Texas law enforcement officers have been frustrated about their inability to protect citizens in the state. Jackson County Sheriff Aj (Andy) Louderback [told Breitbart Texas](#), “Now they have all they need, they have plenty of reasons to not remove someone.”

During the congressional hearing Judd said that Americans are voting against “the establishment” during the presidential primaries because they have demanded border security for far too long but have been ignored.

Lana Shadwick is a writer and legal analyst for Breitbart Texas. She has served as an associate judge and prosecutor in Texas.

Pair of guided missile containers found in Pacific Ocean near Alaska

Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/us/2016/04/13/pair-guided-missile-containers-found-in-pacific-ocean-near-alaska.html?intcmp=hpbt3>



Apr 13 – **Two large shipping containers, stamped with the words “Contains: Guided Missile,” were discovered in the Pacific Ocean near Alaska** Sunday.

Alaska State Troopers said the containers were empty, and information from tags attached to the boxes was sent to the U.S. military. There was no immediate public comment from military officials. Troopers were investigating the discovery of one



suspicious box when they got a radio message from another mariner that a second container had been found. Both were found near the southeast island community of Craig.

Clinton Cook Sr. told KTUU-TV he was on a charter boat that found one of the heavy, hard plastic containers. They were going to pass it, but noticed the unusual shape.

"I seen the data plate," Cook said of the plastic box. "It said, 'Contains: Guided missile.' And I was like, 'Holy crap.'"

Cook told the station he was traveling to a job site to lay propane pipes in the Steamboat Bay area when someone saw the object. The crew initially thought it was a float.

Troopers say an explosives ordinance team helped determine the boxes were "void of their original contents." Troopers didn't know any history of the containers.



The Fallacy of Focusing on Islamic Radicalization

By Daniel Greenfield

Source: <https://www.frontpagemag.com/fpm/262461/fallacy-focusing-islamic-radicalization-daniel-greenfield>

Apr 13 – **There are Jihadists from dozens of countries who have joined ISIS. What do they all have in common?**



The official answer is radicalization. Muslims in Europe are "radicalized" by alienation, racism and unemployment. Neglected by governments, Muslim youth band together and become terrorists. Muslims in Israel are responding to the "despair and hopelessness" of the "Occupation". Muslims from the rest of the Middle East are angry over their "dictators". Muslims from the Ukraine? Who knows.

Radicalization comes packaged with a set of local grievances and explanations. It contends that all Muslim terrorism is a response to local conditions and that we are responsible for those conditions. Even though the "radicalization" is Islamic, it denies that Islam plays a positive role as a Jihadist goal. Instead, like Halal liquor or hashish, it's what Muslims turn to when they have been disappointed in the West or in their own governments. Islam is just what happens when

a Belgian Muslim can't get a job. And yet Islam is the only positive uniting factor for Islamic terrorism.

Why otherwise should a Moroccan youth from a French suburb who works at a nightclub, the son of a rural Saudi farmer who has never been outside his country and an American teenager who converted to Islam all risk their lives to form an Islamic State? The Jihadis of ISIS are a truly multinational and multicultural bunch. They have traveled to two foreign countries that most of them have never been to.

What else unites them into a common identity that they are willing to kill and die for if it isn't Islam?

Radicalization favors local explanations. But those local explanations don't add up nationally or globally. **Europe spends a fortune on social services and yet Muslim terrorism has only grown worse.** Other immigrant minorities in Europe have lower unemployment rates and aren't blowing things up.

Removing Muslim dictators in the Arab Spring didn't lower terrorism; it vastly increased the power and influence of Islamic terror groups. Nor have changes in American foreign policy and greater outreach lowered Islamic terrorism. If anything the scale of the problem seems to have only become more severe.



The Israeli peace process with the PLO likewise vastly increased the terror threat and no amount of concessions has brought peace any closer. There are stateless Muslims throughout the Middle East. Jordan is filled with the same exact “Palestinians” as Israel, many of whom are stateless and have few rights, yet terror rates are far lower. Instead Muslim violence spikes where there are religious differences. As we see in Iraq, Syria and Israel, religious differences are more explosive than political ones. And where religious differences don’t exist, Jihadists create them by denouncing their Muslim enemies as un-Islamic. ISIS is the culmination of a process that you can see among “moderate” Islamists. The official explanation is that a multitude of local factors cause Muslim disappointment leading to some sort of irreligiously religious radicalism which can be cured by preventing that disappointment.

We are expected to believe that there are hundreds of explanations for Islamic terrorism, but not one. And while no doubt individual choices and emotions play a role in the making of a Muslim terrorist, the same is true in the making of a soldier. An army exists as part of a positive national ethos. Reducing an army to a series of personal dissatisfactions is absurd. So is reducing ISIS to individually dissatisfied people while ignoring what its members actually believe. It’s as absurd as believing that Hitler became a monster because he couldn’t get his painting career off the ground.

Islamic terrorism is a positive ethos. It is horrifying, evil and brutal, but it is not some nihilistic void. **You can look at unemployment rates in Brussels or dissatisfaction in Saudi Arabia, but nobody decides to fight and die for a Jihadist group because they’re having trouble applying for a job at McDonald’s.** They join because they believe in its mission. Ignoring the organizing principle of Islamic terrorism while focusing on local conditions that might make Jihadist recruitment easier misses the forest for the trees.

Radicalization programs, under euphemisms such as CVE or Countering Violent Extremism, assume that Islamic terrorism can be countered by forming a partnership with Muslim groups and social services agencies. While the West will ease Muslim dissatisfaction by providing jobs and boosting their self-esteem to

make them feel like they belong, the Muslim groups will tackle the touchy issue of Islam.

These partnerships achieve nothing because social services don’t prevent Islamic terrorism; they enable and fund the very no-go zones and dole-seeker lifestyles that are a gateway to the Jihad. Meanwhile the Muslim partners are inevitably Islamists looking to pick up potential recruits for their own terror agendas. Western countries fund terrorism to fight terrorism and then partner with still more terrorists to train their homegrown terrorists not to be terrorists, or at least not the wrong kind of terrorists.

This is what happens when the “Islam” part of Islamic terrorism is ignored and outsourced to any Islamist who can pretend to be moderate in front of a television camera for 5 minutes at a time.

None of this actually stops Islamic terrorism. Instead it empowers and encourages it.

The Islamist alliances suppress any discussion of Islamic terrorism as “harming” national security. Condemn the Muslim Brotherhood and you’re interfering with CVE efforts to stop terrorism by “educating” Muslims on real Islam and helping the Brotherhood take over entire countries to address the political anger of Muslims. At least the anger of those that are part of the Muslim Brotherhood.

And yet without discussing Islam, there is nothing to discuss.

There are plenty of unemployed non-Muslims in Europe. There are lots of bad governments all over the world. The non-Islamic factors on which Islamic terrorism is blamed are not unique to Muslims. Only Islam is. Islamic terrorism is unique and so its causes cannot be reduced to joblessness or bad governments. A unique outcome suggests a unique cause. And Islam is a unique cause.

Islam is the unique cause of Islamic terrorism. There is no way to fight Islamic terrorism without acknowledging its organizing principle, its objective and its worldview.

You cannot fight “radicalization” without dealing with what Muslim terrorists are “radicalized” to do. Without Islam, all that’s left is the political and sociological hunt for individual motives while completely ignoring what unites these individuals together. And so CVE plays the seven blind men while ignoring the elephant in the room. And the terror attacks



and the futile efforts to avert them continue.

The issue isn't radicalization, it's Islamization.

Islamization is what happens to individual Muslims and to Muslim communities. Islamization is also the goal of Islamic movements, overtly violent or covertly subversive. Islamization is not the answer of some radical preacher, but of the Islamic religion. This is not about jobs in Europe or democracy in Egypt.

Islam is not radicalized. It is radical. Like Communism or Nazism, it offers a totalitarian answer to everything. To truly believe in Islam is to possess the conviction that every country in the world must become Islamic and be ruled by Islamic law. Islamic terrorism is one tactic for realizing this conviction.

We cannot and will not defeat Islamic terror without honestly and bluntly confronting Islamization.

Daniel Greenfield, a Shillman Journalism Fellow at the Freedom Center, is a New York writer focusing on radical Islam.

ISIS Eye Euro 2016 Attack: Brussels, Paris Terrorists Planned UEFA Massacre

Source: <http://www.australianetworknews.com/isis-eye-euro-2016-attack-brussels-paris-terrorists-planned-uefa-massacre/>

Apr 13 – The ISIS cell behind the Paris and Brussels attacks was planning to carry out an assault during the Euro 2016 soccer championship in France. Investigators are trying to verify the claim by Mohammed Abrini, a prime suspect in the Brussels attacks.



UEFA
EURO2016
FRANCE

Abrini, who was arrested on Friday, told interrogators that the plans were changed after Salah Abdeslam was arrested on March 18. Abdeslam is the key suspect in the Paris attacks.

The investigators were told that the plotters made the hasty decision of hitting the Brussels airport because of their concern at the speed at which the police were closing in on them, the Independent reported.

The Euro 2016 football tournament, which is one of the world's biggest sports spectacle, will be running across cities in France from June 10 to July 10.

CNN reported that there were already tensions regarding the security during the championship. The same cell launched three suicide bombings outside the French national stadium in November when Germany and

France were locked in a match. The bombers reportedly tried to enter the stadium but failed.

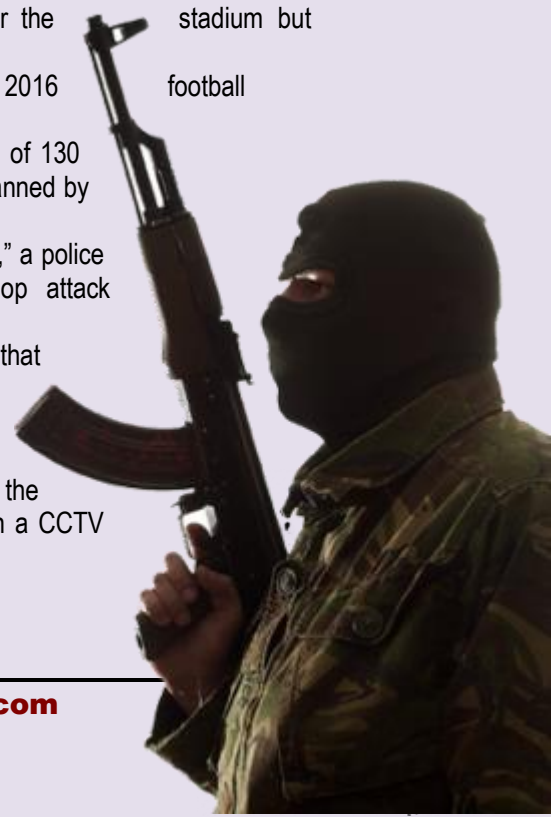
However, Abrini confessed that it was not the Brussels airport but the Euro 2016 championship that the group was targeting.

In November, the cell plotted the Paris attacks that resulted in the death of 130 people. Months later, the Brussels airport and Metro station bombings, planned by the same cell, killed another 32.

"It's not a scoop to learn that the terrorists want to strike during the Euros," a police source told Liberation newspaper. "Security forces constantly develop attack scenarios and the way to respond."

He added that "If the Abrini statements are correct, it just confirms the fact that Belgium is an operational base that needs to be watched even more intensely. Jihadi networks and cells have been meeting there for at least 10 years."

After the arrest of Abdeslam, Abrini remained the only other suspect of the Paris attacks on the run. Both are childhood friends and were caught on a CCTV camera together in a car just a day before the Paris attacks.



Why ISIS wants a 'clash of civilizations'

Source: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/brussels-europe-isis-jihadism-1.3529884?cmp=rss>

Apr 13 – The rash of arrests in Brussels late last week may impress some, but don't expect showers of praise for Europe's intelligence agencies from Pieter Van Ostayen.

"They're like a bunch of blind men," he says in his spectacularly blunt way. "Nobody knows what they are looking for, where they should look for it, who to look for. It's like this network will basically only grow. It's not like they are even close, in my opinion, to stopping this."

This isn't a cheap shot from a man being glib. It's a sad warning from a man who should know.

Van Ostayen is a Middle East historian, an Arabist, a lover of Syria, a multilingual maestro. For years, from his tiny apartment in Mechelen, Belgium, he has tracked, studied and communicated with jihadists who joined ISIS and other extremist groups.

His contacts are vast and eyebrow-raising. When we first met in November to talk about the network behind the Paris attacks, he had to break from the interview to read a text from an al-Qaeda contact. They often berate him, try to convert him and sometimes just answer his questions.

Few understand ISIS like Van Ostayen. And what he sees now is a mutation in the group, in the rhetoric and the recruiting. He points out that the language is less about Islamic fundamentalism and is increasingly focussed on the notion of revenge.

"What they really want ... is the clash of civilizations," he says. Revenge for what ISIS claims the West has done to Iraq and Syria. And the more ground ISIS loses there, the more the group lusts for bloodshed in Europe.

Along the railway line

The shift in language may coincide with recruiting patterns.

After the Paris attacks, Van Ostayen pulled out a map and pointed to a train line between Antwerp and Brussels. It was the towns along that line, he said, that were home to the bulk of the foreign fighters from Belgium.

Radical clerics used to preach in those towns, he said. They groomed dozens of young men. They turned them into fundamentalists and then into jihadists. And those young men were the ones investigators worried about. But it's different now.

"We have been looking at the wrong part of the country," Van Ostayen says. "We were looking north when we should have been looking south."

It is in the south, to Brussels, specifically in the neighbourhood of Molenbeek, where a whole separate network developed. It appears now that it is largely recruits to that network who were tied to the Paris and Brussels attacks.



European

These weren't lost youths turned by notorious street clerics. They were thugs and crooks sucked in by a man named Khalid Zerkani.

"Khalid Zerkani's network is a network of hardened criminals," says Van Ostayen. Nicknamed Papa Noel, the heavysset, bearded man handed out gifts of phones and electronics and games to his charges.

He taught the uninitiated how to steal from tourists in order to raise funds for training trips to Syria. His ambitions were more about violence than about religious fundamentalism. And his pitch to those under his spell was that their criminal backgrounds were exactly what ISIS needed.

"The Zerkani network is far, far, more dangerous, and far more important for the Islamic State," says Van Ostayen.

'Weren't known as radicals'

Van Ostayen identifies this as one of the key reasons investigators have been unable to get ahead of the ISIS network in Europe.



He points to the Brussels suicide bombers Ibrahim and Khalid El Bakraoui as prime examples.



Brussels suicide bombers Ibrahim, left, and Khalid El Bakraoui, right. Pieter Van Ostayen says the pair were known to police, but as hardened criminals, not radicals. (AFP/Getty Images)

"They weren't known as radicals. They were known as hardened criminals. The police were using two lists. The list of people you should be looking for because they are known for radical Islam, and the other list, people known for violent crimes. But they didn't cross-reference them. Nobody actually had any idea that they had to look on the other list."

He says the allure of criminals for ISIS is significant. They have useful connections to weapons, money laundering, fake IDs, safe houses. And, crucially, they aren't as hard to convince to engage in violence.

When asked if ISIS is handpicking them for this reason Van Ostayen nods, "In a way, yes."

Belgian investigators tracked Zerkani's network for two years, resulting in several arrests in 2014, including Zerkani himself. He has been sentenced to 12 years in jail for participating in a terrorist organization. He is appealing.

"Mr. Zerkani has perverted an entire generation, particularly the youth of Molenbeek," prosecutor Bernard Michel said last February.

But Europe's security agencies are a long way from understanding the extent of the network he built. And this is part of what frustrates Van Ostayen.

Not much optimism

"They are not, at this point, capable of even identifying the core of this network, where is it coming from, who is behind it all," he says, shaking his head.

There is something distinctly pessimistic about him. He has seen Syria, a country he fell in love with, destroyed. And he now sees his home, Belgium, enduring violence worse than anything since the Second World War.

We asked him his theory about the network's reach and this man who usually has a ready answer just stops.

"I have no theory."

But he did offer this conclusion.

"Even if we take out the Islamic State as a territory, I don't think we will take out the Islamic State as an idea. That is going to be something we are facing for the next few years, maybe even decades."

Syria: Before and after the war...





Brazil sees rising threat from Islamic militants: intelligence agency

Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-brazil-security-idUSKCN0XC01G>



A Brazilian Army soldier observes the X-Park at Deodoro Sports Complex during a flight as he takes part in an exercise ahead the 2016 Rio Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, April 6, 2016 (Reuters/Ricardo Moraes).

Apr 15 – The threat of attack by militant Islamists is on the rise in Brazil as the country prepares to host the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro in August, the national intelligence agency said on Thursday.

Brazil has long regarded itself as an unlikely target of extremists thanks to its historical standing as a non-aligned, multicultural nation that is free from enemies.



But Counterterrorism Director Luiz Alberto Sallaberry said in a statement the threat had increased in recent months due to attacks in other countries, and a rise in what he described as the number of Brazilian nationals suspected of sympathizing with Islamic State militants.

Sallaberry also confirmed that a credible threat to state security had been made last year.

A tweet threatening Brazil sent in November by Maxime Hauchard, a French national identified as an executioner in Islamic State propaganda videos, was genuine, Sallaberry said.

"Brazil, you are our next target," the tweet said.

Sallaberry said his agency had taken several measures to avert a potential attack, including sharing information with foreign security forces and improved training.

But security experts have warned that many Brazilian officials do not realize how big a stage the Olympics is for anyone seeking to sow terror, either through an attack on game venues, infrastructure nearby or the athletes and 500,000 tourists expected to attend.

Brazilian officials, eager to pull off South America's first Olympics after successfully hosting the soccer World Cup in 2014, have said previously they will ensure a safe games starting Aug. 5.

Olympic organizers plan to deploy around 85,000 security personnel for the games, double the number used in London in 2012.

A large part of this group will be members of the National Force for Public Security, a body of police and other law enforcement officials whose commander stepped down last month amid reports he had criticized embattled President Dilma Rousseff.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Four months ahead the 2016 Olympics this is **THE FIRST TIME** that a Brazilian official warns about jihadist terrorism during this mega event!!! Better late than never you may say but there are serious doubts about security preparedness already done – especially regarding asymmetric threats (CBRNe). 85,000 security personnel is not enough to counter a group of urban terrorists executing multiple attacks. It is the ability to connect the intel dots that counts and the change of inherent attitude that the country is immune from terrorism based on the imagination that everybody loves Brazil! The first might be easier given the international collaboration (especially the US support). The latter is genetic and so far science was not able to modify it not only in Brazil but worldwide!

How they recruit jihadists via Chat Room in Greece

Source: <http://www.makeleio.gr/?p=587559>

(Translated from Greek) - New elements for jihadist recruitment in our country through the Internet but also for the presence in Athens of important members of the ISIS arise from documentation gathered from Greek judicial authorities in cooperation with services from Italy, Norway, Germany and other EU countries. Recruit of jihadists in Greece is made via chatroom at "Paltalk" website where central role had strains of ISIS living in Norway, but also in Italy, many of whom passed through or still are (?) in our country. At the same time members of the Police and National Intelligence Service (EYP) express fears on the possibility of activation of 150 fanatical Islamists trained in Kosovo and Bosnia.

The jihadist recruitment case in our country emerged for the first time in November 2015.

The months-long investigation led to the arrest of 13 people in Italy, Britain and Norway.

According to existing information, the Greek dimension is manifold. As revealed from the

discussions in the recruitment chatroom, the presence of ISIS' members in Greece has been identified. Two colleagues of the online mentor visited Greece: Algerian Umma Omar Semplal and Arfani Gandhi Bhatt. Two other leading members of the network, Ali Ampontoulach Salih and Abdul Tachman Nouroz came to Greece from Italy.



EU parliament drivers had Islamic State propaganda: press

Source: <http://www.france24.com/en/20160416-eu-parliament-drivers-had-islamic-state-propaganda-press>

Apr 16 – **Two drivers for the European Parliament have been caught in possession of Islamic State propaganda**, a German newspaper reported Saturday.

Der Spiegel weekly, citing informed sources, said that IS propaganda CDs were found among the drivers' personal effects and that the discoveries prompted a recent decision by the European parliament to create its own team of chauffeurs rather than relying on private service providers.

That decision is in itself controversial as it boosts the EU parliament's transport costs by 10 million euros (\$11 million) annually.

The parliament is justifying the change, according to Der Spiegel, on the basis that the case of the two drivers may not be an isolated one, and that private sector



companies may be more susceptible to infiltration by individuals linked to jihadist groups.

A European parliament spokesman in Brussels told AFP that there was never any comment made on "questions of security".

According to the Biribin Limousines firm, which employed the pair found with the offending material, "no driver has been sacked. There has never been anything (untoward) found in our cars".

The Paris-based company dismissed the Spiegel report as "a tissue of lies".

Der Spiegel said the European parliament had decided on Monday to no longer employ private personnel but only drivers directly employed by the legislature, at an extra cost of 3.7 million euros (\$4.17 million).

The magazine said 65 drivers currently worked in Brussels for the 751 European parliamentarians and 85 in Strasbourg, in addition to 23 drivers employed by the parliament.

On April 6 the European parliament, which has homes in Brussels and Strasbourg, announced that one of the jihadists who blew themselves up in Islamic State attacks in Brussels on March 22 briefly worked as a cleaner for the parliament several years ago.

Najim Laachraoui was said to have had a summer holiday job cleaning at the parliament for one month in 2009 and one month in 2010.

Was Birmingham next? Photos of Villa Park and Bullring 'found on terror suspect's phone'

Source: <http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/661713/Birmingham-next-target-photos-Villa-Park-Bullring-found-terror-suspects-phone>

Apr 16 – Chilling photographs of major landmarks in Birmingham have reportedly been found on a phone belonging to Paris terror suspect Mohamed Abrini.

Investigators examining Abrini's phone discovered photographs of Aston Villa's football ground, the Bullring shopping centre and the recently revamped Birmingham New Street train station.



Sources close to the investigation told the Birmingham Mail the images were recovered after the 31-year-old's phone was forensically examined last week.

The discovery comes days after Abrini, who admitted being the "man in the hat" pictured alongside two suicide bombers who blew themselves up at Brussels Airport last month, was arrested.

Abrini was the last identified suspect still at large following the November 13 attacks in Paris, which left 130 people dead.

West Midlands Police has previously refused to confirm reports that images of landmarks in Birmingham, including a shopping centre, were found on a mobile phone belonging to a ringleader involved in the Paris atrocities. Investigators believe the photographs were taken on three separate visits to the UK in 2015 but it's not clear what the photos were for. A security source close to the

investigation told the Birmingham Mail: "It is not clear if Abrini personally took the photographs himself.

"The images are not crystal clear and single images show the main facades of **landmark sites in Birmingham including the Bull Ring shopping centre, the city's main train terminal and the premier league Aston Villa's stadium.**

"We now know some of the images on his phone of UK sites were sent to him via an encrypted message app and included non-descript images of Birmingham city



centre and what appears to be the Smallheath area of the city."

West Midlands Police have repeatedly batted away rumours of an attack on Britain's second city.

Photos of the Bullring were also found on Paris ringleader Abdelhamid Abaaoud's phone

Boasting 160 shops, including the distinctive landmark Selfridges building, the photos on Abrini's phone suggest the Bullring, in the heart of the city centre, could have been a target. Photographs of Birmingham were also found on a phone belonging to Paris ringleader Abdelhamid Abaaoud's smartphone.



New ISIS Affiliate Joins The Fray In The Horn Of Africa

Source: <http://i-hls.com/2016/04/new-isis-affiliate-joins-the-fray-in-the-horn-of-africa/>



Apr 15 – The Horn of Africa is now hosting a rather unpleasant guest: a new ISIS affiliate. **Jahba East Africa distinguishes itself from al-Shabaab by vowing to not follow or keep itself within the "prison" of al-Qaeda. Its fighters, the organisation claims, are ready and willing to sow terror to achieve its goals**

Within al-Shabaab, the main terror group in war-torn Somalia, there has been tension and dissension regarding the question of whether to remain under the umbrella of the more



veteran al-Qaeda, or whether to follow the lead of Boko Haram and join forces with ISIS.

Pledging allegiance to ISIS would greatly enlarge al-Shabaab's geographical reach beyond Somalia and would expand its ideological aims beyond al-Shabaab's current focus of establishing a Sharia state in Somalia.

The reasons for the split may be more practical than declared, however, as al-Shabaab is not faring well in Somalia. Allied African forces have managed to drive the organisation out of cities and population centres into rural areas, where it is less effective.

Jahba East Africa has pledged allegiance to Bakr al-Baghdadi, ISIS' leader, declaring him to be the "rightful Khalifa [caliph] of all Muslims."

"We pledge our obedience to him in times of ease and hardship, and Allah is witness to our pledge."

Jahba East Africa's statement goes on to call on fighters from al-Shabaab and other groups to join forces with them.

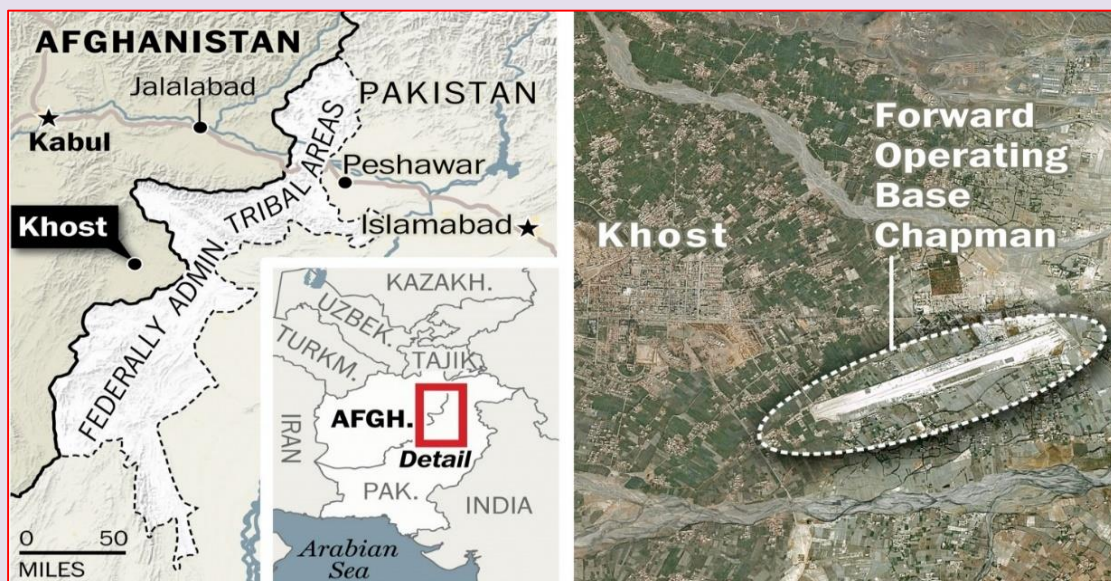
"Sadly, Al-Shabaab has forgotten the resolve needed to work for the establishment of the rule of Allah," they said. "Many Kenyans, Tanzanians and Ugandan Mujahideen have been accused without evidence of working against Islam and the Mujahideen. Many have been detained for accepting the declaration of the Khalifah [caliphate]."

The group called out to followers on social media: "All Mujahideen must accept the Khalifah," they tweeted.

Secret Cables Link Pakistan Intel Org to Deadly Attack on CIA

Source: <https://www.clarionproject.org/news/secret-cables-links-pakistan-intel-org-deadly-attack-cia>

Apr 17 – Pakistan's intelligence agency paid a Taliban-affiliated terror group in Afghanistan to perpetrate one of the deadliest attacks on the CIA in the agency's history, according to inferences made in [recently-declassified U.S. government cables](#) and documents.



THE WASHINGTON POST

Image source: GoogleEarth

Forward Operating Base Chapman: Located about two miles southeast of the city of Khost, it's named after Sgt. Nathan Chapman, the first American soldier killed by enemy fire in 2002.

On December 30, 2009, a Jordanian suicide bomber blew himself up in Camp Chapman in Khost, Afghanistan, located near the border with Pakistan, killing seven CIA employees. The bomber, a Jordanian doctor and double agent, tricked the Americans, telling them he would lead them to Ayman al-Zawahri, now head of al-Qaeda and, at the time, second in command.



A document dated January 11, 2010, issued less than two weeks after the bombing, reports how the head of the Haqqani network, a Taliban-allied organization designed as terrorist by the U.S., met twice with senior officials of Pakistan's intelligence agency (the Inter-Services Intelligence or ISI) the month of the bombing.

During the first meeting, funding for "operations in Khowst [Khost] province" were discussed. "Funds were later provided to tribal elders in Khowst province for their support of the Haqqani network," according to the cable.

At the second meeting, ISI officials gave "direction to the Haqqanis to expedite attack preparations and lethality in Afghanistan."

Although heavily redacted, a cable issued the following month specified the head of the Haqqani network as well as another individual were given \$200,000 "to enable the attack on Chapman." The cable specifically mentions a number of individuals involved in the operation, including an Afghan border commander who

was given money "to enable a suicide mission by an unnamed Jordanian national."

The Jordanian mentioned is assumed to be the suicide bomber, Humam al-Balawi, whom the CIA had cultivated as an al-Qaeda informant. Codenamed "Wolf," al-Balawi turned out to be a double agent, perpetrating the deadliest attack against the CIA in the 15-year history of the war in Afghanistan.

Although each document states, "This is an information report not finally evaluated intelligence," Admiral Mike Mullen (former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) terms the Haqqani network a "veritable arm" of Pakistan's intelligence agency. The U.S. has long-documented the connection between the ISI and the Haqqani terrorist organization.

The documents were the first public disclosure connecting the attack on Camp Chapman to the Pakistani ISI. They were released in connection with a Freedom of Information Act request. The U.S. had previously blamed al-Qaeda for the attack.

ISIS monthly revenue drops from \$80 million to \$56 million

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160418-isis-monthly-revenue-drops-from-80-million-to-56-million>



Apr 18 – **ISIS's monthly revenue has dropped by almost 30 percent in the last year,** according to new analysis released today by IHS Inc., a leading global markets and business research firm.

The latest report from the IHS team responsible for the IHS Conflict Monitor outlines the decline in primary revenue sources for ISIS. **"In mid-2015, the Islamic State's overall monthly revenue was around \$80 million," said Ludovico Carlino, senior analyst at IHS. "As of March 2016, the Islamic State's monthly revenue dropped to \$56 million."**

Around 50 percent of the group's revenue comes from taxation and confiscation, while around 43 percent comes from oil revenue. Drug smuggling, the sale of electricity and donations make up the remainder.

"The Islamic State is still a force in the region, but, this drop in revenue is a significant figure

and will increase the challenge for the group to run its territory in the long term," Carlino said.

Fewer people to tax, less revenue for the caliphate

IHS notes that **ISIS collects the majority of its monthly revenue from taxation and confiscation.** However, income from these activities has fallen by approximately 23 percent since summer 2015.

"The Islamic State has lost about 22 percent of its territory in the past 15 months," said Columb Strack, senior analyst at IHS. "Its population has declined from around nine million to around six million. There are fewer people and business activities to tax; the same applies to properties and land to confiscate."

The general decline in income for the group is also affecting other financial streams, such as the money generating from kidnapping, drug smuggling, and taxation on bank account holders and transactions.

New taxes indicate financial difficulties



“Our research has found that the Islamic State is increasing taxes on basic services and coming up with new ways to get money from the population,” Carlino said. “These taxes include tolls for truck drivers, fees for anyone installing new or repairing broken satellite dishes, and ‘exit fees’ for anyone trying to leave a city.”

To make up for lost revenue, ISIS is also imposing fines. “You can be fined for driving on the wrong side of the road and for not being able to answer questions correctly on the Quran,” Carlino said.

IHS says that ISIS has also started to accept payment of fines in cash as an alternative penalty to the hudud (corporal punishments proscribed under Shari’a law). As the Islamic State considers hudud punishments as the backbone of its Shari’a law-based governance system, this new stance represents a strong indicator of the financial difficulties the group is going through. However, there is no indication as of yet that this increased burden of taxation has triggered even localized discontent among the population living in the Islamic State’s caliphate.

Decline in overall production of oil

The latest IHS Conflict Monitor report also highlights the decline in overall production of oil. “Our research and analysis indicates that

the production of oil in the **Islamic State-operated oilfields has dropped to approximately 21,000 barrels per day, from the 33,000 we saw during summer 2015,**” said Ludovico Carlino, senior analyst at IHS. **“This means that the income the group is generating from the sale of crude has fallen by approximately 26 percent.”**

According to the report, this decline is highly likely to reflect the intensification of the U.S.-led coalition’s military, and to a lesser extent, Russian, efforts to degrade the Islamic State’s capability to produce oil. Almost all the main oilfields operated by the group have been targeted by airstrikes, predominantly by the U.S.-led coalition, resulting in reports of extensive structural damage.

“However, oil production has not completely stopped,” Strack said. “Due to the Islamic State’s enduring capacity to repair, or improvise ways of working around disabled infrastructure, we should look at this as an interruption of production, not a complete stoppage.”

Significantly, the decline in production has not been followed by ISIS significantly raising the price of its oil. “This is not due to any reduction in demand on the black markets in Syria and Iraq,” Carlino said. “Rather, we assess that this reflects the Islamic State’s priority interest in quick sales of the oil in order to generate cash.”

German Security Services Warn of Jihadists Posing as Wandering Beach Vendors

Source: <http://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2016/04/19/german-security-services-warn-jihadists-posing-wandering-beach-vendors/>



Apr 19 – Islamic terrorists disguised as beach vendors may be targeting southern European beaches where vacationers gather in droves during the hot summer months, according to German security services.

The terrorists would be preparing to use weapons and explosives amidst sun beds and umbrellas, according to reports Tuesday from the German daily newspaper *Das Bild*. One senior German security official said: “This may be the way

that ISIS is conceiving a new dimension of terror. The beaches cannot be protected.”

Southern Europeans are used to the ubiquitous presence of hawkers of sunglasses, beachwear, CDs and jewelry who walk along beaches plying their wares. In Italy, the vendors are known as “extracomunitari,” a word for those whose dress and skin color immediately identify them as foreigners, usually Africans, literally from outside the European community.



Citing German security service officials, *Das Bild* warns of possible acts of terror being planned on European beaches, particularly in the south of France, Italy and Spain. The newspaper also claims that the Italian secret service provided the information to their German counterpart.



Last week the police from Senegal launched a similar alarm, cautioning that ISIS militants could be planning attacks on Italian beaches disguised as roaming beach vendors. The captain of the Senegalese police, Seck Pouye, noted that the jihadis train just a few miles away from certain resorts, and specifically cautioned: “They want to strike Italian, French and Spanish beaches. They will exploit certain radicalized vendors who travel regularly between Italy and Senegal, apparently for work.”

Last summer a group of Islamic State militants attacked European vacationers at two different resorts in Sousse, Tunisia. The attacks left 37 dead and many more wounded, among them Belgians, British and Germans.

Similar attacks have been carried out in recent years at the Egyptian resort of Sharm el Sheik, in Burkina Faso and the Ivory Coast.

EDITOR’S COMMENT: This is a serious threat mainly because it is so easy to be executed. Apart from a beach attack there is always the possibility of a sea attack via a fast boat or a night sea attack to sea from hotels aiming to get as many as sleeping guests as hostages. You can control incoming people at the gates of organized beaches or hotels but this is not possible if they swim from a nearby or out of fence beach (AK’s are particularly water resistant and plastic bags always available. Patrol beaches day and night? It can be done but costs a lot. Have armed covert security guards looking like tourists? Can be done – and even advertised! Stay at home? Terrorists WIN! This is a very complex problem for



hotels and authorities to solve because there many things at stake. Hotel managers need to invest some of their profits to harden their premises; if not, next attack will be the end of their enterprises and their reputation in the hospitality market. So, better be prepared than sorry and jobless – if alive!

Could ISIS and Al Qaeda, Two Giants of Jihad, Unite?

By Brian Michael Jenkins

Source: <http://www.rand.org/blog/2016/03/could-isis-and-al-qaeda-two-giants-of-jihad-unite.html>

Mar 2016 – There are both similarities and differences between Al Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Both are bloodthirsty terrorist organizations bent on jihad, sworn enemies of the infidel West and the United States in particular. **Could they one day unite in an international jihadist merger to create an even more potent regional and global threat? It is possible.**

For the moment, at least, the two groups are rivals for the mantle of jihadi supremacy and neither side's leadership has shown much interest in a union. The situation is extremely fluid, though, so it is not inconceivable that at some point in the future, beyond the current leadership perhaps, the two organizations could become one.

Al Qaeda has morphed several times since its emergence in the 1990s and its recognition as the global leader in terror with the 9/11 attacks in 2001.

ISIL or ISIS did not emerge as an international rival to Al Qaeda until 2013. Since then, ISIS challenged Al Qaeda's central leadership, engaged in hostilities with Al Qaeda's affiliate in Syria, expanded its areas of control and influence in Syria and Iraq, declared the existence of an Islamic State, and received pledges of loyalty from various jihadist fronts, including factions within Al Qaeda's affiliates in Africa and the Middle East.

Though they are rivals, there are many similarities between the two groups. Both enterprises comprise a central leadership and an array of affiliates who, while pledging their loyalty to one or the other, have their own interests, capabilities, and modus operandi. Individual fighters may also have their own agendas, and loyalties may continue to shift according to which group is perceived as dominant. In addition, both organizations appeal to self-radicalized individuals, who help the groups build their respective brands

through terrorist acts carried out in other regions, including in the United States.

In terms of their worldview and ideology, the two enterprises are close. Both see Islam under threat by hostile forces primarily in the West. They share a fundamentalist or Salafist interpretation of the faith. They share the same notion that jihad means primarily an armed struggle, not merely a spiritual quest, and that it is the collective and individual duty

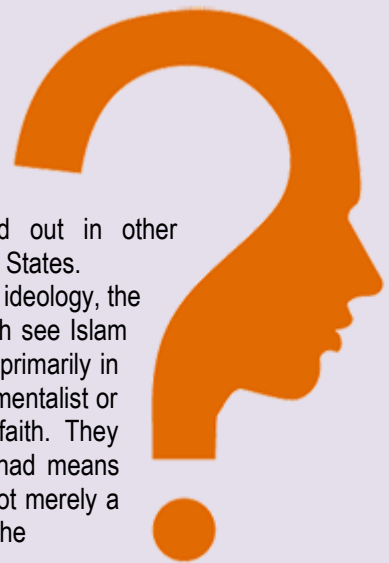
of all Muslims to participate in or directly contribute to the armed struggle. Both Al Qaeda and ISIS see themselves as global movements with global ambitions. Both reject the tenets of the current international order and see the conflict between Muslims and “crusaders” as one that began centuries ago and that will continue to Judgment Day.

Still, there are some doctrinal differences. Al Qaeda's leaders (and most Muslim scholars) reject ISIS's declaration of the caliphate. ISIS takes a harder line on Shia, focusing a large share of its attacks on Shia mosques and other targets. Al Qaeda has taken a more ecumenical line, arguing that Muslim attacks on Muslims, even those following what it regarded as deviant paths, would alienate followers and distract from the campaign against the infidels.

While Al Qaeda's leaders have expressed territorial ambitions, like driving Westerners out of Saudi Arabia and ridding Palestine of crusaders and Zionists, the group has largely operated out of sanctuaries, rather than seeking to seize and hold territory.

ISIS's leaders, on the other hand, see themselves as presiding over an Islamic State, which, as its name implies, is a physical, territorial expression. ISIS conquers, controls, governs, and even runs an economy, something Al Qaeda did not try to do.

The duel for supremacy is really a competition for support, alliances



with like-minded groups and the loyalty of fighters, both in the region and afar. ISIS appears to be attracting a larger and younger audience, which reflects its superior use of online resources. Part of ISIS's recruiting appeal also lies in its advertisement of atrocities, but there are weaknesses in this, including a faddish quality, which fickle youth might quickly abandon.

Al Qaeda, meanwhile, has been less able to receive new fighters in great numbers since its training camps were dispersed after 9/11. Geographic convenience and ease of access enabled ISIS to attract an estimated 30,000 foreign fighters to its ranks, including 5,000 from Western countries. Still, Al Qaeda has hardly given up its global terrorist campaign, continuing to provide encouragement, training and assistance to foreign volunteers planning to carry out terrorist attacks.

To maintain the allegiance of their followers, both Al Qaeda and ISIS must remain violent and active. Terrorists attacking in their home countries have pledged allegiance to both groups.

The November terrorist attack on a Paris night club appears to be the work of a group of French fighters serving with ISIS. The attack on the offices of the French newspaper Charlie Hebdo in January, 2015, was carried out by brothers who had declared their loyalty to Al Qaeda, while their comrade who simultaneously attacked a Kosher supermarket in Paris, claimed his operation to be on behalf of ISIS.

Syed Farouk, who attacked the San Bernardino Regional Center in December, began plotting terrorist attacks in 2011, well before the emergence of ISIS. However, his wife Tashfeen Malik, who participated in the attack, declared her loyalty to ISIS.

While Al Qaeda and ISIS clearly have a lot in common, there are serious differences standing in the way of an early merger between the two giants of jihad. It could take a change in leadership of both groups and perhaps some compromises on mission and strategy, but there are enough points of confluence to make a united jihadist front a realistic and frightening possibility.

Brian Michael Jenkins is senior adviser to the president of the nonprofit RAND Corporation and the author of [How the Current Conflicts Are Shaping the Future of Syria and Iraq](#).

Isil and Italian mafia teaming up to smuggle cannabis into Europe

Source: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/04/19/isis-and-italian-mafia-teaming-up-to-smuggle-cannabis-into-europ/>

Apr 19 – The Islamic State is working with the Italian mafia to smuggle cannabis to Europe, a new investigation shows.

While smoking and handling hashish is forbidden under Sharia law and the group punishes those living in its territory in Syria and Iraq caught using it, its leaders are making millions from helping smuggle it, according to Franco Roberti, Italy's national anti-terror and anti-mafia chief.

Police in Italy have found evidence that mobsters, who have long controlled most of the country's illegal drug supplies, have had to work with Isil to get through its territory in Libya along the main North African smuggling route.

The route for North African hash - compressed cannabis resin - now runs from Casablanca, Morocco, through Algeria, Tunisia to Tobruk in eastern Libya.

The mafia was forced to strike a deal to pass through the increasingly lawless coastal city of Sirte, where Isil controls the ports.

Islamic State's revenues have dropped about 30 per cent to \$56 million since mid-2015, according to a report published this week, forcing the group to think of creative new ways to finance their global jihad.

Research group IHS said Isil had lost about 22 per cent of its territory in the past 15 months and now ruled over six million people instead of nine million. This meant its tax base had become smaller.



With Islamic State getting a cut of the mafia's estimated \$36 billion (£25bn) yearly earnings from the narcotics trade, the money now accounts for seven per cent of the group's finances.

Mr Roberti's investigation into the links between terrorism and the mafia are in their early stages, as his office began exploring the phenomenon in February 2015.

The prosecutor said the similarities between Islamic militant groups and the traditional mafias, such as Sicily's Cosa Nostra, meant it made sense for them to coordinate their investigations.

"International terrorism finances itself with criminal activities that are typical of the mafia, like drug trafficking, smuggling commercial goods, smuggling oil, smuggling archaeological relics and art, kidnapping for ransom, and extortion," he said.

He called for the decriminalising cannabis in order to strike a blow to both the Islamic State and the mafia.

"Decriminalisation or even legalisation would definitely be a weapon against traffickers, among whom there could be terrorists who make money off of it," he added.

The Mafia Runs Guns for ISIS in Europe

Source: <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2016/03/24/inside-the-mafia-isis-connection.html>



Mar 24 – By the time Aziz Ehsan, a 46-year-old Iraqi, was arrested near Naples on Tuesday, local anti-mafia police had already been trailing him for days to determine just why he was in the heartland of the Camorra crime syndicate's territory. He was well known by both the French and Belgian secret services, which list him as a suspected ISIS contact. The Neapolitan cops were also aware of an international arrest warrant for him in Switzerland, where he was wanted in connection with a variety of offenses, including forgery, assault, and possession of illegal weapons.

He was apparently just the type of person Italian authorities thought might provide a

valuable clue as they work to piece together the details of the [complex relationship](#) between Jihadist fighters and Italy's various mobs.

But when the attacks took place in Brussels, the authorities decided it was time to move in and get him. He was arrested as he slept in a car with Italian license plates registered to a deceased man on Tuesday and is awaiting extradition to Switzerland, France, or Belgium.

He claimed that he was in the area to scout out luxury hotels for rich Iraqi tourists, but the police didn't buy it; he appeared to have been living in the car for days. They also pointed to an absence of notebooks, a laptop, or tablet—items you'd think to bring on a



research trip. His no-frills, no contract “burner” cellphone, like the kind favored by Western jihadis, was another sign that Ehsan wasn’t in the region to see which five-star hotels offered the best glass of Limoncello.

“We executed a European arrest warrant near Naples and arrested an Iraqi citizen known to the Belgian and French secret service,” Italy’s interior minister Angelino Alfano declared after his arrest. “He was in contact with terrorists.”

Ehsan’s presence in Italy very likely posed no imminent threat to anyone in this country, but it may be extremely significant in Europe’s losing battle against ISIS-motivated terrorism. Authorities now want to know if Ehsan was here on business, especially if he was working with the Camorra to secure false documents or illegal arms—both big moneymakers for the Neapolitan clans.

Since the [Charlie Hebdo](#) attacks in Paris in January 2015, Italian anti-mafia and anti-terrorism officials have been unraveling long-standing connections between Jihadi fighters and the Camorra in Naples. They have also uncovered ties to the Sicilian Cosa Nostra Mafia and the Calabrese ‘Ndrangheta gang, tracing weapons being trafficked in from the former Yugoslavia and several African nations which allegedly arrive easily in Neapolitan ports.

Italian anti-mafia police have made three major arrests in the last 12 months, during which they have [confiscated major weapons arsenals](#) that included Kalashnikov rifles, submachine guns, body armor, and hundreds of rounds of ammunition that were ready to be sold to terrorist connections. They even found a price list for a wide variety of weapons available for prices ranging from €250 to €3,000 that was printed in Arabic, French, and Italian.

“Naples has been, for many years, a central logistics base for the Middle East. The Camorra is also active in the world of Jihadi terrorism that passes through Naples,” Franco Roberti, a prominent anti-mafia prosecutor, told The Daily Beast before the Brussels attacks. “Naples lends itself to this type of activity. In the past there have been contacts between Jihadi militants and the Camorra clans.”

He says that Italy’s mafia-fighting forces have “thwarted plots and synergies” between the terrorists and the mobsters. What’s not known, of course, is how many plots they’ve missed.

It is certainly a well-known fact that the Camorra runs a highly successful enterprise in the lawless Neapolitan hinterland running drugs, illegal arms and forged documents that make it especially easy for anyone entering Europe illegally to pass through even the tightest borders. It is just as well-known that the main client base has never been strictly Italian.

“We have evidence that groups of the Camorra are implicated in an exchange of weapons for drugs with terrorist groups,” Pierluigi Vigna, Italy’s national anti-mafia prosecutor, said before he passed away in 2012.

Vigna’s words were quoted in a variety of [Wikileaks](#) cables that imply that the United States government has been well aware of the terrorist-mafia connection for some time.

“Criminal interaction between Italian organized crime and Islamic extremist groups provides potential terrorists with access to funding and logistical support from criminal organizations with established smuggling routes and an entrenched presence in the United States,” according to one cable on Italy penned by the FBI.

Investigators say logistics help in moving Jihadi fighters through Europe is one of the hardest rackets to crack. Last summer, Salah Abdeslam, who, until last week, was the most wanted man in Europe for his role in the deadly terrorist attacks in Paris, [traveled freely](#) through Italy with the help of a network of what could be referred to as mafia-sponsored terrorism travel agents.

Authorities in Italy say he boarded a ferry in Bari headed for Greece last August, and that he used a pre-paid Italian debit card until the Paris attacks. Authorities say he used his real name tied to fake Italian documents in both instances.

The idea of Europe’s most wanted man running free is concerning enough. But what is at least as worrying is that the weapons being trafficked into Italy will end up being used in European capitals. Michele del Prete, an Italian counter-terrorism official who has been focusing on the links between organized crime and violent jihadists, warns that the two forces of evil have found a comfortable partnership. “It is established and proven that the lawless climate in Naples has often created favorable conditions for logistical support, exchange of weapons, and false documents,”



he said. "There are specialized groups we have tracked in various municipalities and prefectures that we know are facilitating terrorism."

Investigator Roberti takes it a step further. "Campania, especially the province of Caserta

and Castel Volturno, is one of the main gateways into Europe for those who want to become a terrorist," he said. "It has been demonstrated by numerous investigations. On this now, there are no doubts."

German airport's secret emergency plan was on internet for months - ZDF

Source: <http://in.reuters.com/article/germany-security-airports-idINKCN0XH2BX>

Apr 20 – A confidential emergency plan for Cologne-Bonn airport was posted on its website for several months, German broadcaster ZDF said on Wednesday, heightening concerns about security after attacks at Brussels airport.



ZDF said the document, which was over 230 pages long and meant for internal use only, included instructions on how to deal with natural catastrophes and air accidents at the airport as well as terrorist attacks, bomb threats or hostage takings.

The SITE intelligence group reported last month that Islamic State had posted pictures on the Internet calling on German Muslims

to carry out Brussels-style attacks at Cologne-Bonn airport and Chancellor Angela Merkel's offices.

The Cologne-Bonn document included detailed descriptions of where passengers should gather in emergencies. **It had been on the airport website since November 2015 before** the airport removed it following a query by ZDF, the broadcaster said.

The airport (Flughafen Köln/Bonn GmbH) was not immediately available to comment on the report when contacted by Reuters.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Airport security plans on the Internet! Blueprints of mega malls on the Internet! Luxury hotels plans – sometimes floor by floor on the Internet! Endless stupidity... Just stop doing that! I only hope that top security officer of Cologne-Bonn Airport is by nw enjoying his free time at home!



Norway violated mass killer Anders Behring Breivik's human rights, court rules

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-04-21/anders-breivik-wins-lawsuit-norway-inhuman-treatment/7344094>

Apr 21 – **Norway violated mass killer Anders Behring Breivik's human rights by keeping him in a "completely locked world"** after being sentenced for killing 77 people in twin attacks in 2011, a Norwegian court has ruled.

Breivik took Norwegian authorities to court in March, accusing them of breaching the European Convention on Human Rights by keeping him isolated from other prisoners.

"The prohibition of inhuman and degrading treatment represents a fundamental value in a democratic society," judge Helen Andenaes Sekulic said in her ruling.

"This applies no matter what — also in the treatment of terrorists and killers."



The verdict, which took many by surprise, said the Norwegian state had broken Article 3 of the European convention.

It found that the killer had been subjected to strip searches, had been woken up hourly by guards for long periods and that the authorities had done little to alleviate the impact of his



isolation.

"It's a completely locked world with very little human contact," the verdict said, adding that there had been no attempt to ease the security "even though Breivik has behaved in an exemplary manner during his time in prison".

The ruling also said the Norwegian state had not violated Breivik's right to a private and family life.

Breivik killed eight people in a bomb attack in Oslo in July 2011 before attacking a youth meeting of the Labour Party on an island to the north-west of the capital, killing 69 people.

In March, the case raised dismay among Norwegians taken aback by Breivik's complaints of cold coffee and microwaved meals he said were "worse than waterboarding".

State 'surprised' by ruling

Breivik's lawyer said prison authorities must now ease the isolation of his client.

"He must first and foremost be allowed to be in contact with other people," Oeystein Storrvik told reporters after the verdict.

He declined to say what Breivik's reaction was to the ruling.

Representatives for the state would study the verdict before deciding whether to lodge an appeal, the state's defence lawyer Marius Emberland said, adding he was "surprised" by the ruling.

Survivor: Cecilie Herlovsen

The state's lawyers had argued his conditions fell "well within the limits of what is permitted" under the European convention, and were more comfortable than that of other prisoners.

One survivor of the shooting on Utoeya island said the verdict

showed Norway had a working court system, respecting human rights even under extreme conditions.

"It also means we have to take the ruling seriously and evaluate how we treat prisoners, what abuses they may suffer, and how we avoid abuse," survivor Bjoern Ihler said on Twitter.

"What Breivik did was inhumane, which is why it's crucial to treat him humanely. He doesn't set the premise for how we treat others."

But not everyone shared his view.

"Hooray for the rule of law and all that, but this is absurd," said Viljar Hanssen, whom Breivik shot five times, including once in the head.

The state must pay Breivik's legal fees of some 331,000 Norwegian crowns (\$52,000), the judge ruled.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: I must say that I love Norway and Norwegians. But I think it would be wise for them to get out from their peaceful bubble and join the real world! Terrorist have no rights and punishment should be as strict as possible. They contribute nothing to the society (other than blood and death) and they consume the air we breathe. If a member of judge Helen Andenaes Sekulic's family was among the many victims of his actions would she make the same verdict? Next step would be to allow his Swedish penpal lover Victoria to visit him at jail...



ISIS May Be Linked to Gurudwara Attack in Germany: Report

Source: <http://www.outlookindia.com/newswire/story/isis-may-be-linked-to-gurudwara-attack-in-germany-report/937558>

Apr 21 – **The dreaded Islamic State terror group may be linked to the explosion at a gurudwara in Germany's western city of Essen**, a media report said today as police arrested two teenagers in connection with the "terrorist act".

Suspensions of an ISIS involvement in the Saturday blast at the Nanaksar Satsang Sabha Gurudwara, which occurred at the end of a marriage ceremony, have hardened following the **arrest of two 16-year-olds in the nearby town of Gelsenkirchen last night**.

The two teenagers with known links to regional Islamists have been arrested over the attack which left three persons, including a priest, injured, said city police chief Frank Richter.

"We have to presume it was a terrorist act -- religiously motivated terror by the Islamist scene," Richter said. "We will continue to do everything possible to ensure the protection of the Sikh community in Essen," Richter said. "Our work does not end with the arrest of the two suspects. There are numerous leads that need to be evaluated."

The strength of the Sikh community members in Germany is estimated around 15,000.

Earlier, one of the two men identified by police as Yusuf T, an ISIS sympathiser, is now treated by investigators as the main suspect in the attack, ARD TV network reported.

He is known to the authorities as an activist in the Islamist scene in the Ruhr region of

North Rhine Westphalia and has been actively involved in a campaign to distribute free copies of the Quran in the German-speaking region organised by a radical Salafist sect of Islam.

Yusuf also has links to "Lohberger-Brigade", an alliance of radical Islamists in the town of Dinslaken, the report said.

Most of German Islamists who have travelled to Syria to join ISIS militants had close links to LIES, the organisation behind the Quran distribution campaign, according to the report.

Yusuf had used his Facebook profile to carry out propaganda for the ISIS, it said.

Media reports said earlier that his mask thrown into a bush was recovered by police and it was being subjected to DNA analysis.

Police yesterday released photos and CCTV footage of two men suspected of planting a backpack containing a bomb in the entrance hall of the gurudwara.

One of them carried a backpack with the logo "Russel Athletic". Investigators found the remains of a similar back pack in the debris of the explosion, according to police.

India had expressed "distress" at what has been deemed as a deliberate act from the beginning. Top Indian officials have already taken it up at the highest level as Essen authorities assured India that all steps will be taken to ensure security for all minorities including the Sikhs.

ISIS is Collapsing

By Daniel Pipes

Source: <http://www.meforum.org/5964/isis-collapsing>

Apr 19 – **I predict that the ISIS state in Syria and Iraq will collapse as fast as it arose. Indeed, I will go out on a limb and say I expect it to be gone by the end of 2016.**



That the Islamic State (also known as ISIS, ISIL, or Daesh) will be gone is predictable because all totalitarian states eventually disappear due to three main developments: cadres become disillusioned, subject populations suffer, and external enemies



increase in number. All these problems afflicted, for example, the fascist states of World War II as well as the Soviet bloc. ISIS will collapse quickly because it suffers from an extreme form of these problems.

Disillusioned cadres: The heaven-on-earth ISIS promises its adepts turns out to be closer to hell, prompting many recruits to flee and many more to want to. Growing numbers of ISIS fighters lack loyalty to the group, toiling only for the money or out of fear. The reasons can be as mundane as bad food and as elevated as bad theology, but grievous disappointment is the common theme coming from the ranks of ISIS members. Radical ideologues evolve into penitents; [drug-addled fighters](#) end up as near-vegetables.

Britain's *Express* newspaper reports on ISIS moaning

Suffering subject population: ISIS oppresses the unfortunate millions who live under its rule in a territory about as large as Great Britain. If a few benefit from the system, the great majority suffer from the petty interference, impoverishment, arbitrary rules, brutality, and sadism that characterize ISIS dominion. These subject people will rebel whenever the opportunity arises.

Foreign enemies: ISIS seems to take pride in making as many enemies as possible, which may burnish its credentials for purity but leaves it exceedingly vulnerable. It gratuitously alienated Jordanians by burning alive an air force pilot; it enraged Turks by setting off bombs in major cities; its acts of violence in Paris, Brussels, and beyond have made it enemy #1 in much of the West (including even the Islamists living there); it alienates everyone with the destruction of antiquities, the use of poison gas, and the videotaped beheadings. Its only alliances are with like-minded groups such as Boko Haram in Nigeria.

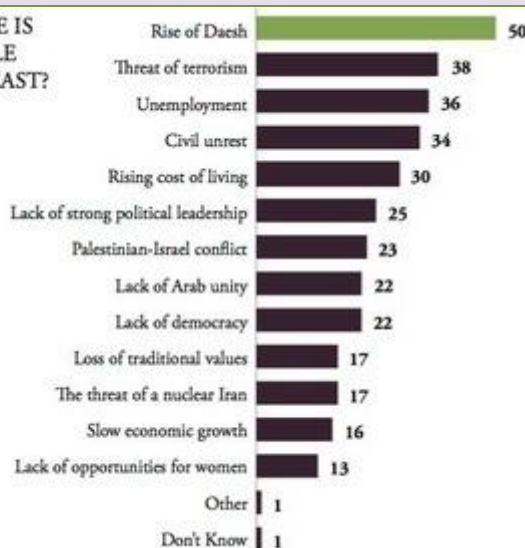
Mummy's boy militants - Moaning ISIS complain of poor food, no phone signal and weather

RADICALISED Britons who shunned Western comforts for a life under the brutal Islamic State regime appear to be growing tired of jihadi life after a series of moaning tweets reveal their true colours.

By TOM BATCHELOR

PUBLISHED: 00:00, Thu, Nov 19, 2015 | UPDATED: 15:57, Thu, Nov 19, 2015

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IS THE BIGGEST OBSTACLE FACING THE MIDDLE EAST?



From the ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey 2016

As a result, ISIS has become uniquely reviled. For example, in an unprecedented meeting, the U.N. Security Council in December 2015 voted unanimously to impose far-reaching economic sanctions on ISIS. On another level, a recent large-scale [survey](#) found half of 18 to 24-year-old Arabic-speakers saying that ISIS is the "biggest obstacle facing the Middle

East," more so than unemployment, Israel, or Iran.

In all, ISIS is losing personnel (25,000 killed, according to a U.S. source) as well as economic power and territory. Leaders are escaping to the friendlier confines of Libya. Deserters are revealing [files with contact information of ISIS members](#). Bombings by many air forces combined with Kurd- and Baghdad-backed efforts are taking their toll on ISIS, especially on its [finances](#). In 2015, ISIS lost Baiji, Kobani, Sinjar, and Tikrit, amounting to 20 percent of its territory in Syria and 40 percent in Iraq. These losses continued into 2016, with Ramadi and Palmyra already spun out of its control. An Egyptian analyst, Abdel-Moneim Said, compares ISIS now to the last, desperate and doomed year of the Nazi Reich.

But if the ISIS state in Syria and Iraq is doomed, ISIS will live on in other ways. First is the successor state in Libya and perhaps also others in Nigeria, Somalia, Afghanistan, and



beyond. Second is the very idea of the caliphate, a medieval concept of Muslim supremacism that has malign implications for modern life.

So, let us hasten to bring about and then celebrate the forthcoming demise of the Islamic State centered in Raqqa, Syria, without deluding ourselves that ISIS is entirely finished. To achieve that requires, unfortunately, defeating and marginalizing the entire Islamist movement. That too may happen, but is many years off.

Daniel Pipes is president of the Middle East Forum.

Families of terror attacks victims can claim \$2bn from Iran's frozen assets: U.S. Supreme Court

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20160421-families-of-terror-attacks-victims-can-claim-2bn-from-iran-s-frozen-assets-u-s-supreme-court>

Apr 21 – The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that the families of victims from several Iran-directed or Iran-related terrorist attacks in the 1980s and 1990s can collect close to \$2 billion from Iran's frozen assets. The Supreme Court, in a 6-2 decision, upheld a lower court's ruling that Congress was within its remit to pass the law requiring Iran to do so.

Terrorism in Malta seen as 'low risk' by UK Foreign Office

Source: <http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20160421/local/terrorism-in-malta-seen-as-low-risk-by-uk-foreign-office.609598>



Apr 20 – **Britain's Foreign Office has warned Britons that there is a high terrorism risk in European countries, but Malta, Iceland and Slovenia were singled out as having a low threat.**

The notice was given prominence on the UK media, in what will be seen locally as a valuable tourism advertisement in Malta's biggest source market.

The Daily Mail quoted a spokesman for the Association of British Agents to keep up to date with the latest advice from the Foreign Office before visiting their intended vacation spot.

'Just as in the UK where the terrorism threat level is severe, travellers should remain alert wherever they are travelling. Bookings for this summer are healthy with year-on-year increases for many holiday destinations throughout the world.'



Currently, Iceland, Malta and Slovenia are some of the European beauty spots, ripe with tourism that are still considered low risk," according to the latest advice from the Foreign Office.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: It seems that Foreign Office still has some problems in connecting the dots. First of all no country is immune to terrorism. Then from the map accompanying this article: Seychelles has its own rising problems with local jihadists; Costa Rica is between Colombia and Mexico (drugs-kidnapping) and Malta pretty close to North Africa and its rising flows of illegal immigrants and AQIM. Practically Foreign Office dictates that Europeans should visit only Poland, Liechtenstein, Slovenia, Iceland or Malta for their summer vacations. What lovely choices for enjoying sea and sun!

